

NEXT MEETING: 12 October 1999
Location: John Houseman Studio Too
A ROUNDTABLE
TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF OUR ASSOCIATION!

The 151st meeting of the Stage Managers' Association was called to order at 5:30pm on 16 September 1999 at the John Houseman Studio Too by 1st Vice Chair Rich Costabile. Present were 5 members.

RICH: John Atherlay sends his great regrets that he's unable to attend this, the first meeting of the 1999-2000 season. He is rehearsing a production of *Company* which will be touring this Fall. John has written a letter to the membership announcing the inauguration of the new season and inviting all stage managers to attend the next meeting of the SMA on October 12th. Most of the other Board members are employed currently, as well, and are unable to attend this meeting. Ira Mont, Past Chair, and Shelli Aderman, Co-Secretary, were at the backstage tour of *Annie Get Your Gun*, held just before this meeting, but had to leave after the tour to get to their theaters. Sixteen members / prospective members participated, despite the arrival of Hurricane Floyd. Richard Hester conducted the tour, which originated from a suggestion by Co-Secretary Dan Zittel at a Board meeting over the summer, and was arranged by Ira Mont with Peter Lawrence and Richard Hester.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Debora Kingston sent a message reporting that we were quite solvent.

MEMBERSHIP: Membership is hovering close to the 400 mark, and that one of the thrusts of John Atherlay's platform is to expand our membership, especially regionally, and to find ways to achieve greater membership participation.

POSTINGS: The use of e-mail to post jobs and other notices has been a great success so far. Several members have landed jobs from these postings. Rich solicited all members to send him their e-mail addresses if they're not already receiving these postings and notices.

WEB SITE: Bill Jones, on behalf of the Web Site committee headed by Steve Espach, reported that the next step in setting up the web site is to create a domain, and to find an internet service provider (ISP) which will host it. He reports that the membership has to decide what they want the web site to be, how it will function, and that will lead us to an appropriate ISP.

OPERATION OBSERVATION: No shows are currently listed. As we continue to find new ways to utilize email postings, Rich asked membership to email him if their show can participate in this vital program. He will post this information on a regular basis to the SMA's e-mail distribution list.

NEW BUSINESS:

MEMBER: What is the potential "political" nature of the SMA?

RICH: That is one of the things that will be addressed in the upcoming roundtable discussion led by John Atherlay. I urge you all to attend and participate.

MEMBER: I've been in NY since 1985 and have pursued work as an actor, producer and stage manager. I am SO very impressed with the e-mail postings and want to "give credit where credit is due".

MEMBER: Will general managers, producers, theater companies etc. be notified of the SMA's ability to post job offerings?

RICH: As of the moment, postings consist of jobs that are referred to us. There has been no attempt made to date, to actively solicit postings.

During the ensuing discussion, it was mentioned that the next generation of SMs will be ever more computer literate, and will look to use online resources more extensively. Also, there are other places, such as Playbill Online, to search for jobs. It would be great to be able to link to these from the SMA web site.

MEMBER: When will the contact sheet will be updated?

RICH: I'll check with the Secretaries.

MEMBER: What is the status of the *Stage Managers' Directory*?

RICH: A questionnaire had been sent out to past recipients of the *Directory*, asking them to tell us what form they would like to see the *Directory* take. The responses to that questionnaire will determine the next step for the *Directory* committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:02pm.

JOHN M. ATHERLAY
Chair

RICHARD COSTABILE
First Vice Chair

JAMES D'ASARO
Second Vice Chair

SHELLI ADERMAN
Secretary

DAN ZITTEL
Secretary

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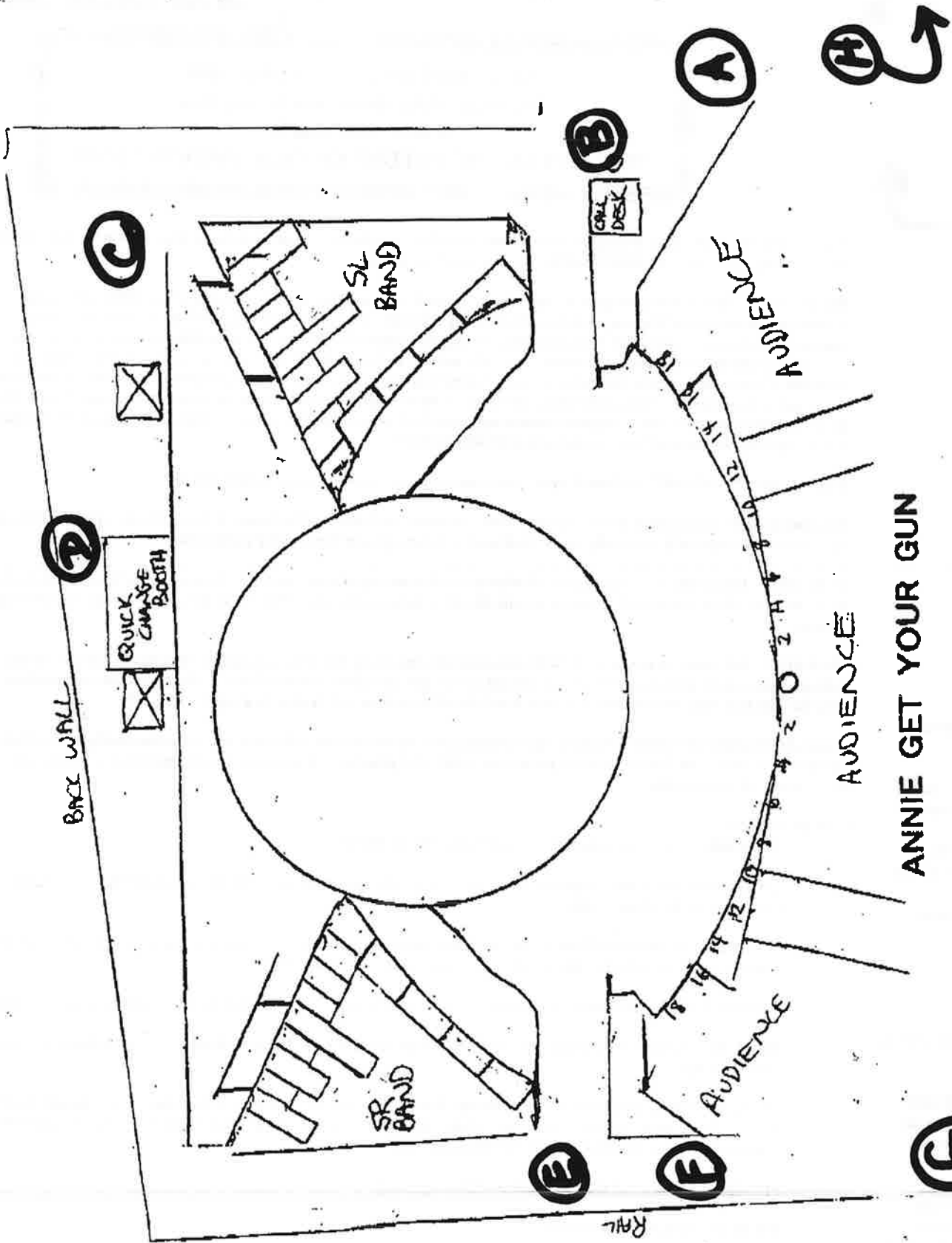
MARJORIE HORNE

LORI LUNDQUIST

JEFFREY MARKOWITZ

CHERYL MINTZ

IRA MONT



ANNIE GET YOUR GUN
 MARQUIS THEATRE BACKSTAGE

Backstage Tour of *Annie Get Your Gun*

SHELLI: Thank you for braving the elements created by Hurricane Floyd, and RSVPing with promptness. We've got a small handheld tape recorder today rather than our normal rig, because of the weather. Present here at the Marquis Theatre today are Rich Costabile, First Vice Chair, Ira Mont, Past Chair, and Richard Hester, who is being very gracious and letting us play in his theatre today. [SEE GROUND PLAN, LETTER "A"]

RICHARD: I could get out of rehearsal! I thought I would tell you how we set up the show, in general, and then show you why some of the things are the way they are. We're not *Phantom of the Opera* so there isn't a lot of machinery. This show is pretty much driven by actors. The props and scenery, such as it is, is more or less manually pushed on and is all part of the action. In terms of pyrotechnics, it is not that enthralling. I think you guys will be able to see how a show like this runs pretty clearly. Peter Lawrence was the PSM when we went into rehearsal. I was the first [assistant], and Jim Wooley was the second [assistant]. Lora Powell was the assistant. We set it up knowing that right after we opened Peter would then become the supervisor and the three of us would all bump up. I would become PSM, Jim would become first [assistant] and Lora would become second [assistant]. The advantage of this has really been that during the tech period I had to set up half of backstage. Usually the PSM never has any actual experience in knowing how backstage is operating working. To me, that has been one of the best advantages of being able to be on the deck during that period. I have a much clearer idea of what's going on when something goes wrong, or who hasn't done what they were supposed to do, or whatever. I also know what the actors are going through back there when I need to teach them. A lot of times you don't know the traffic and obstacles back there until you've done it by trial and error. We also had a weird thing in that we rehearsed at Westbeth Studios for four weeks, and then we teched the show in Purchase, NY for two weeks. Then we went back into a studio for a week while they moved the set down to the Kennedy Center. We were there for four weeks, then came back into a studio for a week while they moved the set here, and then previewed for four weeks. Having started at Purchase and the Kennedy Center, where there are acres and acres of backstage space, we came here where there is none. We literally had the backstage area taped off where people could go. It was this tiny little area in this enormous space [GENERAL LAUGHTER]. We would be forcing people to be in these tiny, tight little aisles. They all thought we were insane. We managed to solve a lot of the space problems while we had way too much space, so coming in here was fairly smooth. Of course, everything was still smaller than we really thought it was going to be. Nothing was quite right, we had pipes sticking out the wall and we couldn't move stuff. It has pretty much worked out. The way we're running now, is Peter has remained supervisor and will supervise the tour when and if it goes out, and the

London production, when and if that happens, and he supervises this. His responsibilities now are to take care of casting. In a month or so he'll go on casting tours around the country to look for ensemble members. That is something he does on *Saigon* and *Les Miz* as Supervisor, so he does all the shows at one time. When he's looking at one group of people for a show, he can find them for other shows as well. He also runs interference on stuff, which works out very well. If there are problems here, he and I decide which of us will tackle it. If it is a problem with someone here in the building, sometimes it is better if he tackles it, so I can maintain a relationship with the person here in the building. Sometimes the opposite happens. It has worked out to be pretty great. He has almost nothing to do with the daily running of the show. He really does leave that completely to us. He is there when we need him and pretty much lets us do what we need to do. That relationship is something I think is ultimately going to be the norm. I've done *Phantom* and *Titanic* and that is how all these shows end up getting structured. You get a supervisor looking at all the companies, and an individual PSM maintains each company. It has a potential of being a kind of nightmare, depending on the people involved. In this case it works perfectly. It is everything you could ask for. There is always someone as a PSM I can go to who is separate from the daily crises that are happening. Of course, there are no crises.

[MOVING TO LETTER "B"] We're rehearsing understudies now, and there is a dance rehearsal going on, but they know we're coming. In the last three weeks we've had eight new people starting the show. Two little kids, two male swings, who each has to learn nine parts, a new female ensemble member, new male ensemble member, and two new standbys who each cover the major parts, Frank, Annie, Buffalo Bill and Pawnee. Clearly there is really no room back here whatsoever, and this is a newly built theatre. The fact that this theatre is connected to the Marquis Hotel presents problems all their own. Our heating and air conditioning systems are linked with theirs. When they originally built the hotel, apparently the front of the building, with the big Kodak picture, was going to be further off the street. They pushed it out by a good ten feet or more. As a result of pushing it out, none of the existing plans have anything to do with what is really there. We've been trying to get the air conditioning system split up. We have the age old problem of the principals wanting to be cold and the dancers wanting to be hot. Trying to find where the wiring goes, where the ducts go, is like archaeology. No one has any idea. Every time we open the ceiling there is a new surprise. The sight of technicians standing staring open-mouthed at what they're seeing in the ceiling is common. That has been an ongoing problem since the theatre opened. It has gotten to a point where everyone is pretty comfortable. You can tell it is cold in here and it will get colder. The call desk here was Peter Lawrence's from another show. It was Peter's choice to set it up this way, with call lights on both

sides. We have a conductor monitor, and a full stage monitor. We have a trapeze trick in the show, so this is a side camera pointed at the trapeze which is right there. We've got a combination of manual fly rail and auto fly. We have two tents upstage that are computer driven. There is one scene where there are two banners that come in and one in the center. We added the one in the center later so the two on the side are computer driven and the one in the middle is manual. There are some pieces we tried to get computerized. There are three ballroom chandeliers that come in. It works beautifully until there are new people up on the rail, which of course is every performance. Then it looks terrible. The crew turnover here, as it is in any theatre, is pretty huge, even among our contract guys. There is almost always somebody who has never done the show before doing the show where one of us will need to be on the deck with them, or talking them through something to get through the show. If things keep going the way they have been, I'd say in another month or two every single person who could ever work on Broadway will have worked here and in that case they'll all know the show and it will be fine. [GENERAL LAUGHTER]

The important thing we have here where people stop during the show is tic-tacs. For Act II we have peanuts in the drawer. The decision was made early on that the orchestra would be onstage. They're divided into two parts, left and right.

Over there is Patti D'Beck, our dance captain, teaching. No one should ever do a show without Patti D'Beck. She is brilliant. You've got the orchestra on two sides here. We also have our string section underneath in the pit. That was primarily done because we couldn't fit them in. It was also difficult to mix the strings in because we have percussion on both sides. The conductor is over there [POINTING ACROSS THE STAGE TO THE STAGE RIGHT ORCHESTRA SECTION]. He has a camera on him and monitors in front. Of course, with people going up and down stairs, the camera shakes.

[MOVING TO LETTER "C"] Be aware we're built up about a foot back here, so there are lots of areas that are taped. There are lots of convenient places to fall through. You can see we really are using every inch of space back here. The choreography backstage is about as complicated as the choreography on stage. There is a lot of trading off of what things go up in the air and when things come down. Pretty much all of the props are stored underneath the bandstand and on the side. The set pieces are pretty much stored on the other set pieces. We have hampers and trunks that fit in anywhere there is space.

MEMBER: When you were at Purchase and the Kennedy Center, did you determine what pieces would fly and work with it flown? Or did you work with it on the ground, in the acres of space, knowing how it would be flown?

RICHARD: We taped out storage space on the floor, knowing it would be in the air. You haven't lived until you've tried to convince the Kennedy Center crew to take two minutes to move something three feet because that's how long it will be in the way. We pretty much knew what would go up in the air. The other problem we had was we never had a cross-section that would tell us where some of this duct work was. We continually had to have people in New York come into the theatre and describe to us what the ceiling looked like. "Is there something sticking out?" These radiators. They would say, "There are radiators sticking out." We'd ask, "How far?" They'd indicate, "This far." We were in this huge football field so they would have a clear idea in their heads of what it looked like, and they would have taken measurements. They then put the measurements down on the floor, and would say, "This can't possibly be right." These ladders weren't on any plans whatsoever. We ended up saying, "Somewhere in this general vicinity the door will go up in the air. When we get to New York we'll sort of figure it out." We didn't really know how much space we had between that and the ladder. The truth of the matter is the door doesn't get through there. It is on an air caster and it is too big. It had to go right there. The other thing we have that is big is this rail unit here upstage left. The rail unit breaks into two pieces, but it has to come through that little area there. Not only does it have to come through that area ... Bernadette sings "Lost in His Arms". In the middle of the song, this piece gets cleared, and comes around the corner. It has to be cleared out of the way in time for Bernadette to walk through there at the end of the song, into that booth to do a quick change. Bernadette comes through, gets into the booth and does her quick change. While she's quick changing, this goes up in the air. When she finishes the quick change, she goes back on stage. Now, of course, they can do it in about a second. During tech, the choreography of getting Bernadette and these pieces where they needed to be was a major problem. We had no idea how narrow that space was really going to be. We only had vague descriptions of what the space was going to be. We sent anyone going to New York to check the room between the two cement columns.

MEMBER: Do you have a policy about Workers' Compensation when you're in tech versus when the show is running? I would think the liability on this would be unbelievable. The chances of somebody getting hurt with the situation you just described.

RICHARD: I don't know how the insurance works, and what the rates are. This show is so much safer than some of the other shows I've done. On *Titanic*, literally every time we moved someone was being sent 20 feet in the air on something that was tilting. We have nothing like that here. In actuality, the danger here is infinitely less than it is on one of those bigger shows. On *Titanic* all we ever did during tech was work out safety issues. The entire show was choreographed on stage. We started from a point of safety and then added art to it. Here we could sort of do art and then fix the things that needed to be fixed for safety measures.

As soon as the *Titanic* started sinking, safety issues pretty much dictated how that show looked. We sent in about 10 C-2 forms a week.

[MOVING TO LETTER "D"] One of the problems we had during the winter in this space was that these radiators get so hot that you can get scalded touching them. However, six inches away, it is so cold you need a coat. If you stood right here you'd be vaguely comfortable, but if you leaned back you'd have third degree burns and if you leaned forward you'd have frostbite. We never quite figured it out. We're glad it is now summer where the mop freezes to the wall from the air conditioning. At least it is continuous. [GENERAL LAUGHTER]

The dressing rooms are all upstairs. The ensemble does almost all their quick changing in the hallway by the sign in sheets, and in the hallway on the other side. There are hooks everywhere that you can possibly put a hook. There will be one costume, and then the dressers will put the next costume. The choreography of getting through here when people are and aren't changing gets interesting. We've rigged a way the piece you just came past can open up and become a quick change booth instantaneously before it has to go onstage and be a set piece. Bernadette pretty much uses this room, and two or three other people during the course of the show use it when she isn't. While Bernadette is quick changing in there, Tom Wopat is quick changing in those trunks. [GENERAL LAUGHTER]

The little dressing room away from home.

MEMBER: How many dressers on the show?

RICHARD: Eight, one supervisor and an assistant supervisor.

[MOVING TO LETTER "E"] There are a lot of holes here, so be careful. One of the big problems we had on this particular show was figuring out how to light these particular areas, given the fact that our entire show is white tent that picks up almost any kind of spill from anything. Trying to find places where people could have mirror stations, and getting enough light here for Bernadette's hair change thing that happens, has been an enormous difficulty. Even keeping these blue crossover lights from bouncing has taken days. Tilting things six inches one way, finding it too dark, two inches back the other way caused spill. The other problem is noise. You can't make any sound back here. The only thing separating us from the audience is this flimsy piece of cloth. It also drives the musicians insane when we're talking. The musicians drive everybody insane [GENERAL LAUGHTER]. Thankfully the rail is up there. I think it used to be down here, but a couple of shows ago they moved it into the air. We would literally have no room whatsoever if it was still down here.

MEMBER: Are they fairly disciplined about noise up there?

RICHARD: I have to say they really are. I have no idea why. I am not questioning it. It may be that with the acoustics, the noise is not going out. If you sit in the left balcony, sometimes you can hear chatter up there that you can't hear anywhere else in the theatre. That's the way the acoustics are. The other thing that is very odd in this house is that the followspot positions are behind the audience in the balcony. It is all very well and good until we get a standing ovation. Then the followspots are gone. If someone arrives late, you can see where they're going to sit on stage. We're trying to get the ushers to keep people until the followspots are done. We're sending them back out into the lobby and around to the other side. It is an ongoing issue here. We had to rewrite some light cues. Clearly, when Bernadette comes out she gets a standing ovation every single night. As soon as she comes out, she goes into complete darkness.

Our main scenery issues, and this was something we started dealing with in the rehearsal studio, are these trunks. These trunks set up the train scene in Scene Three, and they're used in various other places in the show. They get pushed on by actors. They are incredibly heavy, although not so heavy that the actors can't push them on. They are just as wide as this space. We had to adjust the orchestra platforms upstage so they would actually fit in the space. The whole thing is within an inch of not working. It also means that these things have to be set in the aisle before people have exited, so an awful lot of the cast has to exit and climb over trunks. This is an ongoing issue here.

[MOVING TO LETTER "F"] This little space right here was a gift. We had no idea it was here, and it has saved our lives.

MEMBER: You said something about John's Side Shot being on stage right side? What is that?

RICHARD: From there is where the carpenter is pulling the trapeze double, or Bernadette, actually [GENERAL LAUGHTER] up onto the trapeze. He is looking at the monitor which shows the camera stage left, so he is seeing the stage left side of it, and he can see her live stage right through that opening up there. John Croissant was our original carpenter doing that. This is the only other quick change area we have. The crew rooms are back that way. This is a storage / costume / quick change room. The male ensemble pretty much dresses here. Right on the other side of that door is the audience. This is, of course, a noise issue. You can hear how noisy it is in here. It is a very live space. The theatre is actually a pretty great place to play. In terms of these huge theatres, like the Gershwin, and the Minskoff, it is a very nice feeling out there. It is a nightmare for the sound department because the walls are all softgoods. It actually does not feel like a huge barn of a theatre and it is one of the biggest ones out there. We seat about 1600.

We have eleven carpenters, including those on the rail, and eight on sound / electricians. On wardrobe there is a supervisor, an assistant, a stitcher and nine dressers. On hair, there is a supervisor plus

three.

MEMBER: How much was it a burden for the stage managers versus set design team in terms of back logistics?

RICHARD: Tony Walton was our set designer and that was great. If you have to shoehorn something in, you want Tony there. We essentially did it together. As we were working things out in the studio, we would say, "All this stuff is going to end up on stage right. We need it to be stage right. What do we do?" Tony was in rehearsal a lot. When things absolutely did not fit, Tony and Graciela Daniele would work out how to switch things. We had to have the majority of the train trunks come from stage right, and we knew that from the get-go, for storage reasons. We rehearsed knowing that was where they were coming from and that was where they would always be. The design led us to have to do some things on stage, and other things we worked out as we went along. We would try and do what they said. If there was no way to do what the original design called for, we would sit down and all talk about it and figure a way to adjust it. It was a very smooth tech period. We were all pretty prepared for what was going on. We all knew there would be no space from the beginning, so when we got here and there was no space, it was not a surprise. It was a surprise to some of the actors. They didn't believe us. They don't look at tape when they're running around trying to memorize their lines. [GENERAL LAUGHTER]

MEMBER: Sometimes you wonder why we bother.

MEMBER: For us. [GENERAL LAUGHTER]

RICHARD: Later on we can say, "There was tape there. I told you that was a wall."

MEMBER: What was the tech time like?

RICHARD: You pretty much have unlimited ten out of twelves, which, if you're doing a gargantuan show like *Titanic*, means that all of a sudden your life is gone for months. This show was really pretty smooth. We had two weeks of tech. Since we were up in Purchase and commuting back and forth, the commuting time came out of the ten out of twelves. We never had really long killer days. Also, technically, this show wasn't that complicated. We weren't called in to do early morning stuff very often at all. Once we came into the theatre we had very little time. So much had to be worked out in advance. We had very little time from arriving in the theatre until our first performance. We didn't have any long, extended period. Thank goodness.

MEMBER: In terms of you moving up, when did you start learning to call the show?

RICHARD: I started learning almost immediately after our first performance in Washington. I was calling in Washington, and Jim was calling in

Washington. Lora didn't start to learn to call the show until the week after opening, when Peter left and we all moved up. Lora had been there as production assistant, so she pretty much knew everything that was going on and was ready to step in.

MEMBER: Does it take one or two stage managers to run the deck?

RICHARD: It takes one person to run the deck. We put the deck person pretty much stage right. The only time they really go stage left is for Bernadette's entrance. There are a couple times we're in the pit for people who enter in and out of the pit. The complicated stuff is the traffic around the trunks and the safety issue, especially with new people. Of course everything makes sense in work light, then all of a sudden you're in pitch darkness. Surprise.

MEMBER: How long did it take the actors to get comfortable with the physical space here?

RICHARD: It really didn't take very long at all. Once they realized why we had not let them be comfortable at all in Washington, the traffic of the show was pretty well set by the time we moved in here. We did do a certain amount of changes, but most of those were internal scene stuff. We didn't do any of that wholesale moving of Scene Four before Scene One. We didn't go through changes like that, thank heavens.

MEMBER: Are there any particularly challenging sequences of cues in the show?

RICHARD: The opening number has a lot of cues in it. The trapeze trick's problem is that each individual balloon pop is called. It is a complicated sequence to call only because you can't pay attention to it while you're doing it or you get lost. The drums are beating out one rhythm which you have to follow to call, but when you call a balloon pop, it then makes a bang on the next beat. If you're listening to it, that will totally throw you off. The first time all of us called that it didn't look anything like it was supposed to. [GENERAL LAUGHTER] There are two we call on the deck, then one that an ensemble woman pops herself, then two, then one, then two, then one. That's the only part that's hairy. For the most part it is a very straightforward show to call. We do about half the cues off of music counts, and the other half are visual. The other great thing about this show is the entire company is great, from top to bottom. Frankly, that goes for the crew, too. Bernadette and Tom are two of the greatest people you could ever hope to work with, and Graciela as well. That whole feeling really suffuses down through the entire company. No one took anything that was going on seriously enough to panic about it. Everyone pretty much always had a good time.

MEMBER: With the hierarchy of a production supervisor, is that sort of like over at *Ragtime* where they have an Assistant Director, or do you still give acting notes as the PSM.

RICHARD: Peter will come and see the show once a week, or once every other week. He and I will talk about specific things in the show that we are either working on or that need fixing. Some of them will be things that I've already given, and depending on what it is, we'll decide who will give the note. Sometimes if Peter isn't having any luck getting through to someone, I can figure the way to get the note through to them. Sometimes if I've come up against a blank wall, Peter, just by dint of being a new voice, can get through. We use each other. On some of these shows with supervisors, and it happens a bit on *Phantom*, one thing that happens is actors are getting notes from ten different people. One of the music supervisors was giving a note to someone on one of the *Phantom* tours. He said, "Someone told me to do this instead." They couldn't figure out who had given that note. The music supervisor said, "Was that person more or less important than I am?" We don't have that problem here. We don't have enough companies to have that many supervisors yet. John McDaniel is our music supervisor and he is at the *Rosie O'Donnell* show most of the time. He'll come in with some overall notes. Peter is much more hands on than that. We trade off. It really works well. I was a little afraid going into it that it would be too many cooks, but our four personalities mesh, as well as with Patti D'Beck. It works beautifully. I'd do it again in a heartbeat. It makes the most sense of any situation I've ever been in in terms of a show of this size with this many things going on. We also do a lot of press events here, on top of running the show. This past week we did *The Jerry Lewis Telethon* in LA. There is an endless amount of traveling back and forth and doing advance. Peter and I will decide which of us will go and whether we need to have our dance captain with us, and that works out more or less ok. We've just come through this period of putting eight new people in the show, as well as the *Telethon*, *Broadway on Broadway*, and everything else. We keep saying the only thing worse than all the work we're doing is when we don't have any work. It certainly beats the unemployment office.

MEMBER: Does all the outside stuff affect performances here? Are understudies going to do the *Telethon*?

RICHARD: We have not yet had an event where we had to take anyone out of the show. The *Telethon* was on our day off. We flew to LA on the Sunday after our matinee, and we flew back the next Monday night in time for Tuesday. We did "My Defenses Are Down" with Tom Wopat and the eight ensemble men. This is a hard show to pull numbers from. We're still trying to figure which numbers work on camera, which numbers you can do without props. Our opening number has so many people in it, and is a very complicated number to do, yet it is what everyone wants. It has the entire company, and it has lots of little solo sections that are connected into the props they're using. We've come up with a version of the opening number that we send to events like that. "My Defenses Are Down" seems to work well for us on camera.

MEMBER: How many are in the cast and how does it break down?

RICHARD: We have sixteen ensemble members, eight men and eight women. One ensemble man is not a dancer. He is the Frank Butler and Buffalo Bill cover. We actually make him move almost all the scenery in the show. He's really excited about that. [GENERAL LAUGHTER] We have ten principals. We have two standbys, one male, one female. One covers Annie Oakley and Dolly Tate, the other covers Buffalo Bill and Frank. We have three kids that perform and one who is a cover, all between eight and eleven years old. We do have a wrangler for the kid.

MEMBER: Do you have security issues because of your star?

RICHARD: The doormen are very good. We have police barricades at the end of the show, because we do get a huge mob of people waiting to meet Bernadette and Tom. The doormen are all very good. We also have street cops there just in case. Knock wood, we haven't had any real issues. Both Bernadette and Tom are very gracious about meeting the people. When we're in an event like Broadway on Broadway, the company tends to gather around Bernadette when we're going through a crowd scene to protect her, but that is pretty much the company wanting to do that for Bernadette, rather than Bernadette asking for it. Bernadette is one of those people you kind of think you'd take a bullet for. She's just as nice as you can get. She is very involved with Broadway Cares/Equity Fights Aids fund-raising. She continually comes into the office with new ideas for raising money. She's very gung ho. She's a very active company member. She's great.

MEMBER: She's the deputy?

RICHARD: Hardly. [GENERAL LAUGHTER] [CROSSING THE STAGE, GOING TO THE SM OFFICE, LETTER "H", OFF DOWNSTAGE LEFT, BEYOND WHERE THE TOUR STARTED]

MEMBER: Where do you get these big old tubs of Riccola? I keep buying those little bags.

RICHARD: You can actually get them from Riccola.

MUCH WALKING, nattering

RICHARD: This is Jim Woolley. He's also responsible for the arbor out there. This is our office. Come on in. It is usually this crowded during the show. This office is purely stage management. This is the Company Manager's base at half hour. Patti D'Beck, dance captain, also uses it. During the course of the show, half the cast and all of the crew are in and out of it. Everyone is talking and screaming, running around, and playing with toys. Patti is essentially our second swing.

MEMBER: Does everyone wear a body mic or is

there swapping?

RICHARD: Everybody has their own. We have a variety of different phone lines. House phone, fax phone, two regular phones and a bunch of cell phones. As soon as a phone rings in here everybody has to freeze to figure out what direction to grab in.

MEMBER: What is your day like?

RICHARD: Now that we've put the majority of the new people in, we've settled into the routine of rehearsing Thursday and Friday at 1:00. On a day like today, we're just starting with Richard and Karyn as Frank and Annie. I'm working with them up in the lobby, essentially talking through the parts and giving them blocking to write down in their scripts. We're pretty much planning to do that all day. Richard has scheduled an audition during this tour so it has worked out well for everyone. Patti D'Beck is onstage teaching dance. The show is pretty much divided in that there is very little for me to do with the dancers. There is very little scene work. If there is, it is something that can be done in three minutes. It will be one little three line interchange. Patti teaches the dancers, and I'll teach the principals. Lora Powell has been given the lovely task of being in charge of the kids. She teaches and maintains them. We rehearse until about 5:30 on any given day and are back in the office by 6:30. From 6:30 to 7:30 it is basically figuring who's in and who's out, telling wardrobe, telling hair, telling sound. Hopefully you remember all three of those people. Calling understudies. If it is one of the major principals, we let Bernadette and Tom know. At half hour, the actors all arrive. Usually, during the show itself, I'll call Wednesday and Saturday matinees and either Jim or Lora will do the deck. The rest of the time Jim and Lora alternate calling and doing the deck. I'll either be doing paperwork here or watch the show from the front. I try to watch the show twice a week, but it usually ends up being once a week from beginning to end, and scenes over the rest of the week. It totally depends on how much mayhem is happening back here, how busy it gets. We've been doing a lot of meet and greets lately, where groups will come in, and for a donation to BC/EFA, the cast will come down and talk to them. Almost every day in September has one. We spend a lot of the show trying to convince people to come down and do the meet and greet, so it's not just one of us and the four kids. At the beginning of this time when we were replacing everybody and his brother, we rented rehearsal studios for Wednesday and Saturday matinees. One of the stage managers would go with Patti D'Beck and would be there from 1 to 6 rehearsing dance numbers and music. Our Associate Director, John Mulcahi, does most of the teaching. Marvin, our conductor, will do the major put ins and have a session or two with the principals musically. It is usually between Patti, John and myself to get people ready to go.

MEMBER: You talked about the large turnover of crew. I did a show once where the department heads did not well-train their replacements and

subs. How do you deal with that here?

RICHARD: I have to say that our contract crew is really good and they are really very conscientious. The only problem arises when there is a last minute addition so they are effectively teaching the person as the show is going on. That's when we get into trouble. There's nothing you can do while it is happening and you hope you can fix it for the next one. They're also pretty conscientious about training regular subs. The ones we're prepared for know what they're doing. It is the surprise ones. "This is the stage. This is Bernadette. Begin."

MEMBER: Do you utilize the trap room at all? I know you have no elevators.

RICHARD: Our light board operator is down there, and it is essentially the musicians' dressing room. There is the under-the-stage area, and there is a sort of crossover that goes under the first couple rows of the orchestra. There are lockers in there that the musicians use, and tables at one end. The dimmers and console are at the other end. The automation console is up on the rail.

MEMBER: How do you do the gunshots?

RICHARD: We were very conscious early on to make the guns absolutely not real. They are made of PVC pipe and carved wood handles. They are clearly not real rifles. Cubby is our drummer, and does a rim shot for each gunshot. Within a shot or two, the audience buys that they are gunshots. Graciela particularly wanted the audience to not be concerned about the gunshots.

MEMBER: The guns were very clearly out when we came backstage. They can because they are clearly not real.

RICHARD: There is nothing real about them. If you fell on one, you might hurt yourself.

MEMBER: What is the running time?

RICHARD: About two hours, forty minutes, including intermission. We start at five past 8, with a fifteen minute intermission.

SHELLI: ~~We have that on tape.~~ Five after eight.

RICHARD: Absolutely, and I'll stand by it to my dying day. [GENERAL LAUGHTER]

IRA: We'd like to thank you, Richard, and give you the opportunity to sign autographs.