

# Annie People

A Newsletter for Annie Fans

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Artwork by Tricia Trozzi

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Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas, Annie People! This is our last issue for the year 1983, and we'd like to thank you all for your support over the past year. Next year looks like an exciting one ahead for us Annie People, with two Annie sequels, the play and the movie, in the works. The big news lately is that Shelley Bruce's book, Tomorrow Is Today, is out. (See p. 6)

Extra copies of the Paper Doll are available free for the asking. Just send a legal size self-addressed stamped envelope to Annie People, and we'll send it right out. (Tricia: "No, it is not traced; I do all my art freehand!")

Tricia was rather surprised last month when a neighbor appeared on her doorstep with none other than Robert Fitch, Broadway's original Rooster, who had heard about Tricia's colossal Annie room. As he looked around at the 400+ items, he said that he had no idea there were that many Annie things! Mr. Fitch filled her in with many fascinating stories about Annie's pre-Broadway days at the Goodspeed Opera House. It seems that it was Mr. Fitch himself who came up with the idea to have Rooster be such a menacing character in the play.

BROADWAY'S ORIGINAL

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Annie gained several new fans when I took my Girl Scout troop to see Annie on the stage at Neil's New Yorker dinner theater toward the end of its five-month run. My troop enjoyed Jenice Gasior singing "Tomorrow" the best and liked watching the dog, who during his long run finally learned not to bark all the way through the song as he had done at first.

This month's birthday dog is none other than Broadway's (and Goodspeed's) Sandy, who celebrates his birthday the same day as his owner and trainer, Bill Berloni. Sandy will be 9 years old on November 19.



I just wrote to say I LOVE Annie People. It's a dream come true for me. It's wonderful to find other people who love Annie as much as I do. I have been collecting Annie things for about 6 years now...I have over 100 items with Annie on them.

Pam Powers  
Shepherdsville, KY

I'd like to send much love to all the wonderful Orphan mothers I met in the various companies, some of whom will be happy to hear that here's one mother that will be working too. I'll be doing the first show of the season at the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, where I'll be playing Lisette in A Flea in Her Ear through November 20.

Penny Vine  
New Hope, PA

...The people here in Salt Lake don't "get" some of the jokes in Annie; for example: "Right, I'm lucky. Just think--New Jersey." Nobody in Salt Lake laughs at that. So here they changed it to: "...Just think, a pig farm." Also, when Warbucks says, "...after New York, every place else is Bridgeport!" Only a few people laugh here in Salt Lake, but it has been left the same...

Cynthia Moser  
Salt Lake City, UT

...I especially enjoy reading Annie People when there is an article mentioning familiar names from my company, the 4th National. I enjoyed playing the role of Molly again this summer at the Pocono (PA) Playhouse. It was as if I had never left...Hi to the original 4th National Orphans: Kimberly Mucci, Mollie Hall, Kim Davis, Theresa Diane, Laura Nyznyk, Jennifer Gottesman, and Heather Sisen. We have lots of special memories from our year's tour in Annie. Happy Thanksgiving, 4th National Company!

Dee Hilligoss  
(Molly, 4th National  
Indianapolis, IN

...I think that Annie People is a good idea for Andrea McArdle fans as well as Annie fans, since that's where she became famous. I also think it's a good idea because it enables people to keep up with a good show even though it no longer plays on Broadway...

Kathy Weinberger  
Philadelphia, PA

...I saw a copy of your Annie newsletter and I loved it! I was wondering if you could send them to me. I read through most of it, and I know all the kids you talked about...I closed in the show on Broadway, January 2, 1983...

Julie Stevens  
(Tessie, 3rd National)  
(Pepper, Broadway)  
Philadelphia, PA

# Collector's Corner

PLAYBILL  
The Movie of Tomorrow  
Winnie  
by Tricia Trozzi

In the realm of Annie movie collectibles, one thing stands out quite literally--the videocassette standee. This cardboard cut-out of Annie and Sandy is like the ones seen in theaters during the movie's first run in 1982, except that the base says, "ANNIE/The Movie of 'Tomorrow'/NOW AVAILABLE ON VIDEOCASSETTE." Video stores in malls often had the standee displayed in front of the store, where Annie would get her head punched vigorously by rude shoppers (my comment to them--"you want a knuckle sandwich?"). I was able to purchase a mint in-the-box standee for an outrageous amount of money from a store that ordered an extra standee just for the purpose of selling it. But I know of another collector, namely Julie Shaflucas, who was able to get the store's display model, mangled head and all, by using the "persistent nagging" method.

The pose of the figures of Annie and Sandy is the same as the movie poster ads and newspaper ads--almost. In the print ads, Annie's legs are together and both socks are rolled down. On the standee, however, her legs are slightly apart, the rear foot a little higher trying for a 3-D effect, and the left sock is pulled all the way up. The rest of the figure appears to be identical, so I do not think that it is a case of two different pictures. So, will the real photo of Aileen Quinn please stand up? I think the standee version is the true picture because the pose (fists on hips, 3/4 view) would cause the body to be leaning slightly and have the feet apart for balance. The print ads like the poster that was in theaters have the body vertical and the legs together, which looks less natural than the standee pose. Also, the movie poster looks to me like it has been airbrushed to remove imperfections on the face and legs (who are they trying to kid--we all know Aileen is perfect!!) and the rolled-down sock appears to have been doctored. It's a good thing the photo of Sandy is okay, or else I'd be scrutinizing pictures forever!



The videocassette standee is for Annie-otics who like their pictures of Aileen life-size, and who have lots of room; the standee is almost five and a half feet tall and almost four feet wide and one foot deep at the base. Keep your eyes open for a group of nasty people taking turns at smacking a large piece of cardboard in a mall, or maybe you can get a dealer to order one for you; that's how Jon acquired his standee. I will be reporting on some other unusual pieces of Annieness in future issues; let me know about anything out there that you'd like to see described in this column.

## AILEEN ON BROADWAY

AILEEN QUINN, TIMOTHY JECKO, R. MARTIN KLEIN, LARRY ROSS, LARRY ROSS, DONNA THOMASON, HENRIETTA VALOR, RICHARD WALKER.

### UNDERSTUDIES

Annie — TIFFANY BLAKE; Warbucks — RAYMOND THORNE; FDR — ROY MEACHUM; Miss Hannigan — HENRIETTA VALOR; Grace — DONNA THOMASON; Pepper, Duffy, July, Tessie & Kate — AILEEN QUINN; Molly — TARA KENNEDY; Rooster — LARRY ROSS; Lily — JANE ROBERTSON; Drake — TIMOTHY JECKO; Bert Healy — RICHARD WALKER; Sandy — O'MALLEY; Ensemble — DON BONNELL & JANE ROBERTSON; Alternate — ROY MEACHUM

Thanks to Polly Mortensen of Hollywood, Florida, for sending a 1980 Broadway Playbill that shows Aileen's name listed as the Swing Orphan, a post she held for a few months up until the time she was picked for the movie. Aileen performed on stage as an Orphan 67 times.

# ★ Annie Stars Since Annie ... ★

Congratulations to KRISTI COOMBS, who was recently picked to be in the upcoming Broadway show Marilyn. 11-year-old Kristi, who was Molly in 1st National and Annie in 2nd National, and was Duffy on tour this year, will play Marilyn Monroe as a child in the new musical based on the life of the legendary late movie star. The show is due to open on Broadway late in November...STEPHANIE VINE, Broadway's last Tessie, is now starring as Annie at the Bucks County Playhouse with WILLIAM ("Cannon") CONRAD as "Daddy" Warbucks. Stephanie's older sister, LIZ LARSEN, who played A Star To Be in 3rd National, is now starring as Sally Bowles in a dinner theater run of Cabaret in Elmsford, NY. Earlier this summer Liz played Lily in Annie at that same theater with former Broadway cast members CAROLINE DALY as Pepper and MICHAEL CALKINS as Rooster. Stephanie has finished an after-school special for ABC called How to Be A Perfect Person in Just Three Days, which also has in its cast SONIA BAILEY, who was the Swing Orphan on Broadway just after Aileen and before Stephanie... Watch for other former Annies and Orphans on television also: ALLISON SMITH will be seen in an ABC-TV movie called Twist some time in the next few months; ROBIN IGNICO continues her recurring role as Andrea on Trapper John, M.D.; Broadway's original Molly, DANIELLE BRISEBOIS, will be on several episodes of Knots Landing on CBS in the near future; and MARTHA BYRNE, a former Broadway July, is currently being seen on HBO starring in Anna to the Infinite Power... Critics have already predicted that ALBERT FINNEY might land an Oscar nomination for his starring role in The Dresser. Good luck, Albert; that'd make up for the nomination they should have given you last year for you-know-what... THERESA DIANE, who played Tessie in 4th National, is currently a standby in the Broadway production of Brighton Beach Memoirs...Formerly Annie in 3rd National, BRIDGET WALSH again took the title role in a run of Annie this past summer in her native New Hampshire...COLLEEN SIMON, Duffy in 3rd National, was recently in the opera Tosca in Washington, DC...JULIE STEVENS, Broadway's last Pepper, has been very active doing commercials and TV telethons, and she was in Woody Allen's last two movies...3rd National's last Annie, BECKY SNYDER, is currently appearing as Annie at the Candlelight Dinner Theatre in Summit, IL ...RAY STARK's film sequel to Annie, which will again star AILEEN QUINN, will begin production in February for an anticipated Christmas 1984 release. It will be directed by Jan Egleson and is being billed as "an action-adventure story with music"...Birthday wishes: ALLISON SMITH, 14 on December 9; LUCIE STEWART, 12 on December 14; TONI ANN GISONDI, 9 on January 1; ALYSON KIRK, 14 on January 14; ROSANNE SORRENTINO, 16 on January 15.

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## UPDATE - Annie Fan Club

If you have not already done so, be sure to write to Lee Costello, Annie Fan Club, 850 7th Avenue, Suite 803, New York, NY 10019 (and send a SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE!) to get on the mailing list for the new Annie Fan Club that she and Shelley Bruce are forming. I spoke with Shelley about it when she was performing at our local United Way campaign fair, and she said that for now, a mailing list is being compiled of anyone interested, and further information will be sent out to everyone when things get going. By the middle of next year things ought to be off and rolling, so be sure to get your name on the list. This is a very worthwhile project and will ensure that Annie will be around for a long, long time, but it needs the support of every Annie Person!

Update on JENNINE BABO, the Orphan Who Would Be Annie...

For the perky 12-year-old from Pennsylvania, it must have always seemed, "once an Orphan, always an Orphan...." Jennine began charming Broadway Annie audiences as Molly when she was only 7, and later grew into the role of Tessie, and still later, Duffy. When Annie closed, Jennine had been in the show for five years. But she had still never gotten to play Annie.

I first had the pleasure of meeting this exceptionally talented young lady at the Broadway closing party. At the party Jennine wore a sweater that read "UNEMPLOYED ACTRESS - Jan. 2, 1983." Fortunately, such a situation was not to remain for long; Jennine went on tour after that in her old role of Molly.

When Tricia and I came to see Annie at Paper Mill Playhouse here in New Jersey, we learned that Tara Kennedy was ill that day and that Annie would be played by her understudy, Jennine. It seemed as if Jennine's time had finally come to have a go at the title role, and we were eager to see her.

There was something very special about that show, seeing Jennine Babo up there on the Annie stage in a short red wig not just listening to "Maybe," but actually singing it this time--and loving every minute of being Annie. And no wonder, for this Annie was someone who had been in Annie something like two thousand times as three Orphans before she got to hold Sandy's leash and sing "Tomorrow" and waltz with "Daddy" and ride on the Servants' shoulders.

For me, a return there a few days later seemed appropriate, knowing that, either I would see Tara, whom I had not yet seen, or, I would see another performance by Jennine. It turned out to be Jennine again, and I felt she played Annie even better the second time. I took along a friend who had never seen Annie before, and he kind of said it all when he, knowing nothing of Jennine's history, leaned over during the first act and said, "That understudy is having the time of her life, isn't she?"

When I spoke with Jennine after the show, her hair was still all pinned up with bobby pins. She said that it was "really fun" being Annie, but, "that first wig was so tight; I was glad to get it off!" We talked about the matinee crowd at that theater that day, which I had observed was rather staid, compared to Broadway Annie audiences I had seen. This was especially noticeable at the moments when the house traditionally breaks out into applause, such as when Annie first appears in the red dress. Jennine agreed and said, "The evening crowds here are even worse--it's like pulling teeth!" No standing ovation at the end, either. I wish I'd had the guts to start it, because this Annie really deserved one.

(c) Playbill



as Molly

(c) Playbill



as Duffy



Jennine today



Andrea McArdle and Jennine

Submitted by Chris White

Fellow Annie People, the wait is over; Shelley Bruce's book is finally here.

Much has been written, and will continue to be written, about Shelley's valiant battle with leukemia, and how she looked to her old character of Annie for inspiration and hope. But, here it is, the full story, told by Shelley herself. Now we have a chance to really know how she felt before, during, and after her illness. We also have a chance to meet the people around her who were so important in helping to keep her spirits up when things looked darkest.

The book begins with the events that immediately led up to Shelley's hospitalization, which took place when she was sixteen years old, two and a half years after leaving Annie. Shelley describes how after the diagnosis was made and treatments were begun at the hospital, she decided to try to sing again. "All that came out was a series of squeaks," says Shelley. "That seemed to settle it--my singing days appeared to be over."

At that point, we flash back to Shelley's earliest exposure to show business, up through her audition for Annie, the Broadway opening in 1977, and then her being picked to succeed Andrea McArdle in the title role in 1978 (an extra plus about the book is that it is full of photographs from Shelley's life, including many from the Annie years). Here is where we see Annie from the inside out as Shelley fondly remembers the people she worked with and recalls humorous incidents that took place (such as when Andrea came on stage in the White House scene and shook hands with each member of FDR's Cabinet with green "Slime" in her palm).

After Shelley brings us up to date on what she did after Annie, we continue where we left off at the hospital and travel with her on the road to improvement, and at last, her departure from the hospital in November 1981, forty-two days after she had been admitted. As the title implies, Shelley has spent every waking moment since then living life to the fullest, including returning to performing as soon as was possible. She tells of her trip to the White House in early 1983 to receive the National Cancer Courage Award from the American Cancer Society and remembers, "So much had happened since I had been at the White House nearly six years before as an Annie orphan, doing cartwheels down the hall with Amy Carter. The White House had changed; I had changed, and nothing would be the same again."

The importance of this book is twofold: For Annie fans, this book serves as a journal of the Broadway show taking up where Martin Charnin's book, Annie: A Theater Memoir left off. But we get a different slant this time, hearing an Annie herself telling of her close feelings for the rest of the cast, as well as the triumphs and pitfalls of being a Broadway star while barely a teenager. An appendix to the book tells about the original members of Annie whom Shelley worked with, and also a biography of each of the other four Broadway Annies. I found Shelley's own account of the final Broadway show on January 2, 1983, particularly poignant, having been there and experienced it myself.

More importantly, however, this book is the story of Shelley Bruce. Her own story. As you read these pages, you will not only feel a tremendous sense of admiration and affection for this remarkable young woman; you will also get a new feeling of where she has been and, most of all, where she is going. You will laugh, you will cry; but when you get done, you will see why Martin Charnin in early 1982 described Shelley Bruce as having, like Annie, a "heart of gold and a fast left." Reading this book will make you feel even more proud that you are an Annie Person and part of Annie fandom.



Annie People will soon mark its first Annie-versary, and in connection with that I would like to make a few comments about this past year.

One year ago I had never met an Annie performer. In the past year I have had the great pleasure of meeting large numbers of young Annie actresses and their parents, in addition to corresponding with a great many others.

For me, the stereotypes of the "kid actress" and the "stage mother" have been completely debunked. Every child I have met this year that has been in Annie has been personable and pleasant to talk to, and not the least bit stuck-up; and that goes for children from all levels of professional Annie productions, from the small summer theater groups right up through Broadway and Hollywood.

The same goes for the notorious "stage mother" image. From what I have seen, there just aren't any connected with Annie. If there are any mothers of Annie actresses out there who do fit the dreaded stereotype, I have yet to meet one.

My admiration for Annie goes way beyond what I see on stage or screen. What do we see, once the curly red wig is off and the red dress is hung up back in the dressing room?

Certainly not a "kid actress." Not in Annie.

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#### LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE STRIP ANNIE-VERSARY ISSUE!

On August 5, 1984, Little Orphan Annie will be 60 years old. Funny, she still doesn't look a day over 11, but nevertheless, Annie People will be saluting the 60th Annie-versary of Annie's first appearance in the funny papers with a special issue, which will be the July issue, Annie People #10. That issue will be devoted almost entirely to the six decades of the LOA strip, and anyone who would like to contribute any articles or thoughts or whatever to that issue, we would like to hear from you! We are announcing this now, so that yuh'll have plenty o' time t' figger out somethin' yuh'd like t' do.

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**ANNIENESS ARCADE:** Annie People has a catalog of Knickerbocker and Applause Annie items for sale at bargain prices. Many of these collectibles have become rather rare in recent months. If you are a collector and would like the Annieness Arcade Catalog #1 free for the asking, write to Annie People for it.

**COMING NEXT YEAR:** As 1984 begins, and Annie People begins its second year, look for a calendar of Annie-versaries, more of the usual AP features, and up-to-the-minute news regarding the Annie sequels. And if you go to see Annie in your area, write us about it, tell who was in it, etc., so we can put something about it in AP. Be sure to tell any Annie casts you meet about Annie People; we'd like very much to send it to them!

And now...The Official Annie People ANNIE PAPER DOLL! (Don't forget to write for an extra copy of it if you would rather not cut up your issue of AP.)

# - PAPER DOLL -

by TRICIA TROZZI

LEAPIN' LIZARDS-  
LOOK AT TH'  
SWELL CLOTHES!

I WAS WEARIN'  
A SAILOR DRESS  
WHEN I MET TH'  
PRESIDENT IN  
THE PLAY - HE  
WAS REAL NICE

I WORE THIS  
IN TH' LAST SCENE  
O' THE  
PLAY

THIS IS  
TH' WAY  
I LOOKED  
IN 1932

IN THE MOVIE  
I SHOWED MR.  
WARBUCKS SOME  
KARATE-SHUX-  
I DIDN'T MEAN  
T'HURT HIM

Annie

IT WAS A HARD-KNOCK  
LIFE IN TH' ORPHANAGE  
IN TH' MOVIE-ALWAYS  
SCRUBBIN' AN' MOPPIN'

HERE I AM READY T'BE CUT OUT  
AN' COLORED-MAKE SURE YUH  
MAKE MY HAIR RED! YOU MIGHT  
WANNA GLUE ME T'CARDBOARD  
SO'S I C'N STAND UP-HAVE FUN!