

Annie People



MEMBER



A Newsletter for Annie Fans

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Artwork by Tricia Trozzi, co-editor and columnist

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Summer is here and is already a busy one here at Annie People. The big event in June for the AP staff was our drive to Fort Bragg, North Carolina to see Aileen Quinn in a stage production of The Wizard of Oz. Seeing Aileen perform on stage was a first for both of us, and it was truly a great occasion, well worth the long trip, which took a little over eleven hours (but fortunately we did not have to worry about whether we had to land four times). Aileen was a wonderful Dorothy--and her mother made a terrific Good Witch of the North, too!



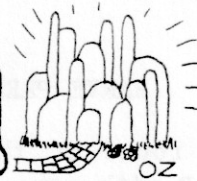
★ Annie Stars Since Annie ... ★

AILEEN QUINN recently starred as Dorothy in a stage production of The Wizard of Oz at Fort Bragg, North Carolina (see related story). This event was not Aileen's first association with the girl from Kansas; two years ago she did the voiceover for Dorothy in a Canadian cartoon version of the story. Catch it on Showtime; it has been airing a lot lately....LAURA BAKER starred as Annie with HARVE PRESNELL in Salt Lake City (see related story)....KRISTI COOMBS and ERIN SULLIVAN are featured on a record and a video of "Kid Stuff," done by a group called The Krypt-a-Kids. There are a total of fifteen boys and girls in the group, which also features LARA BERK's younger sister Melissa and CINDI WINGET, who has performed the title role in Annie in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts....Seems as if former Annies starring in The Wizard of Oz is in style lately--first Shelley, then Aileen, now ANDREA McARDLE. Andrea will be in a stage production between July 30 and August 11 in Milwaukee. Andrea recently spent three weeks in Singapore working with the Special Olympics and is now the spokesperson for the American Neurological Institute. In the fall she will appear again with Shecky Greene in Atlantic City, and there is still talk of possibly bringing Jerry's Girls to Broadway. Keep posted for upcoming details....LARA BERK continues to sing in Youngstars at Something Different in NYC. She will also be seen in the upcoming film version of A Chorus Line. Also performing in Youngstars is DEBORAH GRAHAM, who played July in Annie in 1983 on Long Island when CRISTINA CONOMOS was Annie. Cristina appeared in Desperately Seeking Susan and continues at Youngstars also....HARVE PRESNELL is serving on the President's Council on Drug Abuse. He is also expected to be reprising his role of Oliver Warbucks in the upcoming Broadway sequel and will be performing in a 40-city tour of the original Annie later this year. Meanwhile he will be doing The King and I in California and Taming of the Shrew and Kiss Me, Kate in Alabama....Writes ROSANNE SORRENTINO, "I am singing with a jazz band called The Stardusters. I have four songs so far--they are 'Evergreen,' 'Over the Rainbow,' 'Memories,' and, that's right, 'Tomorrow.'" Rosanne also enjoys cheerleading in school and will enter her senior year this fall. After she graduates next year she hopes to be able to devote more time to show biz again....JENNIFER MAILLET was again in Heidi with the Yates Musical Theatre in Paramus, New Jersey, as she has been annually for the past few years. Since Jennifer is now 14 and has outgrown the title role, she now fits fine into the role of Clara....SARAH JESSICA PARKER stars in a new movie called Girls Just Want to Have Fun....Recent commercials for the First Fidelity Bank in New Jersey were shot in the interior of THE WARBUCKS MANSION at Monmouth College....ALYSSA MILANO has been signed to play Arnold Schwarzenegger's daughter in the upcoming film, Commando....Last year when LISA THOMAS was 12, she played the title role in an Annie production in northern New Jersey. This year she is 13 and played A Star To Be and Bonnie Boylan in another production, which must be a record small amount of time between going from a child role to an adult role in Annie....SHELLY PAUL, who played Molly in last year's national tour, is starring in the Disney stage show at Radio City Music Hall in NYC during this summer's run of Return to Oz....RENEE SHIELDS sang the National Anthem for the Mayor of her home town of Plantation, Florida at a July 4th celebration there. Renee also performs at local shopping malls several times a month....MARTHA BYRNE is currently on As the World Turns with Brian Bloom....MARTIN CHARNIN is preparing a Broadway musical biography of the famous Bill Robinson called Bojangles, which he hopes to have in rehearsal later this summer....LISA McARDLE (no relation), our furthest-away Annie star and AP reader, recently came up from New Zealand to spend a week with JULIE STEVENS in Philadelphia. Lisa played Pepper in her home town of Christchurch....Birthdays: JOHN HUSTON, 79 on August 6; THOMAS MEEHAN, 56 on August 14; ROBIN IGNICO, 15 on August 19; MOLLIE HALL, 15 on September 8.



update
on

Aileen



by Tricia Trozzi

Member of the International Wizard of Oz Club

It's been four years since Aileen Quinn stepped in front of the cameras to film Annie and told Oliver Warbucks, "I've got an interesting smile too, sir." Well, in June 1985 Jon and I saw that smile back in action in a new stage production of The Wizard of Oz at the Fort Bragg Playhouse near Fayetteville, North Carolina. Playing the Good Witch of the North in the show was Aileen's mother, Helenann Quinn, whose former association with director Lee Yopp when she was in theater back in Pennsylvania prompted him to make a special request for Aileen to come and play Dorothy in this production.

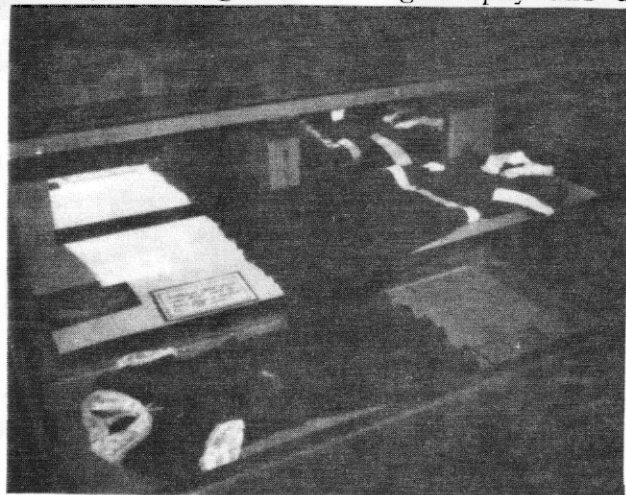


After the show we had a chance to find out more about what Aileen has been doing since Annie was completed. After the release of the movie in May 1982 and Aileen's recovery of a broken elbow from a bicycle mishap, she and her family embarked upon a 12-country, 6-continent, 3-month world tour to promote the film. A highlight of the trip for Aileen was meeting Pope John Paul II in Rome. Unfortunately, since Aileen was out of the country when her Bobby's Girl LP was released in November 1982, no promotion was done for the album.

In 1983 Aileen did voiceovers for the cartoon The Charmkins and also for an animated version of The Wizard of Oz. In 1984 the Quinn family moved to (just think) New Jersey and Aileen continues to audition for parts in New York. She is also active in her new school, earning a debating trophy and a straight A average. When she's not in school, Aileen keeps up her singing and dancing lessons and enjoys playing video games.

Although eight inches taller now than she was in Annie, at 4'10" Aileen is on the small side for her 14 years, but her talent and charm make her seem like a giant. Her voice has gained power and her singing of "Over the Rainbow" was excellent. I was especially impressed by an original song written especially for this production called "Back Home in Kansas" which Aileen made as affecting as "Maybe" was in Annie. The Jitterbug song (cut from the MGM Oz movie) was included in this show and opened up for a long dance sequence to show off Aileen's incredible dancing ability. At the end of that scene, Mrs. Quinn flew in on a wire above the stage, Peter Pan style, to lead Dorothy to the Emerald City.

The whole show was very enjoyable, and it was a pleasure to see one of the nicest and most talented of all Annie performers trading her tap shoes for a pair of Ruby Slippers.



The Annie dresses Aileen wore in the movie were on display at the theater at Fort Bragg. The top one (reflected in the mirror) is the one from the White House scene with FDR, and the bottom one is the red velvet dress Aileen wore at the finale party.

HARVE PRESNELL AND LAURA BAKER STAR IN ANNIE IN UTAH

A big round of thanks goes out to Cynthia Moser of Salt Lake City, who provided AP with extensive coverage of the production of Annie in May and June which starred Harve Presnell as Oliver Warbucks and Laura Baker as Annie. Fortunately for AP the show was an outdoor one, and Cynthia was able to take all these great pictures during daylight at the dress rehearsal for us. Thank you, Cynthia, you're the kind of person the President should have around him.

Harve Presnell played Warbucks first in the 3rd National with Rosanne Sorrentino and later on Broadway with Allison Smith and Alyson Kirk. 12-year-old Laura Baker was the last July on Broadway and has since played Annie several times in her native California. Both Harve and Laura played the 2,377th and final performance of Annie on Broadway on January 2, 1983.

Cynthia went to twelve of the 18 performances, as well as most of the rehearsals, and in reading her impressions, it was obvious how moved she was by the Annie experience. "Harve Presnell's eyes and facial expressions--he's so good. He's the best!" writes Cynthia. "Sometimes one eye was bigger than the other. The way Warbucks picks up Annie in 'NYC' and plops her down on the garbage can. The way Warbucks makes Annie r-e-a-c-h for the hot dog or hands it to Grace instead. Then when Annie falls asleep and he so gently picks her up and his puzzled look and Grace's reaction--a big smile. Grace wants so much to hold Warbucks' hand at the beginning of 'NYC' and wants to hug Annie and Warbucks when Warbucks says he wants to adopt her, but Grace resists."



Laura Baker, Harve Presnell, Cynthia Moser
Triadtheater, Salt Lake City, Utah, May 1985



"Good old Sandy..."

Cynthia goes on: "Laura was crying real tears with real emotion in her voice when she was singing 'Maybe' (Reprise--'Silly to cry...') at the very last show. She tore the audience apart. I was crying too...."

"Then at the end of the show just before 'A New Deal for Christmas' Warbucks says, 'Yes, kids, for you and perhaps for all of us...' He extends his hand to Grace for the first time and Grace reacts--her eyes get wider and her lips form the letter 'O'. Makes one wonder what may happen in Annie II..."

Cynthia concludes: "I've had so much fun. I wouldn't have given up this past month for a trip to Europe or an extra month of annual leave or \$5,000."



"Bet your bottom dollar that tomorrow there'll be sun...."



"Together at last..."



Warbucks tosses Annie into the air (as only Harve Presnell can!)



Harve and Laura check out the latest issue of Annie People before rehearsal!

GUSSY HER UP?

Excerpt from a newspaper review of the Salt Lake City Presnell-Baker production:

"They seemed to have some problems with Annie's hair. Throughout the first act and most of the second, Laura sported her own head of strawberry blonde hair, rather than the mop of curls we have come to expect with Annie...." The reviewer then pointed out the confusing paradox of having Annie suddenly appear in a "curly orange rug" toward the end of the show, and then continued: "...I can only assume that she was supposed to wear the wig throughout the performance and for some reason was unable to do so. But they should have cut their losses and left it off completely for the whole show...."

Excerpt from Harve Presnell's letter to the editor to the newspaper in reply:

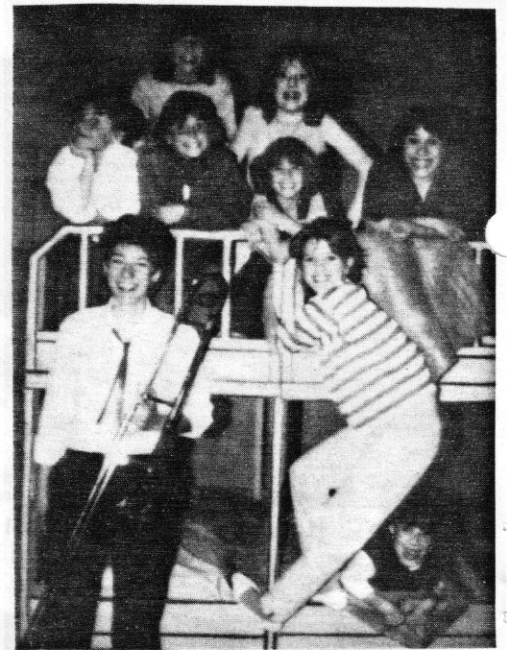
"Was the critic of the Deseret News unduly harsh to our opening night production of Annie? No, she simply did not have her facts straight, nor a substantial understanding of live stage versus the movies....If (reviewer) had done her homework, she would have found that though the movie chose to present Annie in curls from beginning to end, the directions for the stage play stated differently (portion of script quoted from Act II, Scene 5 of Annie)....And thus it has been done on every stage and in every production of Annie where royalties were paid and the directions of creators Thomas Meehan, Charles Strouse, and Martin Charnin were followed. In over 2,000 performances in which I have played Warbucks, I can assure you this has never been changed...."



GLASSBORO, NJ - Top row from left, Kirstin Lynch, Vanessa Lemonides, Christina Santarlas (Annie); middle row from left, Kristi Anne Blessing, Eileen Kolber, Keri Sweeney; bottom row from left, Karen Collins, Melissa Wheeler, Jennifer Pike



PISCATAWAY, NJ - Top row from left, Kristen Amorosi, Debbie Walkoczy, Kathleen Cusumano, Michelle Menter; Bottom row from left, Genevieve Collins, Mitzi Vermillion (Annie) Rose Santaguida



MONTVILLE, NJ - Top row from left, Cindi Winget, Jeanne Murphy; middle row from left, Aimee Lagos, Kathy Smizer, Jessie Smith, Alie Smith; Bottom row from left, Tricia Trozzi, Nancy Lagos (Annie), Krissy Post



SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH - Top row from left, Ruth Barrow, Rebecca Covey, Amy Beckstrand, Amy Jewkes; bottom row from left, Stephanie Dees, Melanie Kieffer



MATAWAN, NJ - Top row from left, Jenny Gerecitano, Maureen Conway, Tina Sutton; bottom row from left, Laren Eisner, Lee Christine Gabey (Annie), Michelle Feingold, Lora Morosco, Suzanne Lawrence (Annie), Marna Shimony



WINDSOR, ONTARIO, CANADA - Top row from left, Andrea Cole, Karen Kocot, Christine Tesky, Jennifer Sommerville, Carla Galli, Nanette Lapointe, Sarah Charley (Annie); bottom row from left, Kim Ottogalli, Jennifer Ferguson, Nicole Hymus, Anna Bayuga, Donna Ryder, Sarah Raisbeck, Sheryl Remekie, Tisa Bezzina. Not pictured, Linda Bevington



LINCROFT, NJ - The entire cast, which included Michelle Diamond (Annie), Melissa Diamond, Beth Quigley, Kathleen Kerwin, Dana Kukielka, Cyndi Leigh Padula, Tina Safiotti, Catherine Soltis, Laura Sortino, Courtney Zimmerman



MONTVILLE, NJ - The whole cast (including Moose as Sandy). Tricia played trombone in the orchestra in this production.



Submitted by Polly Mortensen

Andrea McArdle and Polly Mortensen, Diplomat Hotel, Hollywood, FL, March 1985



Jennifer Maillet (the 2nd National) played Clara in Heidi. Both Jennifer and Michele Cole (Heidi) have performed in Pro-Kids in Montclair, New Jersey.



YOUNGSTARS - Melissa Berk, Lara Berk, Cristina Conomos, and Deborah Gibson sing the Youngstars theme song.



Submitted by Renee Shields

Renee Shields and Andrea McArdle, Diplomat Hotel, Hollywood, FL, March 1985



Tania Taylor Powers performs in Pro-Kids, Montclair, NJ



Submitted by Julie Stevens

BROADWAY REUNION - Alyson Kirk, Julie Stevens, and Stephanie Vine got together to celebrate Julie's 15th birthday on March 22.

LOA STRIP NEWS - Hucky Flynn is back!! He's changed the spelling of his name, but he, like Annie, hasn't aged a bit. Hucky made his initial appearance in Leonard Starr's strip in the spring of 1980 when he was a Senate page in Washington and he and Annie uncovered a graft plot in the Senate. In June 1985 after Annie returned from her swamp adventure, Hucky appeared on the doorstep of the Mansion and invited her to spend the summer with him and his dad. So far Hucky hasn't attempted to kiss Annie in this new story; perhaps he remembers what happened the last time he tried that and decided that he liked having his teeth inside his mouth rather than out.



LEONARD STARR STRIP BOOK - For the first time, Starr Annie strips are available in book form. The new book, published by Blackthorne, contains all the dailies and Sundays for two stories, the Dog Pound-Kneck Brothers story and the Croesus-Stella Han story, both from 1982. Future books are planned.

HAROLD GRAY ANTHOLOGY? - Word has reached Annie People that there are plans being made for the same outfit that reprinted all the Segar Popeye strips to then do the Harold Gray LOA strips. Can anyone confirm this rumor? I want to buy one of the first copies off the press, after which there will be a celebration with a house full of guests and cheese (you know, cheese?).

Jon Merrill
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