

'Fiddler' Cast's Backstage World Fascinates

At 2 p.m. Sunday in Bryan Civic Auditorium, like the 30 minutes before each performance of "Fiddler on the Roof," 45 actors pass from one world to another.

They walk through the stage door, sign in on the bulletin board, pick up their mail and move from the everyday world to the backstage world.

Reading letters from home, wires from agents, greeting fellow players including burly star Bob Carroll who plays Tevye in "Fiddler," they go quickly to their dressing rooms and begin the ritual which will make them the people of Anatevka, a village in Russia, in 1906 on the eve of the revolutionary period.

Carroll, at curtain minus 30 minutes, might be eating a very rare hamburger or brewing coffee in a portable percolator which is as essential a part of the "Fiddler" star's dressing table equipment as his makeup box.

At the same time, he may have Neal Thompson, who plays the Fiddler, in to snip his beard—Carroll's own and very luxuriant.

Other "Fiddler" players may be warming up in the hall, applying makeup or in the wardrobe room for costume repairs, a stitch here or a little sewing there.

At stage left, production stage manager Kenneth Porter is carefully checking his 12-man crew, position of props, sets and lights. Nearby, musicians are tuning up and maybe "catching up on their eating," smiles Miss Ruth Newton, production coordinator.

Preparations for 2:30 and 8:30 p.m. Sunday performances of

"Fiddler" before Bryan and College Station Rotary Series patrons will begin unreeing much earlier Sunday, however.

Two of the largest vans allowed on U.S. highways and three buses carrying 60 people will arrive at 7 a.m. Sunday. Some 25 local helpers will be at the auditorium to assist with unloading.

Porter and his crews will soon be busy stringing 4½ miles of electrical cable for lighting the elaborate scenery by Boris Aronson. Costumes designed by Patricia Zipprodt and valued at \$150,000 will be readied for the matinee performance.

All the costumes were made from brand new fabric before the Harold Prince production tour began. Then they were aged to look ragged, battered and worn. Boots costing \$85 a pair were run through a sanding machine to acquire the proper look of wear.

None of the buttons on the costumes match, paralleling a Russian custom of the period. Buttons were handed down family to family.

At the 15-minute point before curtain, all members of the company have careful makeup and costume checks.

"There are so many costumes in 'Fiddler,' it's wise to check them at every performance by the 15-minute mark while there is still time for repairs," Miss Newton said.

At 0:05, stage manager Barry Molitch taps on Carroll's door and says, "Five minutes, Mr. Carroll." Carroll replies "Thank you" in the tradition of the theater.

Molitch, in turn, knocks on the doors of Miss Laura Stuart, who plays Tevye's tart-tongued wife Golde; Miss Charlotte Jones, experienced trouper who plays Yente, the Matchmaker, and other members of the company with the "five minute call."

"From that point, every member of the company concentrates on becoming the person he is supposed to be in the show," Miss

Newton explained.

The most important words any performer hears, "Places, please," follows the brief period.

The production stage manager, working at a high stand-up desk in the wings, has heard from the house manager that the audience is in, doors closed and the show ready to go.

Speaking into the mike of his headset intercom which links him

to the orchestra leader, spot men, electrician and others, Potter cues the orchestra leader that he is ready. Then he cues the electrician, "House to half."

After the audience settles to quietness, the electrician is again cued to "house out," the lights go out and the conductor's baton hits the downbeat to the overture.

At the final note fades, Porter calls for "house curtain up," and

the electrician, who knows his cues, brings up the lighting indicated for the opening scene of "Fiddler on the Roof," a musical so famous it has been played in Finland, Israel, England, Holland, Australia, Japan, Germany, the countries of Scandinavia and many others.

The Fiddler—Neal Thompson in his non-speaking role—begins to fiddle atop the cottage and

Tevye enters at stage left. "The words 'places please' are magic in show business," Miss Newton said. "Actors, no matter how experienced, tremble and gulp. But once on stage, the magic exchange between actor and audience begins and soon they are both in Anatevka, Russia, living together the lives of the oppressed, but never downhearted, happy-despite-it-all villagers."

Coeds Feeling Unaccepted

(Continued from page 1)

til a dorm was built, because not enough girls will come to a campus without approved housing.

"Most parents," a brunette said, "don't like it. At least the freshmen should have some sort of supervision."

"I would never send my daughter to a school without dorms," Mrs. Grace Kieffer, sponsor of University Women, said.

Howard Vestal, director of management services, said that it was a stated policy of the board of directors that "there are no plans to provide dormitory facilities for women."

Ford Albritton, member of the board of directors, said that as far as he knew there was no board policy.

"We have never acted affirmatively in this area," he said, but hopefully this will come about in the near future."

The new dormitory complex which will be erected on the practice putting green is designed so that it can be used by women students, if it is desirable to do so at the time," according to Dean of Students James P. Hannigan.

"It doesn't really matter whether dorms are on campus or off," said one coed, "but it would give us some place to go if they were on campus. As it is now, the only place we can sit down, especially in bad weather, is a restroom with chairs and there aren't too many of those. It would help to have a ladies lounge in the new mall with lockers so you wouldn't have to carry everything you own to class."

Most coeds said that the restrooms were too few and too hard to find. Five girls suggested that a map of ladies restrooms be published.

Several girls said that some buildings did not have ladies restrooms at all and those that did have were inconvenient.

Hannigan said that the problem was one of "a shortage of restrooms, period."

"Male restrooms are being reduced by 50% and remodeled," he said. "All of the new or renovated buildings have adequate facilities for girls. We've added four in the YMCA and there will be a large number in the new Memorial Student Center and many more in the auditorium."

Another problem is finding make-up and clothes at local stores.

"Particularly if you don't have a car," one girl said, "it's hard to find anything here. The EX-

change Store doesn't really carry anything for girls and North Gate merchants only carry old-fashioned make-up."

Several girls said they went home to shop because local stores were "always out of things or don't even carry them."

Several coeds complained that it was difficult to get dates for big campus events such as the class balls.

"Lots of cute girls from A&M sit home," said one, "while the boys import dates from home. If you do get asked, they wait till the last second, because they're sure you'll be around."

"It's really hard to get dates," another added. "My roommate and I have three girls staying with us from out of town who have dates to the fish ball, but we don't."

The girls were undecided about where a coed should not go without a date. Some said they would not even go to a campus sponsored activity such as a basketball game without a date while others said that they didn't feel that they needed dates to go places.

A majority of the coeds resented the term Maggie, and suggested the alternate name of Aggie coed.

"Maggie reminds me of maggots or moose," said one sophomore. "The boys have the wrong connotation, they use it in a derogatory sense. The term itself is okay, but the meaning is bad."

"It's just another device to keep girls apart," one said. "Everywhere else the coeds are called the same thing as the boys, like Red Raiders."

Two coeds said that they had changed their minds about the word.

"Most people just mean that you're one of the gang when they call you Maggie," they said.

Most girls agreed that A&M coeds should be allowed to run for Aggie Sweetheart, but that Texas Woman's University not be totally excluded.

"We're left out completely now," a junior said. "There are a lot of good looking girls here and they should be able to compete with TWU girls on an equal basis. The whole idea of a sweetheart being chosen from another school is a slap in the face."

One senior seemed to sum it up: "We like the school, but it doesn't like us. We enjoy the traditions and have as much spirit as the boys, but we come third here. First the corps, then civilians and then the girls. We're not even considered Aggies."



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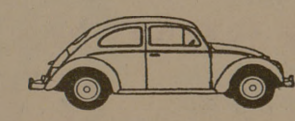
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