

Annie People



ember



National Association
Of Fan Clubs

The Newsletter for Annie Fans

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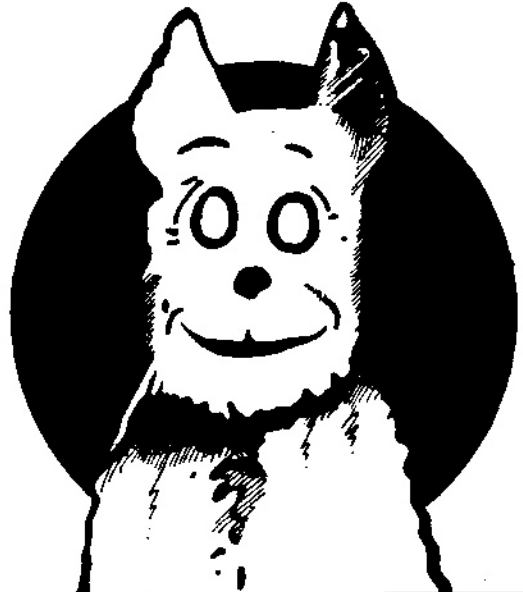
Leapin' Lizards! It's our 5th birthday! It seems hard to believe that half a decade has passed since that day back in January of 1983 when we sent a four-page AP to about twenty people, having no idea at the time how our readership would grow over the years. We want to thank all our readers, both old and new, whose enthusiasm and encouragement these many years have enabled us to keep Annie fandom going, and we are enclosing a special gift for you in this issue.

We have decided to devote this special Annie-versary issue to the event that kind of got us going. "2,377," as we have always called it, was of course a sad ending to the triumphant almost-six-year run of the Broadway show, but, because it was simultaneous with the time when the AP editors first met, for us it was a beginning as well. We are featuring in this issue many of the clippings that appeared in our local newspapers during the week of Annie's closing on January 2, 1983. As you will see, this Broadway closing was no ordinary closing. But then, as all of us Annie People know, Annie was no ordinary show.

At the stage door at the Uris Theatre after the final curtain, a group of us were gathered there, complete with buttons, scrapbooks, photos, and the like, and a photographer from the Times asked us why the get-ups and all the memorabilia. Tricia and I, and Larry Skrdla and Lynne Gerber, replied, "We're, we're, uh..ANNIE PEOPLE!" And so, the phrase was born that would appropriately become the title of the Annie fan newsletter.

"2,377" was more than the final showing of Annie on Broadway. "2,377" was also a reunion of scores of cast members and a coming together of countless fans to celebrate with its creators not so much Annie's conclusion, but its amazing life. There may likely never be a day like that one ever again in the history of Broadway.

And so, to "2,377," five years ago this month, we dedicate our half-decade Annie-versary issue of Annie People.



Why Is This Dog Smiling?
It's AP's 5th Birthday!

MIKE NICHOLS presents
Annie
The Broadway Musical

★ Annie Stars Since Annie ... ★

Beginning in February, after Kate And Allie goes on hiatus for the season, **ALLISON SMITH** will begin recording her first album. There has been a lot of positive feedback to CBS about Allison's performance on the January 11th episode of Kate And Allie, on which she sang "Goodbye To You." Inquiries from fans of the show as to whether a record by Allison of that song is available have also come in to the network. However, since the album will be composed of newly written and recorded material, that song will not be on it ("Goodbye To You" was recorded by Scandal featuring Patty Smyth and hit #65 in the U.S. in December 1982). Lots of luck in the studio, Allison!...**EDWIN BORDO**, Annie's Broadway Drake from Goodspeed to "2,377," writes, "This month I'll be in Sally in New York with the New Amsterdam Theatre Company. **SANDY**, yes, the Sandy, will also be in it. Later this year you can see me in Masquerade, an MGM film with Rob Lowe and Meg Tilly"....**ALYSSA MILANO** recently starred in the NBC-TV movie Crash Course with Brian Bloom and Tina Yothers....**RENEE SHIELDS** cut a record for a toy company; it is called "Puddin's And Pals" and will come with a stuffed animal and a kids' story book. The whole package will be in toy stores this winter or spring....**ROXANNE DUNDISH** and **SHERRY DUNDISH**, Broadway Annie's twin Orphans, performed in the Bucks County (PA) Playhouse's production of 42nd Street.... Watch for **MOLLY RINGWALD's** new movie For Keeps in your area, which opened to good reviews in January....**MONICA GRADISCHEK** and **KATIE LUDWIG** from last year's Annie in Pittsburgh are now performing in an eight-girl group called The Broadway Babies....**STEPHANIE WINTERS** was recently in an Afterschool Special on ABC called Terrible Things My Mother Called Me.... Long-time AP reader **BIRGITTA VICTORSON**, who played Annie last year in upstate New York, recently was in Cinderella and will soon be in Charlie And The Chocolate Factory.... **TANI TAYLOR POWERS** sang at the Little Princess Holiday Pageant in Queens, New York in December. **MELISSA KALFA** was a hostess, and AP's Jon was on the panel of judges with Melissa's brother, pop singer Nolan Thomas.... **AMANDA STEFIK** is in the Niagara Falls (NY) Experience Players and will tour around New York state this summer.... **JANNA ROBINSON** played in Clare Booth Luce's The Women in Rochester, NY.... Birthdays: **TONI ANN GISONDI**, 13 on Jan. 1; **NICOLE ANTHONY**, 15 on Jan. 1, **ALYSON KIRK**, 18 on Jan. 14, **ROSANNE SORRENTINO**, 20 on Jan. 15; **DANA MICHELLE MATLES**, 16 on Jan. 21; **SYDNEY WEEKS**, 17 on Jan. 22; **MARISA MORELL**, 18 on Jan. 25, **LOUANNE**, 18 on Jan. 26, **JANNA ROBINSON**, 13 on Feb. 4, **MOLLY BETH TOTTEN**, 14 on Feb. 4; **APRIL LERMAN**, 19 on Feb. 6, **MOLLY RINGWALD**, 20 on Feb. 14; **ERIN DALY**, 12 on Feb. 15; **STEPHANIE VINE**, 16 on Feb. 23; **JENNINE BABO**, 17 on Feb. 25.

* * * * *

A lot has been going on with **DEBBIE GIBSON** lately: The biggest news is that her first release, the 12" version of "Only In My Dreams" came in as the #1 top selling dance record for the year 1987 on Billboard's annual Top 50 12" Singles Chart!! Congratulations, Debbie! The 45 RPM record of the song was #26 for the year on the 1987 Pop Singles Chart, and Debbie herself was the #5 top female pop singles artist for the year. Debbie's Out Of The Blue album has entered the national Top 15 and the title cut has just been released as her follow-up to "Shake Your Love," which spent two weeks at #1 in the nation on the dance chart and hit #4 on the pop chart. Debbie has been seen a lot on TV lately, with appearances on NBC's Live At Five and Main Street, another week on Hollywood Squares on ABC; and she was host of the Rock Countdown video show on Nickelodeon on Christmas Day. Debbie is presently in Europe doing some TV and radio promos to introduce herself and her sound to the overseas market, but she will be back in the U.S. next month. On New Year's Eve Debbie performed live with her new band at the 4D disco in New York, and part of her performance was broadcast live over New York's dance radio station. A fan club for Debbie is in the works; we will publish the address in AP when we receive more information about it.

CALENDAR OF ANNIE-VERSARIES

1988

JANUARY

- 2 The Broadway show closed at the Uris Theatre after 2,377 performances, 1983
- 3 The 1986 National Tour opened in Rochester, 1986
- 5 Sandy's first appearance in the comic strip, 1925
- 14 Broadway's fifth Annie, ALYSON KIRK, will be 18
- 14 Announcement was made that Aileen Quinn would be the movie's Annie, 1981
- 15 The 3rd National's first Annie, ROSANNE SORRENTINO, will be 20
- 20 Little Orphan Annie comic strip creator HAROLD GRAY was born, 1894
- 22 Rehearsals for the Broadway show began, 1977
- 25 Annie in the 2nd National, MARISA MORELL, will be 18
- 26 Annie in the 2nd National and the 1st National, LOUANNE, will be 18
- 29 Allison Smith became Broadway's fourth Annie, 1980

FEBRUARY

- 7 The Broadway show's 2,000th performance, 1982
- 28 Shelley Bruce became Broadway's second Annie, 1978

MARCH

- 1 Annie Broadway preview opened at the Kennedy Center in Washington, 1977
- 6 Sarah Jessica Parker became Broadway's third Annie, 1979
- 23 The 1st National Tour opened in Toronto, 1978
- 25 Broadway's third Annie, SARAH JESSICA PARKER, will be 23

APRIL

- 11 The 1984 National Tour's Annie, LISA LYNNE, will be 15
- 21 The Broadway show opened at the Alvin Theatre, 1977
- 21 Andrea McArdle became Broadway's first Annie, 1977

MAY

- 3 The London show opened at the Victoria Palace Theatre, 1978
- 5 Broadway's second Annie, SHELLEY BRUCE, will be 23
- 9 Harold Gray died at age 74, 1968
- 19 Bill Berloni found Sandy in the pound in Connecticut, 1976
- 21 The movie premiered in New York, Los Angeles, and Toronto, 1982

JUNE

- 5 Annie won 7 Tony Awards including Best Musical, 1977
- 7 Annie's composer, CHARLES STROUSE, will be 60
- 22 The 2nd National Tour opened in San Francisco, 1978
- 28 The movie's Annie, ALLEEN QUINN, will be 17

JULY

- 20 Annie set designer, Oscar-nominee Dale Hennesy, died during filming, 1981
- 22 Allison Smith's 1,000th performance on Broadway, 1982
- 24 The 1984 National Tour opened in Atlanta, 1984
- 27 The 1986 National Tour's Annie, SARAH BETHANY REYNOLDS, will be 15
- 31 The 2nd National's first Annie, PATRICIA ANN PATTS, will be 21

AUGUST

- 5 Harold Gray's Little Orphan Annie comic strip began, 1924
- 5 The movie's director JOHN HUSTON was born, 1906
- 10 Annie, starring Kristen Vigard, opened at the Goodspeed Opera House, 1976
- 14 Annie's writer, THOMAS MEEHAN, will be 59
- 28 John Huston died at age 81, 1987

SEPTEMBER

- 4 Principal filming of the movie ended, 1981
- 8 The 4th National's first Annie, MOLLIE HALL, will be 18
- 8 Alyson Kirk became Broadway's fifth Annie, 1982
- 11 The 4th National Tour opened in West Point, 1981
- 12 The Broadway show's 1,000th performance, 1979
- 27 Annie meets "Daddy" Warbucks in the comic strip, 1924

OCTOBER

- 3 The 3rd National Tour opened in Dallas, 1979
- 18 Ann Marie Mudge Warbucks was born, 1922 (movie version)
- 27 The comic strip was dropped from the Chicago Tribune, 1925
- 28 The comic strip was reinstated in the Chicago Tribune, 1925
- 28 Ann Elizabeth Mudge Bennett Warbucks was born, 1922 (play version)
- 29 Announcement was made that the Broadway show would be closing, 1982

NOVEMBER

- 2 Little Orphan Annie Sunday comic strip began, 1924
- 5 Broadway's first Annie, ANDREA McARDLE, will be 25
- 19 BILL BERLONI shares his birthday with Broadway's SANDY, who will be 14
- 24 Annie's lyricist and director, MARTIN CHARNIN, will be 54
- 30 The second Little Orphan Annie movie, starring Ann Gillis, premiered, 1938

DECEMBER

- 3 Leonard Starr's Annie comic strip began, 1979
- 9 Broadway's fourth Annie, ALLISON SMITH, will be 19
- 24 The first Little Orphan Annie movie, starring Mitzi Green, premiered, 1932
- 27 Annie in the 2nd National, KRISTI COOMBS, will be 17
- 31 Annie was left on the Orphanage steps, 1922



Alyson Kirk, the last of the 'Annies', helps ring down the curtain on the hit show today

No tomorrow for 'Annie' on Broadway

NEW YORK (AP)—One dog played Sandy—the mutt didn't grow—but five girls have starred on Broadway as "Annie," that poor, plucky little orphan of the Depression.

This afternoon, "Annie" closes at the Uris Theater after 2,377 performances, making it the seventh longest-running musical on Broadway.

"It's a terrible day for everybody, a terrible, terrible day," said Martin Charnin, director of "Annie" and lyricist with composer Charles Strouse of "Tomorrow" and its other songs. "My sense of loss is so vast."

"Loss" may be a poor choice of words. "Annie" grossed \$225 million. "There never has been a show that made as much money or probably ever be one that will make as much money as 'Annie,'" Charnin said.

"But that is not the record anybody wanted to set. It was the length of time on the boards. That's the one you always have your heart set on and when it becomes a possibility, you covet it even more.

"We passed 'Abie's Irish Rose,' 'Man of La Mancha' and 'Oklahoma!' in October and November," he continued. "We'll wind up

seventh, behind 'Grease,' 'Fiddler on the Roof,' 'A Chorus Line,' 'Hello, Dolly!,' 'My Fair Lady' and 'Oh! Calcutta!'"

The five Annies have been Andrea McArdle, Shelley Bruce, Sarah Jessica Parker, Allison Smith and the present Alyson Kirk.

Forty-two little girls have played the rambunctious pack of orphans: seven Kates, including Shelley Bruce; four Mollys; six Tes-sies; five Duffys; eight Julys, including Sarah Jessica Parker; five Peppers, and seven swing orphans—the understudy for all the orphan roles—including Aileen Quinn, who was Annie in the movie.

Dorothy Loudon, Alice Ghostley, Dolores Wilson, Betty Hutton, Marcia Lewis and June Havoc have played mean Miss Hannigan, the harridan of the orphanage.

Reid Shelton, John Schuck and Harve Presnell have played Daddy Warbucks. Shelton was on Broadway for the first 2½ years after "Annie" opened Apr. 21, 1977, and toured in the part for another 2½ years.

Shelton also was in the original production at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, Conn., where Mike Nichols and Lewis Allen saw it and decided to produce it. "We'd auditioned it for every producer in the Theatrical Index and were turned down by everybody," Charnin recalled.

Charnin said the movie price for "Annie" was the biggest in the history of the American theater, \$9.5 million. "And we had the most ancillary rights," he said. "There are no Hamlet dolls."

The show's charms were its simple good will and spirit, Charnin said. "I think you felt 1,000 times better coming out of 'Annie' than you felt going in," he said. "You were certainly full of hope and optimism. You really felt fine about your fellow man and you believed, even though you knew it was not the case, in the intrinsic concept of good triumphing over evil."

"Annie" had to close, Charnin said, because "we were losing \$30,000 to \$50,000 a week last fall."

"In the last couple of years of the run of a Broadway show, you count on the out-of-town visitors who come to New York and go see Broadway shows," he explained. "Now they've already seen 'Annie' in Memphis and Peoria.

"We had four national companies at the same time, some of them running two or three or four years. In the summer of 1980, we were making \$1 million a week, which is historically unsurpassed.

"If I had it to do over, I would have sent out only two national companies."

The movie "Annie" hurt the Broadway "Annie," too. "The movie may have been a flop but when it went into 1,000 theaters at the same time, we got clobbered," Charnin said.

"A movie ticket is \$5. It costs you \$35 to go to the theater. We're a family entertainment and always have been. More likely than not, you're not taking a date. You're taking your three kids—or the three kids of the woman you're seeing."

For now, there is the pain of reading late-arriving Christmas cards from "Annie" cast members with messages like, "You've given me the best five years of my life; let's do it again."

"I'm feeling awful. Nobody has any idea," said Charnin. "It's just so difficult to talk about 'Annie' in the past tense."

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The New York Times / Chester Higgins Jr.

Every Playbill at "2,377" contained one of these - an invitation to come remember Annie with its casts and creators.

This picture marking Annie's closing → appeared on Page 1 of the Times; the only time any Broadway show's closing has ever been so honored.

After the curtain fell on yesterday's closing performance of "Annie," alumnae of the title role took bows with the play's only Sandy. They are Alyson Kirk, right, latest Annie, and Allison Smith. In back are, from left, Sarah Jessica Parker, Andrea McArdle, the first Annie, and Shelley Bruce. It was the 2,377th performance since the show opened on April 21, 1977. Page C12.

Broadway orphans >

It's a hard-knocks life, all right. When *Annie* stopped paying the rent, Broadway closed its seventh longest-running musical after 2,377 performances. As the most recent Annie, Alyson Kirk, hung up her mop-top, she was joined by her four predecessors for a final curtain call. Backstage, Alyson (left), 13 this week, shared a tearful moment with former stars Shelley Bruce (center), 17, who left the show in 1979, and Allison Smith, 13, the longest-running Annie. But cheer up, girls; there's always a *Tomorrow*. An *Annie* sequel is already in the works.



© People

No more tomorrows for 'Annie'

By PATRICIA O'HAIRE

'Annie' doesn't live here anymore. Sob!

The popular musical, based on the comic strip "Little Orphan Annie," had been adopted by Broadway audiences since it opened April 21, 1977. But yesterday afternoon, after its 2,377th performance, it closed with a bang at the Uris Theater.

Alyson Kirk (who played Annie), Harve Presnell (who played her wealthy patron, Oliver Warbucks) and Sandy (her dog) were joined onstage after the final performance by casts, current and former, and crew.

THERE MUST have been about 200 people onstage, and they sang the show's theme, "Tomorrow," loudly and lustily enough to be heard in London, where the musical has just reopened after touring the English countryside.

"Annie" was a happy show for kids and grownups alike, and the house was full of kids and grownups alike for the sold-out matinee yesterday. A number of young voices in the audience frequently joined in on the choruses of some numbers.

The curtain for the final performance was to rise at 3 p.m., but by 2 the lobby was full of parents and grandparents shepherding a lot of people less than 3 feet tall.

The noise level was high, both in pitch and volume, and those who could read were reciting the words of a prominent sign to those who couldn't. The sign said: "Children who create a disturbance in the theater while the performance is going on will be asked to leave."

EVERYONE MUST have been impressed because the noise level dropped considerably once the audience was allowed inside.

When the show ended at 5:35 p.m., Martin Charnin, its director and lyricist, came out to rattle off a few facts about the show, which had the seventh-longest run in Broadway history.

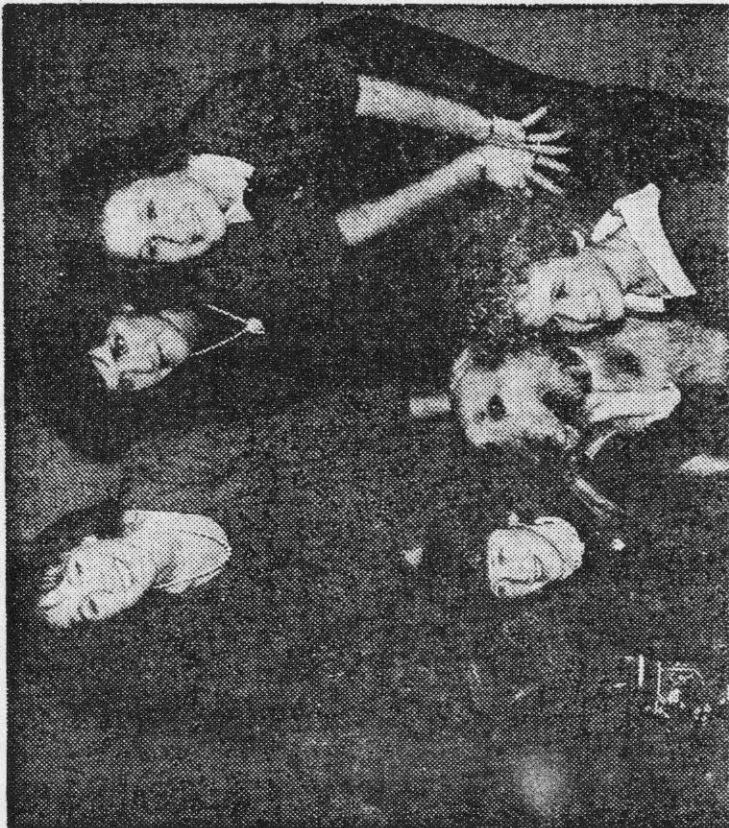
It went through five different red-haired Annies (Andrea McArdle, Shelley Bruce, Sarah Jessica Parker and Allison Smith before Alyson), three very bald Daddy Warbucks (Reid Shelton and John Schuck before Presnell), and a number of mean Miss Hannigans (Dorothy Loudon, Alice Ghostley, Dolores Wilson, Betty Hutton, Marcia Lewis and now June Havoc). Sandy was the only star never replaced.

THE MUSICAL, with book by Thomas Meehan and music by Charles Strouse, won seven Tony Awards, a New York Drama Critics' Best Musical Award, seven Drama Desk Awards, five Outer Critics' Circle Awards, a Theater World Award, a Grammy for its cast album and Cue Magazine's Golden Apple Award.

"Annie" has a scene in the White House and both the Carter and Reagan administrations asked for the play to be performed there. During its nearly six years of life, Charnin said, it was translated into 21 languages, was performed by 27 foreign companies, and was seen by 20 million people.

Leapin' lizards! as Annie might say.

By grossing more than \$200 million, the show has also made wealthy



CHARLES RUPPMANN DAILY NEWS

Alyson Kirk (lower r.), who was the final 'Annie,' and Sandy are joined onstage by former 'Annies' (from top l.) Sarah Jessica Parker, Andrea McArdle, Shelley Bruce and Allison Smith.

men of Charnin, Meehan, Strouse, Drake, to "close the house." Drake (Edwin Bordo) turned off the lights of the Christmas tree and the stage lights, but the audience stayed. And on the actual profit hasn't been reached yet, but it is expected to be somewhere around \$20 million, a mighty pretty figure to be around.

AND NOW "ANNIE" is no more on Broadway. She ended with Charnin's command to Warbucks' butler.



CHARLES RUPPMANN DAILY NEWS

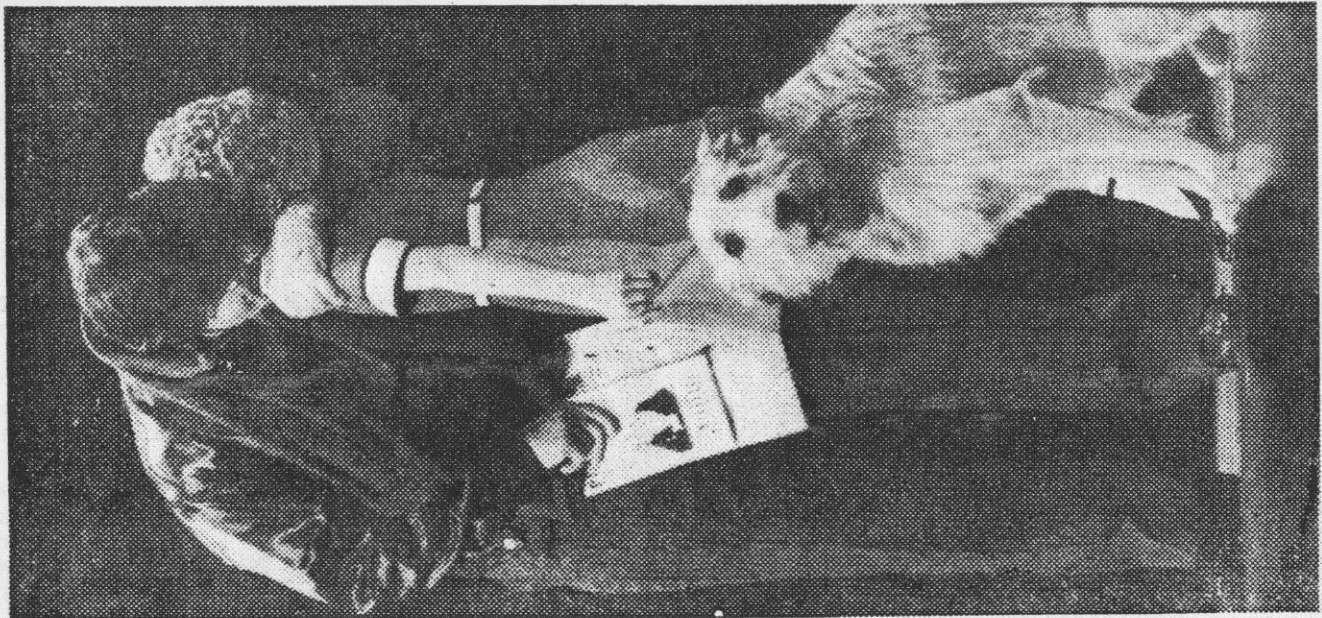
Harve Presnell (Daddy Warbucks), Alyson and June Havoc (Miss Hannigan) bring the audience to its feet for the last time.

Leapin' Lizards, Annie bows out

Annie, the little girl who graced the pages of The Daily News for decades and the Broadway boards for several years, took her final bows at the Uris Theater yesterday. The tot with the mop of curls and a ton of troubles (not the least of which was a lack of pupils in her eyes), performed yesterday in front of her four predecessors. For the umpteenth time, there was a lump in Annie's throat, this time from saying goodbye.



Original Warbucks Reid Shelton, Charnin, Dorothy Loudon—whose Hannigan won her a Tony—and Andrea McArdle, the original Annie, tell 'em all to break a leg.



The kiss-off! Director Martin Chamin gives Alyson Kirk a hug. Sandy looks like a lost dog.

Broadway

'Annie's' closing Jan. 2 strikes an emotional note.

I FEEL terrible," Martin Charnin, the director and lyricist said. "I have never felt worse in my entire life."
"I feel like a little lost soul," added Lewis Allen, the producer.

What is making these men so unhappy is the fact that their show "Annie," which has meant so much financially and emotionally to the people who wrote it and produced it, will close Jan. 2.

"We're just not doing enough business," said Mr. Allen, who produced "Annie" with Mike Nichols, James M. Nederlander and Roger L. Stevens. He blames the recent film version for bringing the Broadway show to a close. "The motion picture is the major element in knocking us down. It didn't hurt us at first. In fact, all the publicity and advertising helped us. But the movie hurt us once it permeated the country."

Mr. Charnin, who came up with the idea for "Annie" 10 years ago, when he saw a collection of "Little Orphan Annie" comic strips in a bookstore, has another explanation:

"The four road companies hurt us more than anything. They ate up our audience. Tourists, who ordinarily keep a show going in its later years, have already seen it."

"Annie" has a book by Thomas Meehan, music by Charles Strouse and lyrics by Mr. Charnin, who also directed it. Mr. Meehan and Mr. Strouse are on record as having said, "Ugh!" when Mr. Charnin asked them to join him on "Annie." And Mr. Charnin is on record as having told his skeptical collaborators, "Fellows, I'm telling you, it's going to work."

"Annie" made its first appearance on stage, to less than enthusiastic reviews, at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, Conn., in the summer of 1976. After some revisions and recasting — and some 11th-hour fund-raising by Sam Cohn, Mr. Nichols's agent — the show began a Broadway tryout at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington the following winter. It opened on Broadway at the Alvin on April 21, 1977. "Annie" is now playing at the Uris. By the time it closes, it will have given 2,377 performances, making it the seventh-longest-running musical in Broadway history.

Despite their sadness, the creators and producers are not without consolation. The musical has grossed \$200 million and has generated nearly \$18 million in profits. There will be additional profits when the stock and amateur rights are released. And there will be a sequel on Broadway next season, "Annie, Part II."

"You can't be greedy," said Mr. Charnin, who was in debt before "Annie" opened. "Everybody has already made enough money off it to last the rest of their natural lives."

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Tricia's ticket stub for "2,377"

NEWSWEEK/JANUARY 17, 1983

The sun will not come up tomorrow—at least not in "Annie," which finally closed after 2,377 performances on Broadway.



Adam Scull—RangeFinders

Annie's all: No more tomorrows

All the old Annies were there—the original, **Andrea McArdle**, who's now 19, plus **Allison Smith**, 13, **Sarah Jessica Parker**, 17, and **Shelley Bruce**, 17. "The closing party was fun," said **Alyson Kirk**, 12, the last Annie, "but we shouldn't have been celebrating." The producers, at least, were happy: "Annie" has grossed \$200 million. And Sandy, after almost six years onstage, can now retire to a nice farm he recently purchased in New Jersey. It's a hard-knock life no more.

This is a "twofer" - a coupon that gets theatergoers two seats for the price of one