

# Annie People



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Member

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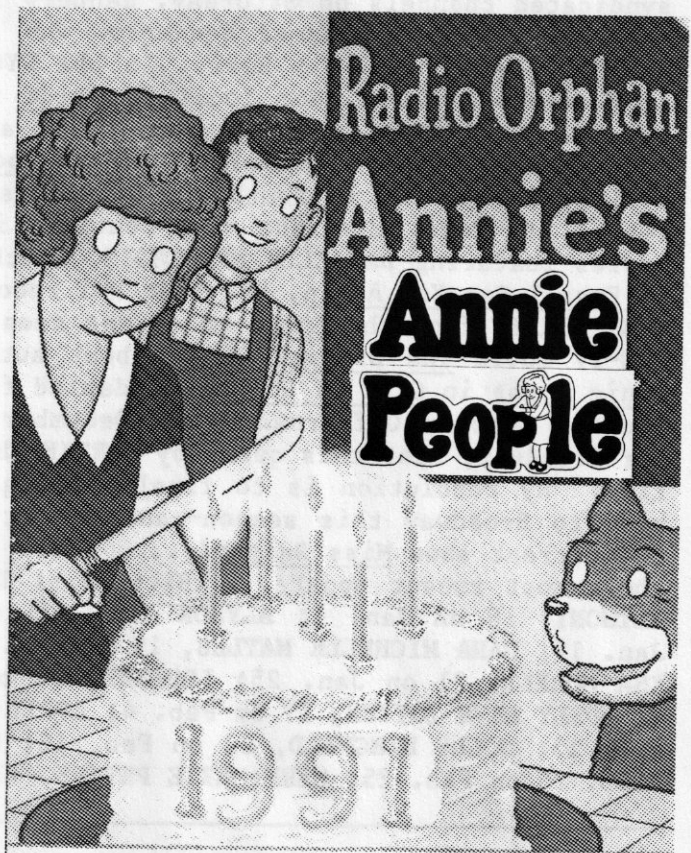
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HOLLY SMITH  
Charlotte's Web  
Detroit, MI



**8<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR**  
BIGGER AND BETTER THAN EVER!

The 1938 5th Anniversary Year Radio Orphan Annie manual is modified to celebrate our own 8th year of publication of Annie People



John Tonner (1.) and Jon with  
REBECCA BAHLING  
Little Shop of Horrors  
Detroit, MI

# ★ Annie Stars Since Annie ... ★

Most Recent Update - **MARTIN CHARNIN** on the upcoming Broadway Annie 2: "Not this season." Plans are still up in the air for the musical over the next several months, but if there is a Broadway opening in its future, it would not be until next winter. The creators have reportedly continued to rewrite and revise it ever since Goodspeed last summer....**TOM HATTEN** sent material from the Annie show in California (see review on page 7) which starred Annie veterans **JOHN SCHUCK**, **LISA ROBINSON**, and himself as FDR....We recently heard from **AILEEN QUINN**, who will be transferring from college in California to one back East next fall. Meanwhile, she will be going back and forth to the West Coast for auditions during the TV "pilot season"....**ROBERT FITCH** starred as the Scarecrow in The Wizard Of Oz in Cincinnati in October through December. His expertise as a magician helped him "burn" as the Scarecrow. Dorothy was played by **SUZANNE BEDFORD**, who played A Star To Be in the 1983 stock tour starring **ALYSON KIRK** which Robert directed. He did a lot of theater in 1990 all over the country, besides choreographing, staging, and co-writing Mask, Myth, and Magic of McBride in New York....The Annie 2 Annies are busy this winter: **LAUREN GAFFNEY** is currently playing in Grown-Ups at the American Jewish Theatre in NYC. And **DANIELLE FINDLEY** is in Decatur, Alabama getting ready to play Annie there....**SANDY FAISON** guest-starred on a January episode of Quantum Leap on NBC....Harry And The Hendersons, starring **CAROL-ANN PLANTÉ** (pronounced plon-TAY), debuted nationwide on various syndicated channels on Saturday, January 12th. Carol-Ann plays Sarah, the older child in the family named Henderson who found a Bigfoot in the woods, brought him home, and named him Harry. In the NYC area it's on Channel 5 at 5:30 p.m. on Saturdays; check your local TV Guide for its time and channel in your area....**LAUREN MITCHELL** sang in show-within-a-show segments playing a haughty musical comedy star on an episode of Matlock on NBC in January....**DEBBIE GIBSON** will begin touring in Southeast Asia this winter before coming back to the U.S leg of her tour; then she will continue in Europe....I recently rented two old movies featuring **DANIELLE BRISEBOIS**. Check your video store; I highly recommend If Ever I See You Again, but I do NOT recommend Big Bad Mama II....The **DALE HENNESY STREET** from the Annie movie was seen as turn-of-the-century Chicago in the NBC-TV movie The Dreamer Of Oz about author L. Frank Baum....**SARAH KNAPP** from Annie 2 was in Gift Of The Magi adapted from the story by O. Henry at the Lambs Theatre Company Off-Broadway in December....**DAVID POWERS**, Annie's Press Agent for Broadway, sent this quote by **MARTIN CHARNIN** which appeared in Playbill magazine: "My resolution is to finally bring the battered but unbowed little red-head to Broadway this season--and to let Saigons be Saigons." (a reference to the current show Miss Saigon)....But now it looks like next season instead (see above most recent update)....Birthdays: **TONI ANN GISONDI**, 16 on Jan. 1; **NICOLE ANTHONY**, 18 on Jan. 1; **ALYSON KIRK**, 21 on Jan. 14; **ROSANNE SORRENTINO**, 23 on Jan. 15; **DANA MICHELLE MATLES**, 19 on Jan. 21; **SYDNEY WEEKS**, 20 on Jan. 22; **MARISA MORELL**, 21 on Jan. 25; **LOUANNE**, 21 on Jan. 26; **JANNA ROBINSON**, 16 on Feb. 4; **MOLLY BETH TOTTEN**, 17 on Feb. 4; **APRIL LERMAN**, 22 on Feb. 6; **ERIN DALY**, 15 on Feb. 15; **MOLLY RINGWALD**, 23 on Feb. 18; **STEPHANIE VINE**, 19 on Feb. 23; **JENNINE BABO**, 20 on Feb. 25; **BERNADETTE PETERS**, 43 on Feb. 28.

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Comments from readers on our "Local Annie Productions" article -- **CYNTHIA MOSER** added the following "Staging Boo-Boo" that she has seen several times in Annie: Annie hugs Sandy at the end but stays with him as the song ends instead of then going over and hugging "Daddy." The moment is made much more effective if the last time the audience sees Annie is when she is with "Daddy," demonstrating her love for him and her thanks for his having found Sandy for her....From **AMANDA SINCLAIR**: "The 23-year-old Annie did have a nice voice but was too old. The worst part was that they added four BOY Orphans! The role of Duffy was played by a boy and Tessie was changed to Teddie. Miss Hannigan then sang "Little Girls, Little Boys..."

# CALENDAR OF ANNIE-VERSARIES

1991

## 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 21
- 15 The 3rd National's first Annie, ROSANNE SORRENTINO, will be 23
- 20 Little Orphan Annie comic strip creator HAROLD GRAY was born, 1894
- 20 Annie 2: Miss Hannigan's Revenge finished its one-month run in D.C., 1990
- 25 Annie in the 2nd National, MARISA MORELL, will be 21
- 26 Annie in the 2nd National and the 1st National, LOUANNE, will be 21
- 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 The Broadway preview opened at the Kennedy Center in Washington, 1977
- 1 The 5 Broadway Annies had a reunion at an Englewood, NJ Annie show, 1986
- 4 Annie in the 1st National, THEDA STEMLER, will be 24
- 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 26

## APRIL

- 11 The 1984 National Tour's Annie, LISA LYNNE, will be 18
- 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 26
- 6 Annie in the 4th National, KATHLEEN SISK, will be 19
- 9 Harold Gray died at age 74, 1968
- 17 Annie 2, starring Lauren Gaffney, opened at Goodspeed-At-Chester, 1990
- 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 63
- 22 The 2nd National Tour opened in San Francisco, 1978
- 28 The movie's Annie, AILEEN QUINN, will be 20

## JULY

- 8 Annie 2 finished its two-month workshop run at Goodspeed-At-Chester, 1990
- 18 Annie in Annie 2: Miss Hannigan's Revenge, DANIELLE FINDLEY, will be 13
- 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 18
- 31 The 2nd National's first Annie, PATRICIA ANN PATTS, will be 24

## 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 62
- 28 John Huston died at age 81, 1987
- 29 Broadway's Sandy died at age 16, 1990

## SEPTEMBER

- 4 Principal filming of the movie ended, 1981
- 8 The 4th National's first Annie, MOLLIE HALL, will be 21
- 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
- 16 Annie in Annie 2, LAUREN GAFFNEY, will be 12
- 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)

## NOVEMBER

- 2 Little Orphan Annie Sunday comic strip began, 1924
- 5 Broadway's first Annie, ANDREA McARDLE, will be 28
- 24 Annie's lyricist and director, MARTIN CHARNIN, will be 57
- 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 22
- 22 Annie 2: MHR, starring Danielle Findley, opened in Washington, D.C., 1989
- 24 The first Little Orphan Annie movie, starring Mitzi Green, premiered, 1932
- 27 Annie in the 2nd National, KRISTI COOMBS, will be 20
- 31 Annie was left on the Orphanage steps, 1922

THIS IS THE FIRST REVIEW OF THE ORIGINAL ANNIE AT THE GOODSPEED OPERA HOUSE IN 1976, STARRING REID SHELTON, MAGGIE TRASK, AND KRISTEN VIGARD. IT WAS UNEARTHED AND SENT IN TO ANNIE PEOPLE BY JOHN TONNER OF DETROIT.

Hartford (CT) Courant, Aug. 22, 1976, by Malcolm L. Johnson

#### GOODSPEED'S SAD ANNIE

It is showtime but the audience is still milling about outside the elegant white swan of a theater on Goodspeed's Landing, glancing over from time to time at the men at work near the yellow Connecticut Light and Power truck near the bridge.

For the second time in a week, the 100-year-old theater is without power; as Michael Price, the theater's executive director says, "It's been a --- awful week." Getting a new show on is not an easy thing even under the best of conditions, but when you have your dress rehearsal in virtual darkness on the night of a hurricane...."

Despite everything, a kind of grim humor seems to be shared by those of the theater's staff waiting outside the Goodspeed Opera House to see if the show will go on. Choreographer Donald Siretta reminisces about his days as a dancer in Noel Coward's Sail Away, describing wrong drops flying in and leads being handed new lines by Coward himself throatily chortling, "It's a disahstah...I love it."

Now the electricity has been restored and ex-lighting man Price has the air conditioning working, and though the plumbing is still out of order, people are filing into the theater. But the troubles are far from over.

Probably no art form resists translation to the stage more stubbornly than the comic strip, and making a musical of Little Orphan Annie would seem a tricky thing indeed.

The persistent memory of Harold Gray's flat, naive drawing style and especially of the ingenuous ciphers that give Annie and "Daddy" and Sandy their unique looks is only the beginning of the problem. Beyond the elusive visual style, there is also the more complex question of one's attitude towards the spunky little redhead and her adoptive 100-percent-American millionaire "Daddy"; should they be real or camp?

In their abortive efforts to bring the now declining, but once hugely popular comic strip to life, the collaborators on Annie have consciously avoided any attempt to make the show look like a comic strip. They have been less certain about the way that Annie and "Daddy" are portrayed; the child is played more or less straight, but the plutocrat Warbucks has less definition --he's neither serious nor funny.

The upshot is that Annie has very little to do with the Gray material, no matter how you view the original strip. It more closely resembles a Victorian melodrama with a 1930s frame of reference and an eclectic grab bag of tunes, and from the start it is clear that Annie is really Oliver! in drag, lost in Depression America.

But although Lionel Bart's adaptation of Dickens had neither the strength of the original nor the integrity of a more fully realized musical show, it truly towers over this American stepchild--in the writing of its characters, in its songs, in its dances, and in its settings.

In Annie almost nothing works. The child herself has had the stuffing taken out of her; as conceived in the book by Thomas Meehan and the lyrics of Martin Charnin, she is a sweet and lovely little tot, but without the Orphan's feisty confidence, unerring common sense, straightforward and eminently workable philosophy of life and shrewd human judgments.

The Meehan-Charnin Annie is a nice kid, but not one who could have come through a fraction of the hair-raising scrapes that Gray sent the Orphan through for more than 40 years. Fortunately for her, but not so fortunately for the



audience, she really doesn't have much to go up against in the virtually eventless book that Meehan has provided. Or to put it another way, there isn't a Fagan or Bill Sykes in sight.

The book of Annie contains only a mildly intriguing conceit: that Annie's optimism--as outlined in a fairly likable tune called "Tomorrow"--helped get Franklin D. Roosevelt and his Cabinet out of the dumps and into the positive thinking of the New Deal. Other than that, there isn't much to arouse one's interest, either dramatically or musically.

Laughs are even scarcer than inventions of plot and fresh musical tunes; however, Meehan tries repetitions (one exchange between Warbucks and Annie over her name must have at least four variations on the words "Just Annie") and he goes for mild cussing and the sort of argot that Gray would never have permitted--"bimbos," for instance. But a show that tries to get by with a line like, "Why any child would want to be an orphan I'll never know" is in trouble so deep that even "after New York every place else is Bridgeport" becomes boffo, antiquated though it be.

Charnin's lyrics share the book's lack of distinction with perhaps the worst "I Love New York" songs extant, which has Warbucks singing, "Too hot, too cold / Too late, I'm sold" in "NYC." And the music by Charles Strouse ranges all over the lot, even reaching for Brecht-Weill in "Just Wait." It's sometimes pleasant music, as in Annie's poignant "Maybe," but there is probably not one tune that stays with you. Nor does the music hew to a distinctive style or even much of a feeling for the Thirties.

The show does have a couple of tolerable moments: the FDR gang warming to "Tomorrow" and the upbeat "You're Never Fully Dressed Without A Smile" on a mildly diverting parody of early radio. It isn't that they're anything to jump up and cheer over; they're just mild lifts from the general doldrums.

Charnin, the lyricist, also directed, and that was probably not a good idea. He hasn't been able to discern the weakness of the material, so he hasn't compensated for it or thrown it out. His staging has imparted no overall style, nor gotten any depths from the characters. The pacing lags and any sense of pictorial composition is totally lacking; it is direction that helps neither the show nor its performers.

Kristen Vigard, the 13-year-old who opened as Annie, is a pretty and appealing redhead, but neither the writing nor the direction provided her with an opportunity to convey the daring and resourceful character of the comics. Her singing had a nice quality at times, but at others she clearly had been pushed into "selling" her songs. She made a more convincing Annie than Reid Sheldon [sic] made a Warbucks; however Sheldon [sic] failed to project the strapping father figure who prefigured "Ike"; and his singing, though competent, wanted the requisite easy baritone power of a Warbucks. (Miss Vigard has since left the show.)

Most of the 15 others in the cast play a variety of roles with few opportunities for distinction. Even Sandy Faison's fetching secretary Grace Farrell spends most of her time in a major role standing to one side and, worse still, she has to do her one big number seated; but, all things considered, she acquits herself quite nicely. The FDR of Raymond Thorne comes a bit too close to Mr. Magoo, and Maggie Trask's Miss Hannigan, the harridan at the Orphanage, is neither menacing nor funny.

Perhaps the most disappointing aspect of the production is the settings of Edward Haynes, who managed miracles with the Goodspeed's small stage in "Going Up." Here he has overloaded the theater's stage machinery with drops and wagons which cramp the playing area and create a frequently quite dismal effect with their grey and white photo collages of New York and flimsy drapes and tacky oak paneling of the Warbucks Mansion. Dan Siretta's choreography is minimal, and at that strangled by the book, songs, and scenery. It's a disaster, but it's hard to love it.

Annie continues at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam through September 26, 1976.



Debbie Hammond (Little Miss Muffet)  
Lisa Hammond (Mary Had A Little Lamb)  
Pittsburgh, PA



Annie fan Cynthia Moser (r.) saw The Music Man in Akron, Ohio, starring George Chakiris and (l. to r.) former Annie Orphans Jennifer Stacy, Paula Smith, and Elizabeth Boggio. George Chakiris won an Oscar for acting in the West Side Story movie in the 1960s.



Annie fan TAMMY SAPHILOFF of Grants Pass, Oregon spent a couple of years searching for dolls that could be transformed into Annie Orphans. Tammy then made a different colored "rainbow dress" for each of them. Left to right: Tessie, Duffy, Kate, Annie, Pepper, Molly, July. Next to Tammy is the McCall's pattern Annie she made, and the McCall's Sandy she made is in front. Congratulations, Tammy, on the completion of your own Annie Orphanage!



LEAPIN' LIZARDS, SANDY!!!  
THEY STILL LOVE US!!!

ARF!!!



Another favorite for kids and adults alike is **Annie**, the hit musical based on the "Little Orphan Annie" comic strip. It's at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium through Sunday (Dec. 16), after which it moves to the Orange County Performing Arts Center from Dec. 18-23. This time around Adrienne Stiefel stars as the charming redhead, who is rescued from the cruel head of the orphanage, Miss Hannigan (Gretchen Wyler), by kind-hearted millionaire Daddy Warbucks (John Schuck). **Annie** revivals come around every once in a while, but the show is particularly right for the holidays, with its sunny outlook and happy ending. Sat. 2 and 8 p.m., Sun. 2 p.m. Tickets: \$15-\$32.50. *Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 300 E. Green St., Pasadena, 818-793-2122 or 213-410-1062. Orange County Performing Arts Center, Dec. 18-23, 714-740-2000 or 213-480-3232 or 714-556-ARTS.*

## Theater review

### 'Annie'

Pasadena Civic Auditorium  
Through Dec. 16

By JAY REINER

Director Gary Davis made a smart move when he decided to bring back three of the actors who made his 1985 production of "Annie" in Long Beach such a rousing success. Those three actors — John Schuck, Lisa Robinson and Tom Hatten — are together again in the California Music Theater's current production of "Annie," and once again the results are just about perfect.

Schuck, as billionaire capitalist Daddy Warbucks, is the key to the evening. "Annie" needs a believable yet big Daddy to help us forget that this show is basically a comic strip about a lonely orphan who gets America's richest man to fall in love with and adopt her, all in the space of a few scenes. Daddy Warbucks, it seems, for all his money is even lonelier than little Annie.

Schuck is big in the best sense of

the word. As an actor he exudes the same size and power that his character displays in influencing the life of everyone he meets, from the president of the United States to the irrepressible orphan who steals his heart.

But Schuck's true value to the show is in providing his character with a heart to steal. The underlying theme of this show is that love and optimism can conquer anything, even in the midst of the cold, heartless Depression of the '30s. It's a message that's hard to resist, especially in these cynical, uncertain times, and Schuck delivers it with grace and tenderness.

As for Annie, the original "Tomorrow" girl, she's played here by Adrienne Stiefel, a young actress with a winning voice who should have some happy tomorrows of her own. When this Annie stands on a table in front of F.D.R. and his glum Cabinet to belt out her anthem of optimism, it's a moment even John Sununu might appreciate.

Miss Hannigan, the evil witch of this fairy tale and Annie's tormentor at the orphanage, is played to a deli-

— *continued on page 72*

### 'Annie'

*continued from page 6* —

cious turn by Gretchen Wyler. This is the show's juiciest part and Wyler's man-hungry Hannigan seems to be running on some high-octane fuel composed of equal parts alcohol, spite and aphrodisiac.

Equally delicious are Michael G. Hawkins and Heather Lee as Rooster Hannigan and Lily St. Regis, those two treacherous schemers who try to burst Annie's bubble. The show's best song and dance number, "Easy Street," is in their capable hands and they fly with it. Robinson

and Hatten, as Warbuck's secretary and F.D.R., lend their usual strong support.

But there's really not a weak link in this production. From Tom Butsch's clever miniature scenic displays of New York City to Jeff Rizzo's snappy musical direction, everything works. Credit Davis with putting the whole package together and then polishing his cast until each scene gleams like the stud in Daddy Warbucks' shirt-front. This production of "Annie" moves intact to Orange County, where it opens Dec. 18 for a short run at the Performing Arts Center.

THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER, DECEMBER 4, 1990

Submitted by TAMMY SAPHILOFF

## La Sierra Today, Spring 1989



Rogue Music Theatre -

Far left: Bailey Gillespie SR'64 sings to Amie Chilson (Annie) in his role as Oliver Warbucks in La Sierra Academy Performing Arts Society's production of "Annie."

1991 ANNIE CALENDAR Update

We understand several of you encountered difficulty in obtaining Annie calendars from Landmark Calendars, who claimed that they were "all sold out." We have talked with them in California and they have assured us that they do have Annie calendars in stock. So go ahead and resubmit your order and check again, but be sure to put ATTENTION: SINGLE ORDERS on the envelope so that it goes to the correct department there. Address:

Attn: SINGLE ORDERS  
Landmark Calendars  
P.O. Box 6105, Dept. 1  
Novato, CA 94948

The price is \$9.95 each (plus \$2.50 shipping and handling for the first calendar, and \$.50 for each additional calendar if you order more than one).

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Judging by the number of orders I had since the last AP for Applause ceramic Annie items, there must have been a lot of Annie-filled Christmases out there! I still have some left - **FOR SALE: Annie Applause Ceramic Figurines**, 6 different, \$12 each; **Annie Applause Ceramic Picture Frames**, 3 different shapes (oval, rectangular, heart), 4 different colors (white, tan, pink, blue). Most of the frames are sold; since I most likely won't be able to fill your color request, I'll lower the price to \$10 each. **Annie Applause Ceramic Heart-Shaped Vase**, \$8. **Annie Applause Ceramic Bank**, \$12. **Annie Applause Ceramic Mugs**, 6 different, **CLEARANCE SALE**, \$2.50 each or \$12 for set of 6. Send to: Jon Merrill, 517 North Fenwick Street, Allentown, PA 18103. All prices include postage. Satisfaction guaranteed; return in one week for refund if not delighted.

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Jon Merrill  
Annie People  
517 North Fenwick Street  
Allentown, PA 18103

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Little Orphan  
**Annie**