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Mr: Sumngr:

Thank you for your interest in our CRAZY HORSE PAGEANT. I will ask our Chamber of Commerce secretary to add your name to her mailing list.

I am not sure what information your Institute is especially interested in for your advisory agency but we might send a few bits of information.

"The Paha Sapa Corporation, producers of the Crazy Horse Pageant, is a South Dakota Corporation owned by local stockholders", (from May 9, 1962). The Board of Directors has ranged in number from five to fifteen (in an effort to get more participation and help).

It appears that \$155,000. worth of stock was printed for the Corporation. \$111,800. has been sold by December, 1972. Much of this was accepted by persons in exchange for materials used the first couple of years in the buildings and grounds.

Hundreds of dollars have been donated by individuals for materials, costumes, small equipment and supplies.

Hot Springs merchants have given money for advertising, for a monetary return nightly for cast members, or have hired a person to participate in the cast.

The Pageant has lost money every year until 1970 when it showed a profit of \$35. The 1972 season was not normal because of a flood condition north of Hot Springs which affected the whole tourist trade in the Black Hills.

Figures and bookkeeping can be used in many ways, but for all practical purposes, the Crazy Horse Pageant has not been profitable for its 12 years

The two major means of income are from Pageant ticket sales, and the Concession sales from souvenirs, pamphlets, books, moccasins, vending machines and pop and popcorn.

Some of the 1972 figures show; Concession income \$13,497.; Ticket sales \$18,601.; Payroll \$10,428. (tax \$569.); Old accounts (back to 1962) \$22,457.; Liabilities and Worth \$47,680.;

Robert Hyde (Rawhyde) researched, wrote, directed and acted in "The Strange Man of the Oglalas" which became the "Crazy Horse Pageant".

He generally played the part of Crazy Horse 1962, 63, and 1964 to resign after the 1964 season. (He is now associated with the Gerald L.K. Smith complex in Eureka Springs, Arkansas), (as the Christus in the "Passion Play"),

Play directors have changed almost annually since then, some paid and some volunteer. At times the top person managed and directed both Concession and Pageant, again the one person had only one activity. During the last few years the president of the Board of Directors has made decisions "on the spot".

The basic and original equipment and costumes were selected in Hollywood by Hyde. Some of it is still in use, altho second-hand when purchased. Two past-directors (during their school-days), are now our local states attorney and our U.S. Senator).

The staging area is advertised as a quarter of a mile long and 400 to

600 feet deep, with Fall River partially encircling it. Some earth-moving was done to make a better slope for the seating area, and the slope leading to the Custer Battlefield above the river, was graded for a better approach to the battle-area plateau. Over the ten years half a dozen "flats" have been created near the seating to locate a level for the Sweat Lodge, an Indian tipi for a Medicine Man, two cavalry scenes and the Big Belly Council. Three natural levels provide spaces for the upper, middle and lower Villages on which are spaced three to nine tipis. One hidden road had to be bulldozed into the steep bank of the river to provide an out-of-sight path from the Concession to the river level. The main level was enlarged and shaped to allow sinking the (old) control Block House in the bank under the seating-slope, and to provide a cove to "hide" the two log buildings which are rolled out (on railroad tracks) to form the stage for Fort Robinson.

The huge parking area also took a little leveling, with two short inlets leading directly in from the arterial highway from Rapid City down to Pine Ridge (Indian country) and Nebraska.

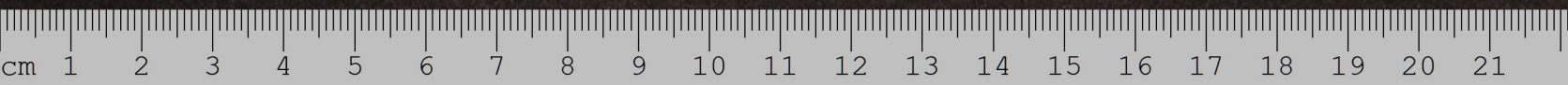
The cast area (costume house, corrals, make-up shelter) has its own approach road to the same level as the upper Village.

The main difference of this Pageant to others is that every bit of sound is on a tape which can be made to drop parts of scenes (to speed up the time on a stormy night with the rain visibly approaching down the valley) or to ~~to~~ provide "lags" to give the cast additional time on slippery ground to move from scene to distant scene. Five audio speakers are controlled to direct the attention toward the scene being enacted. Timing is critical to coordinate the cast action with the rolling tape. As each director took over the Pageant, changes were made to "improve" the tape and the present presentation is quite different from the original "The Strange Man of the Oglalas".

Lighting is accomplished with a mixture of a battery of moguls (for the Village), smaller floods on the intermediate scenes and a large spot mounted in the sound-light control room above and behind the audience. This one spot reaches from the back of the Village to the first look-out scene by General Custer. The Hollywood controls for this lighting is patched and will soon need replacing. All of the lights are taken down each fall and remounted for the new season. Ninety percent of the electrical work is done by local semi-amateurs. The last scene fades out using blacklight in the Death scene of Crazy Horse.

Each year finds different methods being used to hold different casts for the heavy six-nights-a-week schedule. Generally the person playing the part of Crazy Horse has been paid, but circumstances vary from year to year. Both volunteer Indians and whites were bussed from Hot Springs to the Pageant (five miles east of town). A few cast members were financially sponsored by businessmen. Groups of visiting scouts or other young visitors (and families) were used in the cast. For two years now, business donations and a percentage of the nightly ticket sales was used to "pay off" the cast once a week. The nightly cast numbered from 30 to about 160, which meant over 200 individuals listed as "regular" cast members. Ages ranged from carried babies to seventy-year-olds.

The head-ache of the Pageant was the attempts to control belligerent teenagers who would disrupt the cast, not follow directors orders and commit acts of vandalism even during the play.



(Feb.20)

The only "fact" that we can promise from night to night, is that two performances will never be the same. Even tho the sound is all on tape, there are so many possible variants that no matter what the director or the "old-timers" in the cast guard against, something new will crop up to foul up a detail. As in most productions, the mistake is not noticed by the audience even tho the aware cast shudders over the mistake.

As noted in some of the printed explanations, and as in most plays, passing of time is denoted by blackouts with perhaps a voice (white or Indian) covering incidents leading up to the next scene.

Some of the experiences in the Crazy Horse Pageant which led to consternation in the cast, and a slight change in the normal procedure -

Foot soldiers arriving late for the Custer battle because they had to stop and kill rattlesnakes.

Fort Robinson officers shuffling speaking parts because some of their number were still on the Custer battlefield giving first aid to a soldier literally shot in the back by a blank wad.

Horses raced by teenagers too close to the burning tipi and having the tails of the horses catch on fire.

A racing horse getting a hoof caught in the poles of the burning tipi and throwing his rider.

Stopping a scene to fight grass fires in the upper village.

Hearing a horse fall on a slippery bridge in the darkness and not knowing whether the rider is under the horse, in the river, or sprawled on the rocks at the river's edge.

Having the Fort Robinson buildings "jump the track" in the darkness and trying to manhandle them back on before the spotlight flashes on. Having the buildings-wheels cut the light cable, and the director holding the frayed ends of the cable (110 volts) together for fifteen minutes through the final death scenes.

Watching a horse rear up and fall backwards on a rider.

When an in-experienced operator wanders all over the hills an eighth of a mile away and can't find the Custer lookouts, while the tape has already started the dialog.

Flipping on the final lighting, only to note ~~that~~ then that the black lights have been stolen.

Getting fingers caught in the switches on the rails under the Fort buildings.

The cost of accident insurance on the cast was prohibitive, because of the rifles (used only the first two years with blanks) and the horses, and "conditions" on the grounds. Yearly medical bills were around \$100. to \$250. Normal insurance covered the Pageant in the seating and concession areas.

These unorganized paragraphs may give you some ideas concerning the Crazy Horse Pageant which is billed as a community effort, putting on about 55 performances a season.

At our recent stockholders meeting, a representative of one of the nearby Indian reservations informed the meeting that they were hoping to borrow (SBA) enough money to buy assets of the Pageant and produce it as an Indian business venture. They (the tribal council) hoped to have some definite information by the end of February.

Don Collogan

