

# Annie People

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MEMBER



The Newsletter for Annie Fans

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The 1986 Annie National Tour finished up in Tacoma, Washington, on the 9th of June after a run of 23 cities. Like everyone who has ever been in an Annie cast, all the people involved were sad when it closed, but the good news is there are a few possibilities of its being revived in the not too distant future, although nothing is definite on that. We hope to have more news in that regard in the next issue of AP.

Sarah Bethany Reynolds, who will turn 13 on July 27th, never missed a performance the entire time, which is especially admirable because of the mishap that occurred about two weeks before the tour ended. Sarah's mother and several of the kids and other Annie Moms were hiking on Mt. Hood in Oregon, and Mrs. Reynolds fell and broke her leg in four places. The tour continued on to Washington state, leaving Mrs. Reynolds back in the hospital, but she was OK enough to travel home to Rochester (with a gigantic leg cast) as soon as the tour closed. So everyone is home now and enjoying the summer. Sarah's mom told us that one of the last performances of the tour saw Sarah with hiccups for the entire second act. And then there was the time of that memorable blooper, "Hey, lady, could you donate an orphan to the apple's picnic?"

Submitted by Pam Gaddie



Annie fan Pam Powers Gaddie with Sarah Bethany Reynolds - Louisville, Kentucky

Submitted by Janna Robinson



Jon with 1986 National Tour Orphans - clockwise from lower left, Erin Daly, Stephanie Kae Seeley, Nicole Anthony, Kristen Schmitz, Molly Beth Totten, Allison Harvey, Janna Robinson

# ★ Annie Stars Since Annie ★

ALLISON SMITH sang "Never Go With a Stranger" in Albany, New York and was honored by the New York State Assembly with an award called a Legislative Resolution honoring her for her dedication to the arts, community, and her numerous charitable works. Congratulations, Allison! She also sang at Carnegie Hall for the Cavalcade of Stars and at the Marriott Hotel in New York, and she played in a celebrity tennis tournament for Juvenile Diabetes, for which she is Youth Chairperson. Because of Susan Saint James' pregnancy (which will not be written into the script), taping of Kate and Allie began for the season in June, one month earlier than usual. Unfortunately, because of the schedule change, Allison was not able to star in Peter Pan in California; she had been offered the lead at the Sacramento Music Circus, having starred in Annie there in 1983....CHARLES STROUSE's much-awaited new musical Rags will open on Broadway in August and will star MARCIA LEWIS. Another former Miss Hannigan (2nd National), JANE CONNELL, will open on Broadway in August also, in Me and My Girl....ROBIN IGNICO's 1982 ABC-TV movie Don't Go To Sleep was rerun recently. This was the film she starred in shortly after Annie came out....Be sure to catch KIMI PARKS, who is now in a featured role on Guiding Light on CBS doing an impressive portrayal as a young inmate in a reformatory. And don't miss MARTHA BYRNE on As the World Turns on CBS; her character of Lily Walsh has been featured a lot lately on the show....Congratulations to ROSANNE SORRENTINO, who graduated from high school in June....Lots of national tour and local Annie kids in New York showcases lately: Channel 11 in New York did a full half-hour show on Barbara Klein's Young People's Showcase in New York. SUSAN LIPTON, CAROL-ANN PLANTÉ, and AMY BETH BERNSTEIN sang and were interviewed in the segment. Seen performing lately in Peter Sklar's Professional Children's Revue: CRISTINA CONOMOS, MELISSA KALFA, CARYN LYN JONES, CAROL-ANN PLANTÉ, TANI TAYLOR POWERS, and DANA DAWSON. And seen performing in Pro-Kids in New Jersey: ELLEN CARO and KATHY SMIZER....Several from last year's fine Annie production in Montville, New Jersey appeared in Damn Yankees there this year: NANCY LAGOS, AIMEE LAGOS, KATHY SMIZER, JEANNE MURPHY, and--AP's TRICIA TROZZI again on trombone in the orchestra....STEPHANIE VINE will star in the title role in Alice in Wonderland this month at the Levitt Pavilion for the Performing Arts in Westport, Connecticut....SARAH JESSICA PARKER starred on the pilot for the Alan King Show on CBS....SUSAN LIPTON's 1984 Young People's Special Little Arliss, in which she starred with R. D. Robb, was rerun recently on NBC....SYBELLE FRANKLIN, who has played Annie twice in New Jersey, will play her in a third production in August. When not in her red dress or Orphan garb, Sybelle sings in a gospel trio called the Decibelles, composed of her and her two sisters....The Dream Makers '86 show in Atlantic City this year saluted the Statue of Liberty and featured KRISTI COOMBS, ARLENE KULIS, DANA DEWES, CHRIS NOEL CANTERA, LOREN KAUFMAN, SHERRI LEIDY, and PATTI GILBERT in fine solo and ensemble singing and dancing....Musical Theatre Works put on The House in the Woods in New York in May and June, and then it moved up the Hudson to Tarrytown. KIA GOODWIN and CARYN LYN JONES played orphans in this charming new show. KIA will soon be on her way back to the West Coast to begin taping 227's second season....The 4th National's DANA DAWSON and KIM STERN will be in the upcoming movie Starlight....ALBERT FINNEY is currently playing the lead to sellout crowds in London in Orphans....Birthdays: LARA BERK, 14 on July 12; TARA CARNES, 16 on July 16; LAURA BAKER, 14 on July 22; PATRICIA ANN PATTS, 19 on July 31; KIA GOODWIN, 13 on Aug. 2; JOHN HUSTON, 80 on Aug. 6; THOMAS MEEHAN, 57 on Aug. 14; KRISTEN SCHMITZ, 16 in August; ROBIN IGNICO, 16 on Aug. 19; ALLISON HARVEY, 13 on Aug. 30; and belated greetings to DEBORAH WEBSTER, 17 on June 11; LOREN KAUFMAN, 13 on June 16.

## ANDREA McARDLE COMPLETES SUCCESSFUL CLUB RUN IN NEW YORK

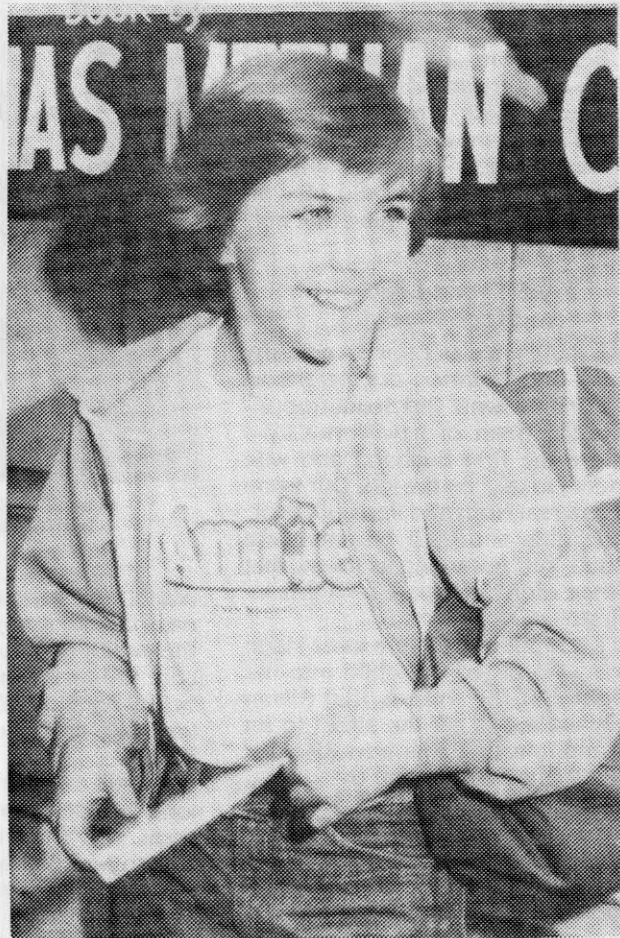
Andrea's club act at Freddy's in New York in March and April gave us a chance to see Andrea perform a wide variety of material. Martin Charnin wrote her act, marking the first time they had worked together since Annie, and the wit of both writer and performer showed in the patter between the songs and the parody material throughout the show. A particular favorite of us Annie fans in the audience this Easter Sunday afternoon was the very funny Charnin-penned song about how people had suddenly reached the inevitable conclusion that "Annie" had grown up. For this number Andrea sat on a stool with glasses and a frumpy wig, and the number even ended with a take-off on "Tomorrow."

The rest of the program involved fine renditions of show tunes ("Somewhere There's a Place" from West Side Story), soft rock (a well-done medley of Heat-wave's "Always and Forever" and Billy Joel's "James"), ballads ("The Wind Beneath My Wings"), and the Irving Berlin piece, "They Say It's Wonderful." A highlight of the afternoon was Andrea's sensitive performance of Martin Charnin's new composition, "In the Quiet of Your Arms." Andrea even gave up center stage briefly to drummer Luther Rix while she picked up his drumsticks herself and provided admirable percussive rhythms at the drumset for one song.

If the repertoire at Freddy's seemed a little heavy on the somber, slower-type numbers, it must be realized that Andrea is at her best on that type of song; however, remembering her excellent version of "Heat Wave" on the Merv Griffin Show a couple of years ago, this Andrea fan would love to see maybe a couple more uptempo numbers as part of her act. In any event, it is hoped that this run will result in opening new doors to yet an additional dimension to Andrea's busy career.

### MARTIN CHARNIN INTERVIEW

The next issue of AP will present the first installment of an exclusive interview with Martin Charnin. In the course of this interview, which will be divided over three issues of AP, we will learn how Annie was created, the very earliest days of the show on the Goodspeed stage in 1976, and how it grew and changed on its way to the Kennedy Center in Washington and then on to the Alvin Theatre on Broadway. We will also find out how the casting was done, Mr. Charnin's own account of the experience of opening night, the show's going on to becoming the worldwide smash hit it was, and finally, the impact of its closing on its director and creator. And, we will find out a few tempting tidbits about the Broadway sequel being planned for the spring of 1987. And--for all of us frustrated Annie trivia buffs, the meaning and origins of the famous Grace Farrell "cheese" line will at last be revealed to all of us. So, don't forget--the interview will begin in the September issue of Annie People.



Andrea in earlier days



Top row from left, Kristi Coombs, Arlene Kulis, Ali Mitchell, Regina Meredith, Alison Grambs, Alyssa Milano, Chris Noel Cantera; front, Denise Meredith.

# The Annie Troop: Girl

**W**e weren't prepared for the telephone call that came just two weeks before Christmas last year. Martin Charnin, director of the Broadway musical *Annie*, wanted our daughter to play an orphan in the national touring company of his show. If we agreed, I would chaperone 12-year-old Alison to at least six major cities where, each performance, she would be Pepper—the tallest, toughest ragamuffin in the *Annie* orphanage.

My husband and I had only one day to decide and were naturally apprehensive. (Alison, of course, was ecstatic and ready to pack her bags.) Should we let our little girl have the chance she longed for, or should we keep her a "normal" sixth grader who dusts for her allowance?

After we had decided to give Alison her dream—at least for six months—we were surprised to find that there would be lots of room for normal activities in the show-business life she was to experience. The best surprise was that Girl Scouting would play an important role in maintaining that normalcy.

## From Troop Leader to Stage Parent

When Alison was Brownie age, my husband and I started our neighborhood's first Brownie Girl Scout troop—right in the heart of New York City—and were the first husband and wife co-leaders to take on the job. Our troop became a real Mom and Pop endeavor, and the girls and their parents were delighted. Yet, rewarding as it was, that challenge didn't compare with this latest first.

It's tempting to picture us as stage parents who urged our child into the limelight. Yet the truth is that Alison literally walked in off the street to an open audition that was advertised in the newspaper and mailed by a friend who thought she should try. That she walked out with the possibility of an honest-to-goodness role came as a real shock. Since she had had no theatrical experience, no real lessons except for

*Jennifer Ian Grambs is a freelance writer who lives in New York City.*



In each city they played, the "Annie orphans" were made to feel right at home—thanks to the warm welcome of the other Girl Scouts they met

piano, and no agent or any show business contacts, my big concern before the audition was whether she would be able to handle the disappointment of being rejected. But that would be a learning experience—even good for her.

I still don't know how Ali, with her long braids, saucer eyes, and lanky body, was chosen over the hundreds of starry-eyed girls who filed across the stage of the Alvin Theatre belting out "Tomorrow." But I can recall that what made me most proud was not that she was picked, but that she had enough self-assurance to try when the odds

were very much against her.

In retrospect, we needn't have labored so hard over our final decision. Since my husband and I are both writers, it would be easy for me to take my work along as we roamed the country and easy for him to be with us a lot of the time. Ali's schooling would be taken care of by a tutor prepared to teach the children in split sessions to accommodate two groups, lower and upper grades. Companionship certainly would not be a problem because the children, ranging in age from 8 to 12, would often be together. (As it turned out, the girls were very com-

# Scouts on the Road

patible, enjoying each others' company off-stage as well as on.)

## Going "on the Road"

Going "on the road" is a fascinating mixture of show business tradition and everyday household chores for me and the eight little girls in the show—Annie, six orphans, and an understudy.

Traveling with our national company means touring with oversized trunks plastered with stick-on banners from every city on the itinerary—in our case, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Rochester, Seattle, and (maybe) Honolulu. Even though the company itself is a warm family of actors, actresses, and crew, traveling also means making new friends in each city—and then leaving them. So when Colette Phillips, public relations director of Boston's Patriots' Trail Girl Scout Council, came up with the idea of a traveling Annie troop that would connect with Girl Scouts in each new city, we were delighted. The Girl Scout song "Make New Friends but Keep the Old" that Alison had learned as a Brownie took on added significance.

## A Boston Welcome

The first Annie Girl Scout troop meeting was held February 9 in Boston's Bradford Hotel, where the girls' tutor Barbara Flynn had set up their cozy schoolroom. Barbara is the troop's permanent assistant leader and took great care to coordinate meetings and activities with the girls' unusual schedule. This first meeting held opening night charm for the excited new troop that included Brownie as well as Cadette levels.

Our girls were used to meeting celebrities, but that didn't diminish the thrill of meeting Deborah Hart, their leader from the Boston council. Most of the girls had been involved in Girl Scouting back home, so sitting in a circle singing "Zip, Zap, Zonk" came as naturally as singing "Tomorrow" on cue.

The difference, of course, was that they made national news when the first Annie troop became official at an investiture service two weeks later. Photos of Annie (Kristi Coombs) and the other orphans, proudly displaying their

Girl Scout pins, appeared in papers all over the country. So their friends back home knew about their unusual troop long before the girls could write them the news.

## Windy City Activities

Our company played Boston for ten weeks and all that time Deborah Hart kept the girls involved. Together they visited the Children's Museum, met with another troop, made a Girl Scout public service announcement for television, worked on interesting paper projects, and at their last meeting made lovely dried flower arrangements. On their overnight train trip from Boston to Chicago, some of the girls put their new skill to use making elaborate arrangements with leftover materials.

We were prepared for Chicago's windy weather—but not for a blizzard in April! The inclement weather, coupled with an especially busy schedule, made it difficult for this now-seasoned Annie troop to arrange meetings with Lone Tree Area Girl Scout Council. Despite the problems, the council was able to provide the girls with a variety of patches and songbooks that gave them an idea of what Chicago-area Girl Scouts were doing.

Eight-year-old Ali Mitchell, the youngest member of the troop, was impressed with the Expo 1982 patch designed by a second grade Brownie. "It gives me a good feeling to see that someone my own age can make something so special," said Ali, who does something special herself. She's the "swing" for the orphans and understudies five parts.

## New Friends in Cleveland

In Cleveland, our next stop, May flowers were blooming on the banks of Lake Erie where the Annie troop met with girls from Lake Erie Girl Scout Council. (They had learned about the nationwide Gift of Water projects, so picnicking on Lake Erie with new friends held special significance.)

As always, the most interesting part of these meetings is watching the girls interact. Understandably, the Lake Erie girls were a little apprehensive about meeting show business kids. Would they be stagestruck? Friendly? The answers came shortly after the girls gath-

ered together singing Girl Scout songs, eating hot dogs and hamburgers, and chatting happily.

"What's it like to be on stage?" asked Danielle Harbarger, who had just flown up to Cadette level the night before. Alison was very much in awe of Danielle and her 39 badges. So, after Alison told her how it feels to have a standing ovation, she listened intently while Danielle explained the challenges of acquiring so many badges.

After the last S'Mores were eaten, I spoke with program specialist Anne Springman who also was interested to see how the girls got along. We both noticed how they were genuinely interested in one another's daily life; and she remarked that the Annie girls "obviously have great respect for girls their age."

## The Scrapbook Fills

"Strut Miss Susie" was a favorite game in Rochester when girls from Girl Scouts of Genesee Valley visited the Annie troop, accompanied by their leader and assistant leader, Barbara Walker and Kathy Walker. This time, the circle of girls chatted around the hotel's grand piano that shortly before had been the scene of some vocal lessons for the cast.

Since the girls in Junior Girl Scout Troop 1055 were from the rural community of Caledonia, a lot of the talk was about farm life. Ten-year-old Arlene Kulis, who plays Tessie and is known for her love of horses, was delighted to find that some of her sister Girl Scouts had horses of their own. When the meeting ended, the troops parted—but only briefly. The Caledonia girls were en route to the Annie matinee, and the Annie troop had to change from Girl Scout sweatshirts to orphan costumes to entertain them.

At this writing, Alison's adventure as Pepper is almost ended. After a few more cities she'll be home, and all this will be an exciting memory. As I look over her scrapbook, I notice that among the Annie photos and show business memorabilia are pages of Girl Scout keepsakes she has collected. And beneath a personal letter from Debbie Hart in Boston, she has drawn a heart and written, "Our Annie troop is special to all us orphans."

—Jennifer Ian Grambs

Since Annie (or even before Annie), a number of former Annies and Orphans from Broadway, the National Tours, and the Movie have sung on records of their own or as parts of groups. Below is a list of those known to the staff of AP; if you know of any we missed, let us know so that we may update this list.

KRISTI COOMBS	Single - GP Records, 1979 "I'd Like To See The Easter Bunny Disco"
KRISTI COOMBS	Single - Gold Records, 1979 "I Wanna Take A Peek At Santa" b/w "Mommy's Getting A New Baby For Christmas"
HALLY McGEHEAN	Single - Eighties Records, 1980 "Let Me Be Annie for Christmas"
AILEEN QUINN	Album - Columbia Records, 1982 <u>Bobby's Girl</u>
ANDREA McARDLE	Album - Geffen Records, 1984 <u>Jerry's Girls</u> Original Cast
KRISTI COOMBS and ERIN SULLIVAN	12-inch Single (and Video) - Kryptonite Records, 1985 "Kid Stuff" by the Krypt-a-Kids group



From left, Kia Goodwin, Vicky Lynn Todd, Stephanie Winters, Kim Davis, Laura Kerr, Tammy Kauffman, Rachael Antill, Danyle Heffernan (Louanne was Annie in this 1st National production in Toronto in 1981)



Kia Goodwin, Caryn Lyn Jones  
The House in the Woods, 1986

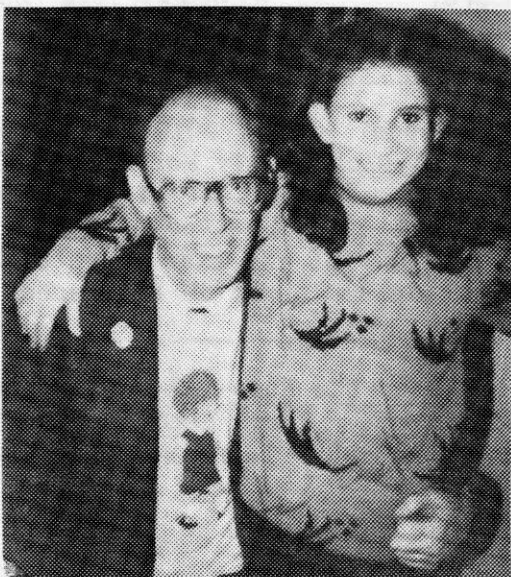




From left, Dana Dawson, Carol-Ann Planté,  
Cristina Conomos - Peter Sklar's  
Professional Children's Showcase



From left, Monica Miller, Susan Lipton, Amy  
Beth Bernstein - Young People's Showcase



Jon and Janna Robinson (Tessie)  
1986 National Tour, Boston



Tricia and Leslie Castay (Grace)  
1986 National Tour, Boston



Patricia Ann Patts  
2nd National, 1978



Top row from left: Kristi Coombs, Chris Noel  
Cantera, Dana Dewes, Arlene Kulis; bottom row  
from left, Loren Kaufman, Sherri Leidy



Renee Shields as Annie  
Miami, Florida, 1985

Submitted by Renee Shields

**ALYSSA JANE  
MILANO**



(Kate)

Eight-years-old, Alyssa is making her theatrical debut. Her father, once a professional musician, works with her vocally and she has inherited her dancing abilities from her mother who is involved in producing shows for discotheques. A resident of Staten Island, NY, she attends P.S. #32.

2nd National, 1981  
with Kristi Coombs

**April  
Lerman**



(Tessie)

A writer in her spare time, she recently completed an original musical. In children's theatre she has appeared in *The Wizard of Oz*, *Three Tales At a Time* and *Who Is Next*, a special presentation by the N.Y. Shakespeare Festival.

1st National, 1979  
with Mary K. Lombardi

**Molly  
Ringwald**



(Kate)

She began her professional career singing for the Sacramento Traditional Jazz Society. At the age of six, she recorded, with her father's Fulton St. Jazz Band, her own LP, entitled *I Wanna Be Loved By You*. She has appeared on *The New Mickey Mouse Club* and on TV in her hometown of Sacramento.

2nd National, 1979  
with Patricia Ann Patts

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FAN CLUBS: The Andrea McArdle Fan Club (Christopher White, 1010 Elm Street, St. Charles, IL 60174) and the Allison Smith Fan Club (Polly Mortensen, 6751 Meade Street, Hollywood, FL 33024) continue to be very active. I don't know about the Friends of Danielle Brisebois Fan Club; I have received nothing from them in well over a year. FOCUS (mentioned on page 8 of the last issue of AP) unfortunately never really got off the ground and is no longer in existence.

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Rankings of the 1985-1986 TV season are out: Who's the Boss (Alyssa Milano), Prime-Time Series #10; Kate and Allie (Allison Smith), Prime-Time Series #13; 227 (Kia Goodwin) Prime-Time Series #18. And the Annie movie on NBC, Movie #6.

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Jon Merrill

Annie People

Box 431

Cedar Knolls, NJ 07927

**Annie**  
A New Musical