

Interview with Patricia (Patty) Randall
Saturday, April 9, 2022
The Hill Cumorah Legacy Project

Recorded over Zoom

Interviewee: Patricia (Patty) Randall

Interviewers: Trevor Kamen and Joshua Kanofsky

Duration: 01:01:42

Transcription App: Otter.ai

As of spring 2022, Patricia Randall is the Theatre Costume Shop Director at Brigham Young University Idaho.

Transcript

[00:00:00]

Trevor Kamen & Joshua Kanofsky [simultaneously]: So—

[laughter]

Joshua Kanofsky: He can go.

Trevor Kamen: Yeah, we're just going to alternate asking you questions about your time working at the Hill Cumorah Pageant.

Patricia Randall: Okay.

Trevor Kamen: Just go through them.

Joshua Kanofsky: So, he questions that we emailed, those are the exact same questions that we're going to ask. Although if—we may ask any questions, obviously, during the interview, just based on the information that you talk about. But yeah, it shouldn't take too long. There's only about 10 questions.

Patricia Randall: And do you want me to keep them fairly brief and concise?

Joshua Kanofsky: However you like. There's no time limit per se. I think I made the Zoom meeting an hour and a half. But yeah, no, you don't have to if you don't want to.

Patricia Randall: Okay.

Joshua Kanofsky: Okay, so we can begin. So why/how did you begin work on the Hill Cumorah Pageant?

Patricia Randall: Um, I for the very first time went to New York, to be at one of my family reunion[s], and part of that was we were going to see the Pageant. And I was hoping that I was going to be able to go backstage and go into the different dressing areas and see the costumes and see how they prepared them and, you know, what they would look like in person. And that came true when [laughs] Chris Bjorling was a member of the presidency. There was [Dwight] Schwendiman, [Chris] Bjorling, and, um... Oh dear, now I can't remember his name. And—well, I think, before I saw the Pageant, Chris came to me and said, “Would you like to go backstage and see costumes?” and I said, “Absolutely!” So, I got the tour, and that was really neat, and then [I] saw the Pageant. And it's so different to see costumes up close and see them on stage. So, it was very fun for me. I had been a full-time employee at BYU Idaho, running the Theatre Costume Shop, and so I was all about costumes and stuff like that. The unique thing, of course, with the Pageant is you're very, very far away from the stage, and so, the farther away you are, you just get a general look of what the costumes are like. So that's very different in making and creating costumes for the Pageant, so it was so fun to see 'em up close.

After I saw the Pageant, we were there for a week. And at the end of our family reunion—which Chris was a part of—I went up to Chris. I just had *such* an overwhelming feeling that this is a place I need to be a part of. It was just the most overwhelming feeling. And so, I hated to be the typical, you know, person that goes up and says, “You know, if you need any help, I know how to sew.” [laughs enthusiastically] But I got brave and started talking to him, saying, “I—you know, if you ever need [laughs] any help, just call me.” He said, “I am so glad you came up and said something. I've been *waiting* the whole week for you to say

something, and I would really like to bring you on, on the costume staff, the wardrobe staff.”

And I said, “Yeah, just give me a call.” And so, about a month later then, I get the official call.

And it was amazing, and I was thrilled. So that’s kind of *how* I got into the costume—the wardrobe staff at the Hill.

Joshua Kanofsky: Nice, [00:05:00] that’s very—pretty detailed. I could—I was just imagining the whole timeline of events take place. Thank you. That’s really great.

Patricia Randall: Good. [laughs quietly]

Trevor Kamen: When was that, that you started?

Patricia Randall: I saw the Pageant in 2011 and then was called for the next summer—the 2012 Pageant.

Trevor Kamen: And when—after—once you started working, what would you say was the most difficult aspect of your job there? Of the costume design itself?

Patricia Randall: You know, the—for the first two years, I was simply a staff. I sat at a sewing machine, and I just sewed whatever they needed. Then I was asked to do the design part of the head of [costumes]—of wardrobe at the Hill. It encompasses everything from creating new costumes to the whole logistics [laughs] of—the cast arrives, and there is all this tryout, and then everybody is cast. They’re given a part, or two or three parts. And that all falls under the wardrobe, too. You have to run that one night of casting and getting parts and sending them to the correct dressing room that they will be getting their costume in. That evening is one *blur*. I mean, it is just, it happens so fast. And the first year, I said, “They’re—I mean, I do this. How can you put costumes on...” At that time, I think it was like, almost 800 people! And logistically, that’s impossible. It really is. So, the first time I witnessed that happening, I just went, “That’s impossible,” but I watched it happen, and it was surreal. And so, that is a big part of the job.

So, at first, they divided the job, thinking it would be easier if we had one person just over the administrative—the—attending the meetings with the directors and getting their requests for costumes. And then coming back to the person who takes their list of “this is what I want,” and you design it, and you approve it with them and all of that. And so, at first, I was the design part of costumes. And so, I got the wish list, and then I did sketches and approved it and showed them—cut possible fabric and stuff like that. And I did that for, I believe, two years, and then they said, you know, we’ve got to go back to just one person over all of wardrobe, because you got... It just... You kind of need one person who sees the whole picture. And they liked it better. So, the Presidency and the directors agreed, let’s just have one person again. And they then asked me to just be over all of it. And so that was probably my fourth year there or something.

And then for the duration, I was over all of it. And it is a big job, but you just—you know, you chop it up into the pieces that you need this first and this next, and you pull in people that help you implement, and... You know, it’s what I did for a living, so it wasn’t anything big and new. It’s just that the Pageant is *so* big, and that is—logistically, every aspect is a big chunk that you have to bite off, and—so, that’s kind of the whole tricky part. [00:10:00] But I think, just because of my job, it gave me the resources and the ability to, you know, get that done.

Trevor Kamen: Were you ever able to... Did you ever have to reuse costumes from previous years? Or is it all from scratch every year?

Patricia Randall: Oh, no. The big thing about the Pageant is every costume is stored, and it’s reused the next year. Yes, we have different bodies every year, but I think they were used to knowing that—the body type that they would put into that character. And so generally, everything fit, which was another [miracle]—for me, it was a miracle. I just couldn’t see how

that could happen, but it did. So, we reused the whole show every year, but the directors at the end of Pageant will then pick and choose—you know, “In my scene here, I would like this person to be a little brighter, or a little—a different color, or…”—you know, whatever. So, I got a big, long list about a month or two after one Pageant closes. And that let me start planning, and pulling together fabrics and all of that, getting it approved, and then going with it. So, sometimes I’m able to pick some fabrics that are right up the hill, if I know ahead of time that’s what they want on this character. But a lot of times, you know, I’m back in Idaho, and that’s in New York. My resources and everything are where I live. And then you say, “Okay, shall we build it here? Or do we build it when we get there next year?” And that was another consideration.

So, logistically, if I was doing a whole scene all over—like, one of the first things they wanted from me was a whole new look for the Restoration [of the Gospel to Joseph Smith] scene. And I had voiced my opinion to the director that the Restoration scene looked like a funeral. Everybody was dark. And these poor people... I mean, the temperatures in New York would get close to 100, and they were putting these people in layers and layers of wool because that’s what they would have been. But that’s okay to be realistic, but to help people survive the heat, you can get a fabric that looks like wool, but does not[laughs] —it’s not wool, and it’s comfortable; it’s cooler and all that. So, I completely changed the whole Restoration scene into a positive, happy group of pioneers. They’re colorful. And the director just loved it. He almost got gooey with me with how much he loved it. And that was just such a great experience to change something and have it be so well received.

Joshua Kanofsky: Our question after that actually was, “What are the logistics involved in costume design?” but that was a great response. It answered both [laughs] questions in one. But the question after that actually works well. You’re talking about how the Pageant takes up a

tremendous amount of time. How did you balance your—just, your personal life and The Hill Cumorah Pageant? Did you ever feel pressured to do one or the other?

Patricia Randall: Yeah.

Joshua Kanofsky: How did that balance go?

Patricia Randall: That is just another aspect of the whole thing. I was working full time. I'm the kind of person that I like to start at the *beginning* of when I get an assignment project, and I like to start hacking away at it right from the beginning. Because, in [00:15:00] costumes, some things just take time, like—you've got to know from the beginning to the end what your whole project is. Some things that you need to order will take a month or two to get here. And so, all of that—I like to know the whole project right up front when I get it. And then I can just hack at it a little at a time.

At the time that they called me, my mother was living with me. She, I think, was just about 90 at the time. She died when she was 96, and that was after the year that we didn't have a Pageant. She had a lot of needs, complete total care, and we had really nice people who came in while I was at work to care for her. And so, I had those people in place. And then I had a great support system. My husband is wonderful, and he loved my mom. And I had a wonderful sister who said, "Don't worry about it." Now, for the first few years, I actually put mom on a plane and center to my sister in California. But the last five or six years of Pageant, she was too frail to uproot her from her little safe place to go to California. So, my sister came to *my home* for the month. I would be gone a month every summer.

The other part of that, the tricky part, was that, in my full-time theater position, we were opening a play the end of June, right when I needed to get on a plane and go back to Pageant. So, I made them aware of the fact that, for that play, I need everything—every design, everything

they wanted—I needed it, you know, two months in advance. And the first year, you know, I had one of the directors that didn't really do well with deadlines. And so, I had to leave my top seamstresses at his mercy. You know, he would come and say, "I need this." And I said, "Gals, you need to say no if you have to say no." So, there's the *job*. There's the *home*. And—it just worked, you know? I just had a great support system in place in all those areas, and I couldn't have done it if I didn't have those things to support me leaving. So, that was the hardest part.

Trevor Kamen: And—thank you. So, another question we had was: [During]—while you worked on the Pageant, did you ever—were you ever appeal—did any part of the Pageant ever appeal to you more than others when you worked on it? Like, would you prefer working on a costume for this section of the Pageant versus another? Or do you just like part of the Pageant more than you liked others?

Patricia Randall: Oh, I just love every scene. The one that touches you, the one that just brings you to tears, is the Savior appearing out of the black sky, that—the lights just go down perfectly. And then, *bam!* This white, shining figure of a man is descending, and as it gets to the level of stage, then he walks down and around, and when he hits the little Primary children, they believe he is [laughs] Christ. And it means so much to them to hold their hands out, and he touches their hand or something, and it's just beautiful. And it's overwhelming. And you really believe, "This is it. This is his Coming, and this is what it's going to be like. So, it's very moving."

Those costumes, actually, for the [00:20:00] last Pageant that we held in—I think it was 2019—we made a whole new Savior costume. And it just worked well. And it was just beautiful. And it flowed in the breeze. It was just beautiful. So that was tender for one of my seamstresses. I gave her the project. I did pattern work and did things that I handed off to her, which is what I do in the college, too. I create the project, and in the case of the Savior, it has to be adjustable

every year to a long torso, a short torso, you know, whatever. And—but it was so special for this one seamstress that she just said, “Can I do this?” I said, “Yes, you can do this.” So, it was very special.

The rest of the costumes in that scene are *every cast member* onstage. They put on what we call the “crowd costume.” Everybody chooses that on casting night. And we added a lot of color, and it was [laughs] just beautiful. So, it wasn’t the hardest scene to costume, but it’s the scene that touches—if you ask many people, they’ll say, “Oh, it’s the New World multitude scene.” So, that’s fun.

Joshua Kanofsky: Were there ever any moments that—in the play, is there [best guess] a certain performance where a costume would get damaged, and they might have had another scene where you’d have to, maybe, repair that costume?

Patricia Randall: We always had repairs every night. There wasn’t a big disaster at all. The thing that maybe, you know, a person in the audience wouldn’t really recognize is... there are—there’s [sic] two scenes, I believe, there’s a scene where... In the any of the “vision” scenes, they have this sprinkler system that sprays water up, and when you hit lights on it, it looks like a dream. And so that would have—the—I think the Water Curtain is what they would call it—it happens behind, like, the nativity scene; they shoot the water up—and so, costumes would get wet, especially if the wind was blowing *the wrong way*, they would be saturated. And so, the other scene is the boat scene, where Nephi built the boat and now the people are on the boat, and then the argument with the brothers, and they’re going to *kill* Nephi. The Lord causes a big uproar in the water, of the sea. And boy, those people get wet, and it is *cold, stinky* water from the pond out back up the hill. And it stinks! [laughs] And so, [when] those people get done with that scene, they run in, and they drop all their wet clothes and put on their next costume for the

rest of the play. So, in one, two, *three* different costume rooms, they have wet costumes, and those rooms have washers and dryers. So, we wash those; we put them in immediately so that, by the end of the play, they're dry and hung up again, ready for the next day. So, logistically, that's a little bit of a tricky, but it works well every night.

Trevor Kamen: So, this question is a bit different, but... You've worked for a while with—in the costume design, so just randomly, do you have any—what worked best for you when working, when making, crafting the costumes for the Pageant?

Patricia Randall: Well, sometimes, a new costume... [00:25:00] We're going to be able to pull the fabrics needed and everything from what we have at the Hill, and in that case, we design—I designed it, we cut it out, and we sew it at the Hill. That's one thing that keeps us busy during the whole thing. But typically, I don't get a request for new things until the Pageant is over. If they give it to me soon enough, I can go through the fabric we already have, and I can get it approved. But [a lot]—most of the time, new costumes are given to me *after* I get back home. And so that's the logistic dilemma—[it] is, if it's the whole group of, like, [the] Lehi mob, or—it's either 30 people, maybe it's only 16—if I get the fabric coming to me in Idaho, then I do the—I either sew them all up during the year, or—like the new Restoration, that was a *big* job. I literally sent fabrics, detailed instructions. I had things cut out, so I had instructions on how to assemble, like, the Restoration ladies' dress, and it's step-by-step, and then I mail it to them. And then, if they can, they bring that with them to the Hill.

A lot of times when we do—like, they wanted all new battle men. The battle men are 50 Nephites and 50 Lamanites. That's a *lot* of fabric; that's a *lot* of costumes. So logistically, what we did was I assigned out certain people to be over Lamanites and over Nephites. And at that time, we had a wardrobe member who drove a fifth wheel to the Pageant, and we were able to

put all of that together and tuck it in the very back of his fifth wheel, and that saved us a *ton* of money. The only way to really ship heavy costumes was I would take a very, very large suitcase; I would fill it; and, as long as I could pick it up and put it on [laughs] the counter of the Post Office person, then they would ship that for \$50. That was quite a savings. But I had to pick that suitcase up and get it up on the counter. So... I think I sent about three or four large suitcases one year. So, that was one way we hacked away at it. But the logistics of a big cast is things like that.

Joshua Kanofsky: Was there ever—was there a budget that you had to adhere to or follow?

Patricia Randall: Yes, yes, I had that, and, you know, I had to use it in buying things and mailing things. But I—I’ve always made a policy that that budget is what I have. I don’t have any other. And I always came in under budget, so they were happy. [laughs]

Joshua Kanofsky: You were mentioning before also that you had a guide on how to make certain costumes step-by-step. Were there... were you given any pointers, or did you work with other departments when designing costumes? Or was it all sort of planned out and—?

Patricia Randall: When I get the request for a new costume, because I watched the Pageant every single night, I make notes every single night. I will talk to the director over that scene and make sure [00:30:00] the criteria of, you know, what kind of movement are they going to do. I know that because I’ve seen it. And they specifically say, “You know, the skirts that the battle men are in now really restrict them. Some of them have to jump from one level of the stage to another. They need real movement.” So, I find out the criteria. That’s the first step in designing something. You have to make sure you’re going to design something that will allow them to do what they have to do. So, I do collaborate with the directors, and the people who are requesting a new costume from me, they’re the ones that know everything, and so I go to them first.

And then, with the battle men being such a big number, and—that's a lot of fabric, and that was fabric we needed to find and buy and make sure we had extra leftover, because you do it one year, and then the next year you have some special... hmm... maybe you have a very, very large kid that's going to be a battle man. And so, you've got to have some extra fabric on board for special circumstances. So yeah, a lot of collaboration before I even start specifically putting my idea to fabric.

Joshua Kanofsky: Was that—did the casting department ever have to, sort of, have a knowledge of the costumes, just to know what they can actually fit into?

Patricia Randall: They did. And as changes were being made, and if you've got a new director—you know, somebody got released, and a new director came in—well, they come in cold; they don't have any idea, so—part of the prep for the casting night is me providing each of these—I think we had about 10 or 12 individual directors. So, when they go out to hand out these casting tags, they need to know what kind of a body type goes into the costumes I already have. And so, that was provided to them. They would look at it before so that, as they then went out and mingled among the big bunch of kids or people, they would be able to pluck out the ones that would fit the costumes.

Trevor Kamen: Would they ever request serious alterations? If they really wanted a person to fit this character, would they then go back to you before they cast them on, or would they cast them on and then tell you?

Patricia Randall: Actually, both happened. The first couple of years... Well, the year that I did the Restoration, they wanted a whole new Joseph outfit—Joseph Smith. And so, they needed somebody tall enough and large enough that he would look good on stage. You put a tiny person on stage, and you try to sell it as “This is one of the greatest men that have lived since Christ”?

And you'd kind of have to have a stature. So, what I did was, I created a whole new outfit for a man who would be basically a 42 to 44 coat size. And then, it was [unclear]—and then, once I did that, during casting, they would pull me out of my spot and have me meander around. They'd pluck out about 12 or 15 guys, and then they would start having them do little gestures like Joseph Smith does in the play. And they would say, "Patty, what do you think? Do you think this guy would fit the coat?" And I would have the coat with me, and [00:35:00] when they got really serious about a few guys, they'd have them to try on the jacket. And I thought, "Oh boy, this is interesting," but it really helped. And *that* you don't really alter. You don't really alter a suit coat as far as length and width. You want it to just fit. And so, that's how we did that. And that was special.

I can't think of another cast member that they were eyeballing specifically to fit a costume. I did, however, get very good at predicting *who* would play *King Noah*. He had to be the tallest, the biggest man. And every year, I picked him out when they were signing in to—cast members were signing in—and I'd spot this giant of a man and say, "That's going to be King Noah." And I did that pretty good for about three or four years and picked the one, so...

Joshua Kanofsky: You spoke before how there was that scene where you basically redesigned the costumes, where it was a very dark theme, and you brightened it up, made it a totally new scene by changing the colors. Were there any other memorable moments that you can recall working with the Pageant?

Patricia Randall: In changing costumes?

Joshua Kanofsky: Just in general, like, any memorable moments that stick out to you when you think back about it.

Patricia Randall: It was nice to redo the Savior's. We never touched King Noah. He was so perfect. Gail... Oh, I can't remember her last name; it's a little tricky. [*Editor's note: The individual in question is Gail Argersinger.*] She's the one that designed this whole new Pageant with lots of color. And King Noah is just so impressive that nobody wanted to touch his costume, change it, do anything to it. However, his court, we redid the women in the court. I did that I think my first or second year. And then we redid the hats for the—Noah's—King Noah's court priests. They had huge hats that made them look like bakers, and they wanted something different. And I had a person on my staff, who—I'm not kidding—you give him a picture, and you give him some materials, and then you just walk away, and he would create hats that were incredible.

And—at one time, we redid... we had four Nephis—son Nephis. And we redid and put him in a leather vest, and they painted on it. His wife—the guy that does the hats—his wife paints, and for a living; she does illustrations. She is incredible. And she painted things on his leather vest that just looked gorgeous. And you have to know that the cast members are—they walk through the crowds while—before the Pageant, and the most photographed people that you see—[that] people, the people that come, want to get a picture with—is [sic] King Noah, Joseph Smith, the Three Wise Men, and then this new Nephi. His vest was so gorgeous, they wanted to have a picture with Nephi. So, that's another consideration when I designed something.

How will this look on stage is the most important, but how will it look to a person who's come to see the play? Because they [the actors] get to walk around and say hi to people and everything. So, those are the considerations.

Joshua Kanofsky: Was—when you were saying that King Noah is an important role, is that important from [00:40:00] both an artistic point of view and just from a story point of view as well?

Patricia Randall: Yes. King Noah was supposed to be a righteous ruler, but it turned out that things got more and more wicked. And everything to him was, you know, “Oh, that’s gonna make me more money,” or “I can tax the people more.”

He’s basically... They chose, from the very start, he would be bigger than life. They have him appear on the very topmost part of the stage. And as he descends and he walks down, his feet are enormous because of the boots they create. [coughs] Excuse me. And the headdress is the biggest headdress in the whole Pageant. So, he’s important in that it was in his court that one of his priests, Alma [laughs], listening to Abinadi chastise King Noah, that he believed in everything that Abinadi was telling. And so, here is a priest of Noah’s, and he gets converted, and he has to run away. They want to catch him and kill him, but he got away, and he—he made a big difference. So, King Noah’s court was a big, big scene, very important.

Trevor Kamen: [indistinct] Joshua, do you have any other questions?

Joshua Kanofsky: I was going to ask, how did the work on the Pageant, did it differ at all from your background or any conventional work that you had in costume and wardrobe design?

Patricia Randall: You know, it was like a perfect scenario. In theater, in my job, you know, it’s interesting that, when you do things and you’re paid for them, there’s a certain mentality, and you... I had a great spot in the theatre department, and I enjoyed working with people, and I enjoyed the girls that I hired to sew in my shop. And that was a nice place to be. But when you get at the Hill, you have people from amazing vocations, and they have volunteered to be there. They get themselves there at their own cost, and they’re not paid for anything they do, and these

are talented people. And... Everybody's there because the Pageant is important to them. And they have their own set of what we call "Pageant Miracles." And the stories are just amazing, you know, the challenges of getting to Pageant and getting there.

There was one family coming as cast members. And at one town, they were stripped of... Somebody had gotten into their car, which was packed full; they had kids and everything. They stole *all* their clothes, everything that was in the car. I couldn't believe it. And they were stuck in this city, and they weren't at Pageant yet. They called the Presidency, and people that were already at the Hill actually donated money to get them all the way to the Pageant. They put together clothing and money and food so that, when they got there, they could have the things they needed. I mean, things [00:45:00] like that are just amazing.

And then, there's the *little* miracles of... I mean... One of my first miracles was the year that they put me over the design and stuff. All of a sudden, you get to the Hill, and they realize, and they come and tell you that, "Oh, by the way, we accepted 50 more people than we were planning on. And so, we're gonna need costumes. Do you have enough crowd costumes to put on these people?" And I went home one night and thought again, "This is impossible." We don't have enough seamstresses to whip up a bunch of crowd costumes. We don't know what size these additional are... Is it men? Is it boys? Is it more women? Had no idea. Those kinds of things. And I was desperate all of a sudden and [laughs] went to bed and prayed, "You know, I'm happy to do this. But I don't see a way. I need help."

And when I went to the Hill the next day, a gal had driven all the way from the coast, the West Coast, in—Washington? She drove her elderly parents all the way across the country because they had been accepted into the Pageant. She had not been accepted; she was just driving them to keep them safe. So, she's a seamstress. And she's—wow, she's a gung-ho

seamstress. You can give her anything, and she'll figure out how to put it together. And she just walked in the shop that day and said, "Um... Here's my story. I'm doing *nothing*. I mean, I'm sitting here, reading all day long. And I sew. Can you use any help?" I was—I almost started crying; I was so thrilled. And when she started sewing, I mean she *was getting things done*. And I had two or three other walk-ins. And I thought, "Wow, ask and you shall receive." [laughs] And we got all the sewing done, and it was a breeze. I just couldn't believe it. I was so—I was so desperate the night before, and everything just worked out. And that happens *constantly* at the Hill. Just constant.

Trevor Kamen: You mentioned a shop before. Do you operate a shop in your hometown?

Patricia Randall: I—my full-time job was BYU Idaho's Theatre Costume Shop Director. So, I had a big room. My job was to take the designs—every play has a costume designer—and she would hand me her designs and tell me all the specifics about it. She would either go do the buying for me—for fabric, trim, everything that was needed for the design—or, in some cases, if I was the designer of the show, I had to go and get all of the materials. And then, I did all the measurements for the cast member[s]. We'd get a cast; they'd all come in at different appointed times. I would measure them; I would do some fitting, and then we went right at sewing up these designs. Sometimes, I had to do fitting shells, where I just take any old fabric, and I cut out my pattern work, I put it on 'em, and see if that's going to work. If it does, then I cut it out of the real fabric. So, that's kind of what I did at the costume shop.

We had a lot of other things that I was in charge of. We rented costumes. You know, I oversaw about ten seamstresses. Some were really good; some, I had to do a lot of teaching, but then they became good. And so, with all of that, then I go to the Hill, and I have to kind of take the techniques and the things that I know we need to do and apply 'em at the Hill, which—

[laughs] how do you apply a cast of maybe [00:50:00] twenty people to 800? You know, it was mind-boggling. But I got to know the Pageant in two years, and then [was] thrown into, you know, an administrative calling, and it just worked, so... It was a little tricky at first. [laughs]

Joshua Kanofsky: Now that the Pageant is unfortunately—I believe it just finished its last year.... Well, they didn’t do a show in 2020, I believe. 2019 was their last show. What are you going to miss most about it?

Patricia Randall: It’s the people. I mean, we miss the Pageant and hearing the music. I mean, we all say that, when—whenever “The Spirit of God” is either sung in sacrament meeting or you hear it, I don’t know, maybe in the Tabernacle Choir, tears just come, because it was the song that, once it started playing, that was the signal that all cast members had to get in their lines, ready for the procession up onto the stage as the very beginning of the Pageant. [*Editor’s Note: Prof. Randall is referring to the LDS hymn “The Spirit of God,” with lyrics by William W. Phelps.*¹] And that song just evokes so much emotion. But truly the thing that we all miss the most is each other. It was hard to say goodbye at the end of every Pageant because we knew it would be a full year before we saw each other.

Now, *some of us* are so close that we literally see each other during the year; we get together, or—and I would say that’s us women. And so, we have—the way the Pageant ended was, in one way, *really* awful in that we thought we were going to see each other for *one last year*, and that didn’t happen because of COVID. And so, it was such a *letdown* to just have it *end*, and yet for a lot of us *emotional* people, we knew that, if we had just one more year, every

¹ Anon. (composer) and William W. Phelps (text), “The Spirit of God,” 1835 (text), 1844 (music), Church Music Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, accessed May 1, 2022, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/music/library/hymns/the-spirit-of-god?lang=eng>. Archived URL, saved May 1, 2022: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220501170333/https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/music/library/hymns/the-spirit-of-god?lang=eng>.

day would be tearful. You know, “Oh, this is the *last time* for this. This is the *last time* for that....” And it would have just been an emotional mess. We would have been a mess. And so, it was hard not to be together and say goodbye, but for me and for several others, it would have been a *mess!* [laughs] Every day. So, the real answer is the people. You get so close, and some of us will be friends forever—I mean, very close. And so, that’s the thing we will miss the most. We miss all of it, but we miss each other the most.

Joshua Kanofsky: So, in a way, I guess it was almost a—[laughs] it’s obviously not a good thing—but for the people who would have been especially emotional, I guess it was good that they didn’t explicitly state that it was going to end that last year.

Patricia Randall: [laughs] Yeah.

Joshua Kanofsky: Wow.

Trevor Kamen: You got one last year believing that you would do it—another—again, so it just seemed more positive in the end.

Patricia Randall: [laughs; shakes her head] It’s hard. We do keep in touch.

Joshua Kanofsky: Are most of the people who attend from the western side of the United States, like, you know, around Idaho and Utah? I know you mentioned before Washington and California, or are they spread out?

Patricia Randall: Yeah, they are *really* spread out. We have a cluster in the New York area. And then, we have *south*. We’ve got Texas people; we’ve got New Mexico. [00:55:00] We have a cluster in Utah. I *think* I’m the only one in Idaho. And then we have some in Washington, California. And so, the western people, there’s always an opportunity that they are going to be in Salt Lake for something sometime. And so, we have vowed to get together and open it up for—you know, there are people clear back in the east that *also* come to Salt Lake for *some* purpose.

And so, we have vowed—I think now we can finally think about getting together without worrying about all the masks and all that kind of thing. So, COVID—boy, COVID *really* threw everything for a loop. And we are dedicated to getting together, so I'm sure will happen soon.

Joshua Kanofsky: Have you caught wind of any future projects or meet-ups to, sort of, just get everyone back together?

Patricia Randall: No, we—that planning hasn't really happened yet. But... Um... I'd have to go through and find out, where is the spot to get together, that the bigger number of us can get together. And then, the others have the choice of, you know, coming to that. So, I think, whatever we do, I think it's going to end up in Salt Lake *somewhere*. And, you know, we miss the people who have been released. We—you get so close, and you've relied on each other, [laughs] and you love each other, so even past wardrobe members will be invited, so, yeah.

Joshua Kanofsky: That was all the questions I had. I don't know about Trevor, but...

Trevor Kamen: Yeah, that's all I've got, too.

Joshua Kanofsky: It was really great speaking with you. This was so informative. Our professor is a big fan of the Hill Cumorah Pageant. I believe he's attended two or three. But yeah, I mean, this was very informative. So, we've read up on it in class and whatnot.

Patricia Randall: Well, and as wardrobe members, when things were quiet, which was rare [laughs], we would go together somewhere. Some of us loved shopping for antiques, and that's a great area for antiques! And [laughs] then, the biggest thing that gave us so much joy every day was, let's see, Chill & Grill. It's a little walk-through, like a little drive in, but you just sit, and you park at a park bench kind of thing. And it was so loved, the ice cream was so loved, the food was so loved, that we made trips all the time. And what I started [laughing] was, I'd put a... Ten [best guess] of the southwest women's room was where I was stationed, and that's where I set up

my office, if you will. And so, I plastered a paper on the side of our fridge [laughs] and said, “Write down your order for Chill & Grill,” you know, for ice cream. And then, I would bring it all—I’d have them write names on everything they did for me—and bring it and put it in our freezer, and these people would buy three and four different types, you know, and they’d pick whatever they wanted to eat in the day. And it was so fun, too. Just little things like that we miss. We were just a big, big family, and it was *so* awesome. And we’ll miss it. [01:00:00]

Trevor Kamen: If you ever get the chance to meet up again, you should try something similar.

Patricia Randall: I think we will. I think Utah offers a lot of yummy places, so... [laughs] But whenever one of my wardrobe people come to Rexburg, we go out for ice cream, and we take our pictures, and we send it out on the thread that has all the wardrobe people, so yeah, we try to do what we can do.

Trevor Kamen: Thank you. It’s been really nice to learn all your stories.

Patricia Randall: Thanks.

Joshua Kanofsky: Thank you as well from me, too. At least we’re ending on a bit more of a positive note than [all laugh] the previous. Thank you so much for your time. It’s really been great speaking with you!

Patricia Randall: Thank you.

Joshua Kanofsky: All right.

Patricia Randall: You’ll let me know when this all gets put out there?

Joshua Kanofsky: Yeah, we can send you an email. I don’t know exactly what our professor is going to do with it.

Trevor Kamen: Yeah.

Joshua Kanofsky: But we’re just submitting it to him.

Trevor Kamen: We'll turn over our transcript to him and let him figure it out. And then, if there is—hopefully we can put on his site, and we'll let you know about it.

Patricia Randall: Good. Great. Thank you so much, guys!

Joshua & Trevor: Thank you!

Joshua Kanofsky: It's been great. Have a great day. Bye.

Patricia Randall: Yep.

Dublin Core Metadata for the Interview

Title: Interview with Patricia Randall, Saturday, April 9, 2022.

Subject: Hill Cumorah Project, Theater, Costume Design, Friendship

Description: In this roughly 60-minute interview, Patricia Randall—a professor of costume design at BYU Idaho—describes her experiences at the annual Hill Cumorah Pageant in Palmyra, New York. In 2012, she began her work as a seamstress for the Pageant and eventually became the head of wardrobe and costume design for the production. This interview explores in depth her experiences and work at the Pageant over the years. Additionally, this interview delves into the impacts of the Pageant on Randall and the role it continues to play in her life, even now that it has ended. The interview concludes with Randall's hopes for those involved looking towards the future.

Creator: Patricia (Patty) Randall, Joshua Kanofsky, and Trevor Kamen

Source: The Hill Cumorah Legacy Project

Date: Saturday, April 9, 2022

Contributor: Joshua Kanofsky and Trevor Kamen

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Format: M4A (audio), PDF (transcript)

Language: English

Identifier:

- Kamen_Kanofsky_PattyRandallInterview_04-09-2022.m4a

- Kamen_Kanofsky_PatriciaRandallTranscript_04-09-2022_Edited.pdf