

# Annie People

The Little Orphan Annie Fan Club Newsletter

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**SARAH JESSICA PARKER's** movie *Miami Rhapsody* will be out soon. After Sarah left *Annie* in 1980, she has been in several movies, but this one is the first one in which she will be the lead. Sarah was the third young actress of five to play the title role in *Annie* on Broadway, and when she left the role at 14 years 10 months, she was the oldest Broadway *Annie* ever (shown here with Sandy). She was also the only one of the five to replace a younger actress (Shelley Bruce is about 5 weeks younger). At the final performance of *Annie* on Broadway on January 2, 1983, all of the *Annies* came to see it, as well as many former Orphans and *Annies* from the National Tours, and we always remember that of all the celebrities we met that day, Sarah took the most time of any to talk and joke with the fans at the stage door and pose for pictures. Sarah has become a beautiful and articulate young woman, and it is fun to see her on talk shows, because she uses such big words sometimes, it is almost like listening to a professor. She will celebrate her 30th birthday on March 25, and we wish the third Broadway *Annie* lots of success on her new film.

Hello, Annie People, and happy 1995! This month marks our 12th anniversary of publishing AP, which we started doing right after "2,377"--that is, the final performance of *Annie* on Broadway in January 1983. We are pleased that several of our favorite *Annie* celebrities of years gone by are meeting with show business success in 1995. Be sure to see the pictures and articles in this issue

Here is an article about *Annie*'s first year, written around the time of Andrea McArdle's 14th birthday on November 5, 1977 and published in the December 1977 issue of *Playbill*.



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(c) *Playbill*

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## B'WAY ALBUM

Above: Andrea McArdle (*Annie*), her mother Phyllis, father Paul, and brother Michael at her 14th birthday party on Nov. 5.

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# Leapin' Lizards!

Just look at the changes that "Annie" hath wrought . . .

Take seven little girls, all orphans. Add radiant uplift ("the sun will come out tomorrow"), a mutt named Sandy, and a billionaire. Serve with Andrea McArdle, Dorothy Loudon, and Reid Shelton. And we have an extraordinarily satisfying dish, the musical *Annie*.

Any whopping hit affects profoundly many lives. Consider, among other things, the burgeoning fortunes of *Annie's* cast and creators.

**Sandy owes his life to the show. He was only hours away from the eternal sleep when Bill Berloni snatched him from a Connecticut pound.** Now collectors crave his pawtograph and hostesses his presence. "Sandy gets as many party invitations as Sylvia Miles, but he's more discriminating," said a close observer of the social scene.

"I still do the laundry, I still go to the supermarket and ride buses," said Dorothy Loudon. On the other hand, she is enormously pleased to have her first Broadway hit and a Tony Award for her show-stealing portrayal of Miss Hannigan. In all, *Annie* won seven Tonys.

**Big-voiced Andrea McArdle, the appealing Little Orphan Annie, employs a secretary to cope with her fan mail, including love letters and proposals of marriage (she has just turned 14). Her automobile license plate has the word, Annie, in place of numbers.**

"I don't think we'll ever get back to normal, it's too exciting," says Andrea's mother. "We're from Philadelphia but Andrea couldn't get on the Mike Douglas show before *Annie*. Since, she's been on the show six times."

**David Merrick saw the show from a box. "I wish I'd been there," said one of the producer's many fans, "I've always wanted to see Merrick in a box."** Boxes, because they have fish-bowl visibility and poor sight-lines, are the last desperate resort of V. I. Ps.

Mrs. Jacqueline Onassis shared a box

by Rebecca Morehouse

with her children, Caroline and John Kennedy, and writer Pete Hamill. Natalie Wood and Robert Wagner settled for a box and, in royal fashion, took a bow.

*Annie* has been the most coveted Broadway ticket since it opened to whoops of admiration in April. At 8 every morning, trailing the paraphernalia of the informed (folding chairs, sandwiches, coffee), the strong and the eager line up to buy standing-room tickets. The Alvin box office opens at 10.

The ticket fury falls hardest on David Powers, known in the hallowed halls of press agency as "The Powerhouse." As the show's drum-beater, he gets up to 50 calls a day from people wanting house seats. They represent a dizzying mix of Dear Abby and Medical Center.

**"I get calls for tickets from honeymooners, from people having anniversaries, people named Annie, people who are hard of hearing or partially blind," he said. "One man wanted to bring his wife 'because she has only three months to live.'"**

He no longer has to court the press, the press courts him. "Critics come in from everywhere, some have had to stand. If *Hellzapoppin* hadn't closed in Boston, I wouldn't have taken *Annie*. I'd have missed the biggest hit since *My Fair Lady*. And 14-hour work days."

**The White House and "Annie" have been closeasthis since the musical played the Kennedy Center, pre-Broadway.** Mrs. Rosalynn Carter saw it with Amy, met the cast, and said to the children, "Would y'all like to come to the mansion?" She is, as we-all know, a former occupant of Georgia's Governor's Mansion.

"The children saw Amy's bedroom and the bowling alley," said Andrea's mother, Phyllis (Mrs. Paul) McArdle. "They met President Carter when the company did a mini-version of *Annie* at the White House. Andrea said the President had a sort-of light around him. But she said the same

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thing when she met Gerald Ford."

*Annie* is the only Broadway play with a quote from President Carter. It is displayed outside the Alvin.

**Dorothy Loudon did the White House performance in a wheelchair.**

"My foot got caught in the treadmill at the theatre that night," she said. "From the White House, I went to a hospital emergency room. I was in my wig and costume, so I fitted right in with the drunks and derelicts. I had two broken toes, it was painful."

As the boozing orphanage director, she is mean—but funny-mean. "You rotten orphan!" she snarls to Annie.

"There's some truth in the character, everybody in the audience has wanted to scream at children," she said. "Mike Nichols (the producer) offered me the part. I really didn't want to do it."

**Reid Shelton (Daddy Warbucks) has worked steadily in theatre since, reversing Greeley, he came here from Oregon in 1950. But his was not a name of note until "Annie" romped into his life. A six-footer with mucho machismo, divorced and**

therefore a target, he is hotly pursued by the ladies.

"I still live in a fourth-floor walkup," he said. "But I have someone to shop for me and a part-time secretary to answer the mail. The strength of the show is you care about the people in it. There's so much joy in it; there's nothing wrong with making people feel good. At almost every performance, the audience stands up and roars."

**Sandy gets wild applause and a higher salary than some of the actors.** "It's more than the actors' minimum," said his adoptive father, Bill Berloni. "He has his own dressing room, an agent, and an understudy, Arf. But Sandy has never missed a performance, he doesn't get headaches and colds."

Berloni was an actor-technician at the Goodspeed Opera House, East Haddam, Conn., when *Annie* was done there in the summer of 1976. The director asked him to find a dog for the show.

"At the last pound I went to, I saw this poor, scrawny dog cowering in the back of a cage. He had been abandoned (like

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Annie). That day was his last, they hold them seven days, then put them to sleep."

**When Muhammad Ali visited backstage, Sandy had the chutzpa to bark at him.** "That dog's prejudiced," said the champ.

The show has drawn more celebrities than Truman Capote's party at the Plaza. Barbra Streisand came with son Jason Gould and friend Jon Peters. The commotion she touched off has not been equaled. "The cast was stupefied," said a company member.

Because the show has Sunday school propriety, a significant number of parents bring children. Gloria Vanderbilt, her two sons. Beverly Sills, her daughter Muffy. Liv Ullmann, her daughter Linn.

**For Katharine Hepburn, seeing "Annie" was a snap.** She called the box office one morning, announced in her no-nonsense voice that she would attend that day's matinee, and have two tickets waiting, please. The tickets were there.

**Martin Charnin, the director and lyricist, catapulted Little Orphan Annie from**

**the comics to the Great White Way.**

"I got the idea in 1971, after reading a book containing 25 years of the strip," he said. "We—Thomas Meehan (the book) and Charles Strouse (the music)—spent 14 months writing it. Then it took four and a half years to get it on. No one believed it would make a musical.

"It's changed my life dramatically. I've become a minor celebrity, which is pleasurable, and it won't take seven years to do my next project, a musical version of *I Remember Mama*. Alexander Cohen will produce it, Liv Ullmann will have the leading role, Thomas Meehan will write the book, Richard Rodgers the music, and I'll write the lyrics."

There's a literary spin-off from *Annie*. Charnin has written *Annie, a Theater Memoir*, which Dutton will publish in December. Bill Berloni and a ghost writer have glorified Sandy in a picture book, to be published by Simon and Schuster.

*Annie* tickets are printed through 1978, and there's a \$2,000,000 advance.

As Andrea says just once in the show: "Leapin' Lizards!"

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# CALENDAR OF ANNIE-VERSARIES

## 1995

### 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 25
- 15 The 3rd National's first Annie, ROSANNE SORRENTINO, will be 27
- 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 25
- 26 Annie in the 2nd National and the 1st National, LOUANNE, will be 25
- 29 Allison Smith became Broadway's fourth Annie, 1980
- 29 *Annie Warbucks*, starring Lauren Gaffney, opened in Chicago, 1992
- 30 *Annie Warbucks* finished its seven-month run in New York, 1994

### 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 28
- 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 30

### APRIL

- 11 The 1984 National Tour's Annie, LISA LYNNE, will be 22
- 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 30
- 6 Annie in the 4th National, KATHLEEN SISK, will be 23
- 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 67
- 22 The 2nd National Tour opened in San Francisco, 1978
- 28 The movie's Annie, AILEEN QUINN, will be 24

### JULY

- 8 *Annie 2* finished its two-month workshop run at Goodspeed-at-Chester, 1990
- 8 *Annie Warbucks*, starring Kathryn Zaremba, opened in New York, 1993
- 18 Annie in *Annie 2: Miss Hannigan's Revenge*, DANIELLE FINDLEY, will be 17
- 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 22
- 31 The 2nd National's first Annie, PATRICIA ANN PATTS, will be 28

### 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 66
- 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
- 7 Annie in the 1991-92 National Tour, SARA ZELLE, will be 14
- 8 The 4th National's first Annie, MOLLIE HALL, will be 25
- 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
- 24 Annie in *Annie Warbucks*, KATHRYN ZAREMBA, will be 12
- 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* and *Annie Warbucks*, LAUREN GAFFNEY, will be 16
- 18 Ann Marie Mudge Warbucks was born, 1922 (movie version)
- 20 The 1992-93 National Tour opened in Bloomington, Indiana, 1992
- 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)
- 31 The 1991-92 National Tour opened in Rochester, 1991

### NOVEMBER

- 2 *Little Orphan Annie* Sunday comic strip began, 1924
- 5 Broadway's first Annie, ANDREA McARDLE, will be 32
- 11 Annie in the 1992-93 National Tour, HEATHER SOROKA, will be 14
- 21 Annie in the 1992-93 National Tour, MISSY GOLDBERG, will be 14
- 24 Annie's lyricist and director, MARTIN CHARNIN, will be 61
- 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 26
- 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 24
- 31 Annie was left on the Orphanage steps, 1922



....and in 1995 Annie again comes face to face with her old 1980 enemy, Sheik Bahd-Simel....

# ☆ Annie Stars Since Annie ... ☆

In this issue of AP we salute a few special *Annie* performers as they meet with new successes:

**AILEEN QUINN** played Bet in *Oliver!* at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, New Jersey in the fall, and Tricia and I had a lot of fun spending two and a half hours in a nearby diner with Aileen catching up on all her doings. As is the case with many *Annie* child actresses, she decided to take a break from show biz during the college years and study non-theatrical subjects. Aileen spent her first year on the West Coast but transferred back to Drew University in her home state of New Jersey (at the time she starred in the *Annie* movie she lived in Yardley, Pennsylvania, but her family moved to the Garden State in winter 1984). She specialized in the Japanese and Spanish languages and considers the high point of her college years the six months she spent in Chile living with a native family. Now Aileen has graduated, and she is eager to get back into the business she has loved all her life. And so, it's back to the audition circuit in New York, and I'm sure will be seeing more of the vivacious and talented young lady in the next few years.

**MONICA LEE GRADISCHEK**, who has been featured in the pages of AP numerous times over the years, has just landed her very first Broadway role. On February 10 she will replace Jessica Stone as Frenchy in *Grease*, acting opposite Brooke Shields and Adrian Zmed. Monica played Annie in her native Pittsburgh three times and won much acclaim and several awards for her performances, after which she moved on to many other community theater roles in the area. Last year she graduated from New York University and has been auditioning in the city ever since, and finally all her hard work and talent has paid off. Over the years I have met few Annies who have retained such a tremendous loyalty and affection for *Annie* as Monica has, and I'm sure that will be lifelong. Additionally, I have admired her talents and her love for performing for a long time, and I'm sure those fortunate viewers of *Grease* on Broadway will feel the same way. Congratulations, Monica!

In January **LARISSA AUBLE** celebrated her 10th birthday on Broadway where she has been in *Show Boat* since last fall. Larissa was the Swing Orphan in the Off-Broadway version of *Annie Warbucks* in 1993-94 and is thrilled to be in *Show Boat* as Young Kim. When we went to see Larissa in the show in January, she gave us the full tour of the Gershwin Theatre, including actually being on the stage with the sets. Of course Tricia and I couldn't help but recall the fact that years ago this theater, formerly the Uris, was where *Annie* was performed during its last year on Broadway up to January 2, 1983, so being on the *Show Boat* stage among the sets was especially fun for us. Larissa is another actress who will always treasure her association with the play about the little red haired Orphan, and I'm sure her early theatrical experiences will be very much in her thoughts throughout what will deservedly be a long and successful career.

More news: **ANDREA McARDLE** will be performing with John Davidson in the stage version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *State Fair*. A tour will travel around the country, eventually reaching Broadway.... **JACKIE ANGELESCU**, C.G. in *Annie Warbucks* in New York, will play the lead in *Opal* in New Brunswick, New Jersey. She will be understudied by **NANCY BRAUN**, Annie in *Annie Warbucks* in the New Jersey premiere last October directed by **PAUL GOLDIE**.... **RAYMOND THORNE** writes that he is now in the touring company of *Crazy For You*, playing the part of Everett, the father of the female lead. He says it's a "great show and cast".... More on **SARAH JESSICA PARKER** (see page 1): She was host of *Saturday Night Live* on November 12. Her opening monologue consisted of commiserating with the Democratic Party about losing so many contests in the elections which were held on the previous Tuesday. As part of the monologue, she sang a parody of "Tomorrow" about how the Democrats will be back tomorrow. She got almost all the way through the song before being stopped by other *SNL* cast members who told her to stop singing for two reasons: Everybody on the show is a Republican, and mostly because they don't like "the Annie song." Sarah finished the song anyway. Later on in the show she sang again a funny rock song.... **HARVEY EVANS**, Alvin T. Paterson in *Annie Warbucks*, is in the new hit show *Sunset Boulevard* on Broadway. He was the "Gypsy Robe" recipient in the opening night ceremony that is a tradition to bring good luck to a new musical. The chorus member who has been in the most Broadway shows--Harvey had been in 19--is the one chosen to wear the Robe, which is a very large dressing gown decorated with souvenirs of shows. The Robe is worn by the chorus member in the center of a circle of the entire company, and everyone touches the Robe to bring good luck and a long run to the production. Then the recipient had to decorate the Robe with a souvenir from that show, and then the Robe is passed on to the next production to open.... Coincidence on November 19, Saturday night at 10 p.m.; on NBC, **KATHRYN ZAREMBA** was making another appearance on *Sisters*, while over on ABC, **MARGUERITE MacINTYRE** was guest-starring on *The Commish*--as the murderer!



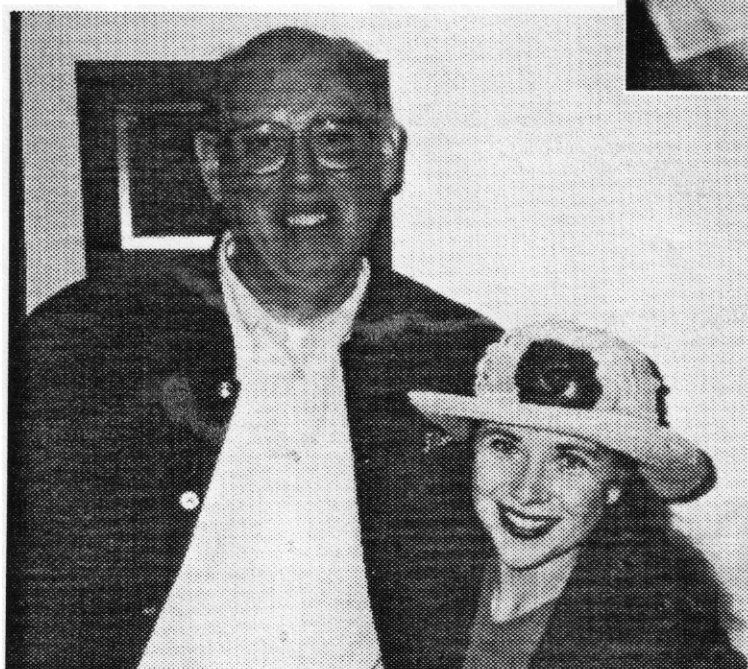
(Left) **Springboro, Ohio-Miami Valley Dinner Theater** (June-August 1994)  
 Back row: Emily Kushner, Andrea Afanador, Shayna Stoyanoff, Aquila J. Beach, Brandi M. Hoskins, Amanda Balkema, Lauren Ashley Stacey. Front row: Brooke Stacey, Brooke Moore.

these two photos submitted by Cynthia Moser

(Right) **Akron Ohio-Weathervane Community Playhouse** (Nov. 17-Dec. 18, 1994)  
 Back row: Kelly Jones, Karla Dotson, Angelique Osborne, Alaina Cheronis, Alyson Blazey, Kelly Flynn (Annie), Lisa Schueller, Lindsay Nichols. Front row: Chanel Hodges, Caitlin Cook, Sarah Weinhardt.



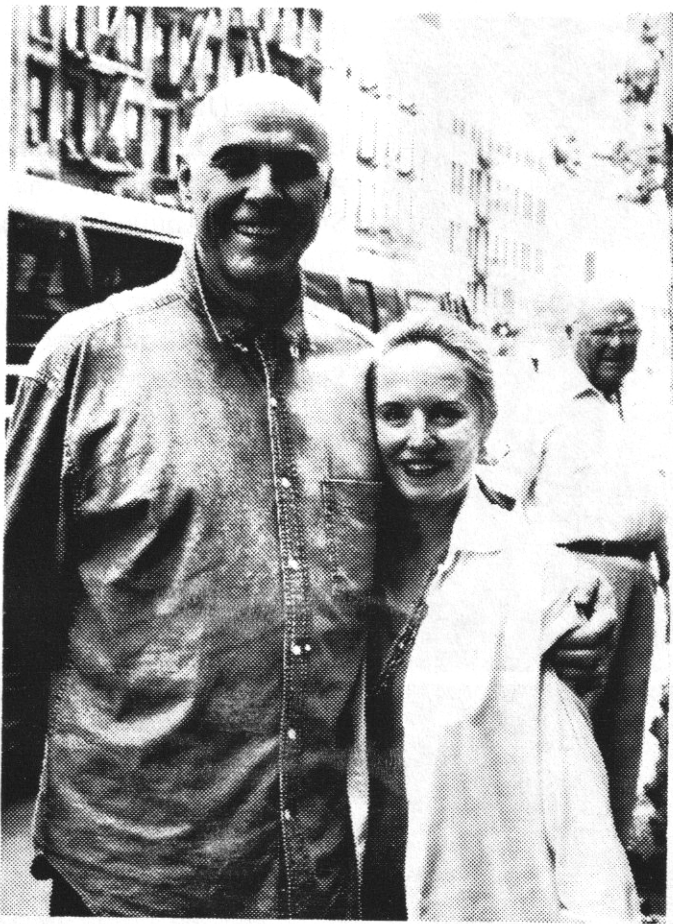
November 1994-Jon with **Aileen Quinn** at **Oliver!** at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, NJ.



January 1995-Tricia and Jon with **Larissa Auble** at **Show Boat** at the Gershwin Theater on Broadway.

## Annie Stars and Family...

(Left) **Harve Presnell** and his wife (photo submitted by Cynthia Moser)



(Below) **Andrea McArdle** and her daughter Alexis (photo submitted by Christopher White)



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Little Orphan  
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