

EQUESTRIAN SPECIALTIES

THE

CIRCUS REPORT



"AMERICA'S FAVORITE CIRCUS WEEKLY"

7th Year

January 9, 1978

Number 2

London Report

CIRCUS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS - 1977

... by Jack Niblett

Five great days of Circus Competition, were what the posters promised, and the promise was amply fulfilled by the Second Annual Circus World Championships. The events were held from Dec. 13th through 17th, in Gerry Cottle's new giant big top, an eight-poler, comprising one ring, a stage and a hippodrome track, built up on Clapham Common, London.

Judges included: Ronnie Smart (Billy Smart's), England; Carl Semback (Krone), Germany; Wasily Zupanevec (State Circus) Yugoslavia; Gerry Cottle (Cottle's), England; Mrs. Wilkie (Wilkie's), South Africa; Karl Wallenda, U. S. A. (except high wire acts); Mr. Arnardo (Arnardo's), Norway; with non-voting Chairman of Judges, Jimmy Chipperfield, of England.

Marks were awarded for presentation and for content.

The five categories and end entrants were:-

FLYING TRAPEZE - Rock-Smith Flyers, US; Flying Terrels, US; Flying Ganeas, Rumania.

HIGH WIRE - The Wallendas, US; Manfred Du-

val, Germany and the White Devils, France.

TRICK RIDING - Mohawks, England; Jerry, Jimmy & Jonny, Sweden and Michaela Kaiser, Germany.

(Continued on Page 26)

EQUESTRIAN SPECIALTIES

ACTS THAT CAN AND WILL GO ANYWHERE

Kathy Batchelor

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'78 Plans

In a short telephone interview with Gopher Davenport, circus owner and producer, the following information was disclosed about his plans for the 1978 season.

We'll open around Jan. 7 or 8th, in the suburbs of Phoenix (Ariz), Mr. Davenport stated, with a new, expanded circus format with a large "wild animal" exhibit. The show will open under the title "World Wide Jungle Wonder Circus."

The circus will feature two specs - opening with "Talk To The Animals" in the first half and closing with "I Love A Circus" in the second half.

Ken Benson, formerly with Fisher Bros. Circus and lately of Louisiana Purchase Garden & Zoo, of Monroe, La., will be the announcer and ringmaster and he will be featured with a cage act after the opening spec. He will also handle the elephants and present a chimp act.

"We have a well balanced show and at the present time plenty of good personnel," Davenport stated. "I have engaged Mel Silverlake to be manager of the show and this will give us knowledge and strength up front. Mel will also have the side show and snake pit show.

"There will be over 100 animals and birds in the free zoo which will give the public extra value for their money."

Personnel for the show will include: Route Coordinator, Gopher Davenport; General Agent, Teonite Davenport; Phone Director, Bill Pickrel; Special Agent, Max and Jerry Toliver; Bill-

poster, Steve Kautzman; 24 Hr. Man, Chris Willfong; Circus Manager, Mel Silverlake; Office Manager, Clara Stevens; Home Office, Kathleen Davis and Bobby Echos; Concession Manager, Jimmy Kernan; Midway Diner, Larry Sheffield; Pie Car, Joey Matheson; Cookhouse, Shanon Matheson; Midway Manager, James Myers; Side Show Manager, Mel Silverlake; Menagerie Supt., (over 100 animals), Wayne Dike; Elephant Supt., Robert Stevens; Cat Supt., Ken Benson; Electrician, Gary Sheffield; Supt. of Transportation, William Ira Swain; Water Truck Driver, Eddie Lutz; Big Top Supt., Jack Carson and Prop Boss, Bill Parker.

The circus program will feature: Program director, Mel Silverlake; Announcer/ringmaster, Ken Benson; Band master, Bud Manly; Circus Welcome by Ringmaster; Spec "Talk To The Animals" with lyrics by Bud Morely; Ken Benson, lions; Anchor perch in Rings 1 and 3; the clowns; Single elephant in each ring; Hand balancing, Joseph Matheson; Animal fantasy (camel, llama, zebra, Sicilian donkey); Past-times of the Old West, Ken Benson; Pony, Horse and Pony display; Web number; Goats, Dogs and Goats display; Juggling display; Single traps with Mayola, Lee Ann and Mora; Intermission.

The second half will feature: Circus Riding Academy (mechanic and horse); Swinging ladders; Elephant and chimp, Ken Benson; Jargo, comedy graffe; Sicilian donkey, Pony drill and Single Donkey display; Bear Act; "I Love A Circus" with lyrics by Bud Morely; the Jungle Wonder Circus Elephants.

..... M. L. Dupont

Paul V. Kaye

1829 NORTH FULLER AVENUE • HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA 90046

December 30, 1977

Messrs. Roy "Sabu" Moreau -&- Bobby Gibbs
c/o The Circus Report
El Cerrito, California - 94530

Gentlemen:

The lead paragraph for your listing of elephants published in the December 19, 1977 issue of The Circus Report states: "This information is correct to November 5, 1977 only".

Please be advised that the information contained in your list has NEVER been correct!

You list three elephants, "Dumbo, Peggy and Dolly", as being owned by Judy Jacobs. The correct information is:

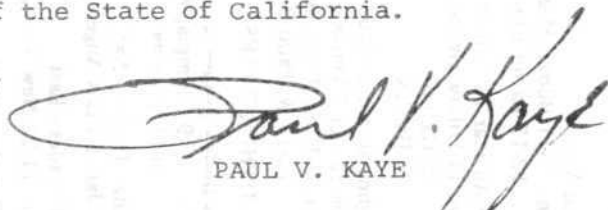
I personally purchased DOLLY from Gene Holter on
January 2, 1971.

I personally purchased DUMBO from Dolly Jacobs on
January 6, 1971.

I personally purchased PEGGY from Dory Miller on
July 3, 1973.

All of the abovelisted elephants are my personal separate property and presently in my custody again by order of the Superior Court of the State of California.

Very truly yours,



PAUL V. KAYE

P.S: "BABY JUDY" is also my personal separate property.

Show Dates

Circus Vargas

Jan. 9-11 Biloxi, Miss.
12-15 Baton Rouge, La.

Cole All Star TV Circus

Jan. 11 Willow Grove, Pa.
12 Oxford
14 Halifax

Ringling-Barnum - Blue

Dec 29-Jan 1 Venice, Fla.
Jan. 3-10 St. Petersburg
12-15 W. Palm Beach

.... OTHER DATES

Bugs Bunny Follies

Jan. 9 Olympia, Wash.
10-11 Tacoma

Holiday On Ice - Nat'l

to Jan. 15 Los Angeles, Cal.

Ice Capades - East

Jan. 11-22 New York, N. Y.

Ice Capades - West

Jan. 11-15 Edmonton, Alta.

Bob Jones Pet Zoo

Jan. 9-14 Wayne, N. J.

NOTICE

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Am an amateur contortionist and a long time fan.

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Xmas Show

A Christmas show, sponsored by the Eagles Club and presented at the Caldwell Auditorium in Tyler, Texas, on Dec. 17th, drew good attendance for both the 2 and 6 p.m. show.

The program was produced by Don Anderson; with Vi Hofmeister on the front door; Jo Ann Anderson, stage manager; Marie Loter; organist; Bobby Gibbs, announcer and Gene Randow, producing clown.

Show acts included: Circus Overture by Marie Loter; Gene Randow, clowning; Bobby Gibbs, dogs; Rosa Gibbs, web; Stacy Anderson, pick-out pony 'Apache'; Torrino Bros., juggling; Bobby Gibbs, llama and camel; Gene Randow, clown gag; Rosa Gibbs, iron jaw; Austin Anderson, comedy gorilla; the Olmedes Bros., bicycle act; Gene Randow, clown number; Bobby Gibbs Santa and his white mules; Finale, Christmas number with candy.

Visitors attending the show included: D. R. Miller, Tom Inabette, Gopher Davenport, Mel Silverlake, Mr. & Mrs. Lassister and Lisa Johnson.

PEOPLE

POPO, the Clown, presented his magic act each day during the Holiday Season at Oakland's (Calif.) Children's Fairyland Park

JAMES C. HOLM is currently playing schools with his dog act. He is working 16 dogs at the present time.

JACK RYAN, former publicity chief for Ringling-Barnum, has been invited by that show to pen a story concerning Irvin Feld's tenth anniversary as Circus' president and producer for the 1978 program book. Ryan resigned from his Ringling job in Feb. 1973 to become Director of Public Relations at Magic Mountain (Calif.).

FREDDIE KITCHEN, musician and accordionist worked with the Pan American show reported on in a previous issue. Tom Ogden was the show's announcer.

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THE PAMELA ROSAIRE/ROGER ZOPPE nuptials in Texas on Nov. 12th attracted a "turnaway" crowd, including the Joe Zoppe Family, the Rosaire Family (with the exception of Kay who was hung on long distance throughout the ceremony); the Corky Plunkett Family, the Hall Family, Donnie and Gayner Johnson, Mary and Hubert Castle, Cleo Plunkett, Bridget Balentine, Johnny and Betty Zoppe, the Bob Dunhams, James and Mafalda Zoppe, Dick McLaughlin, Floyd and Shirley Pauli, Max and Gertie Craig (looking very glamorous; I am told) plus many, many others.

BENTLEY BROS. bows in late Spring on the west coast, then heads east for a series of dates in the summer. The producing team of Bentley/Clancey advises the 1978 tour will be only a "chain-of-dates", due to commitments in '77 which prevented their setting up a longer route. That picture will change in 1979.

WHEN JOHNNY FRAZIER's Fisher Bros. Circus ended its season in Texas a number of showfolks were on hand: Ted Bowman, Dorey Miller and wife, Ione and Donnie MacIntosh, Corky and June Plunkett, Christopher and Debbie James, Bobby Gibbs, Glen Henry and Gary and Zoeann Henry... among others.

TINA MICHON, wife of French wild animal trainer JEAN, who went in last fall for an emergency appendectomy was discovered to have, instead, a cancerous tumor. Mrs. Michon underwent two operations in 12 days. According to reliable sources the cancer danger was eliminated and Mrs. Michon is happily now on the road to full recovery. The Michons are under contract to JOHN CUNEO.

MORE NAMES: A roster of illustrious names attended the Sarasota showing of King Bros. last fall: Art Concello, Merle Evans, Lucio and Gilda Cristiani, Lou Jacobs, and Mary Ruth Herriott. Attending DONNIE and GAYNOR JOHNSON's annual pre-Thanksgiving dinner-bash were the Zoppes, the Plunketts, the Halls, most of the Carden-Johnson personnel including Jimmy Connors and sons, Lou Reagen, Bill Golden, Ann Pike, Luben and Jeanne Stoyanoff, Joe Lemke, Marvin Varner and family. Missing were: RED HARTMAN and JOANNE and PEE WEE PINSON who were in Hammond (Ind) for Sam T. Polack. The affair was catered by GIL GRAY and CARL WONG with others joining their talents to the cooking spree.

DOWN RUMOR ROAD: That the PALACIOS, now in Mexico for Atayde, will split their double wide flying act (I hope not!).

XMAS DATERS: GARY and ZOEANN HENRY for Hetzer... JOE LEMKE, MARVIN and JOANN VARNER, MICHAEL and PATTI WUDKE to a John Stron unit... INGE WILLIAMS made the Chicago circuit for SCHULTZ, ditto JERRY LIPKO, BILLY RODGERS, PRINCE NAJVEZ, LILLI-ANA... The PLUNKETT Family in Texas for BOB ATTERBURY.

JIMMY COLE visited the Carlos Twins on Circus Vargas at its closing stand. The twins and the late Mrs. Cole (Heidi) grew up together in Germany. Jimmy also visited JIM NORDMARK's new Circus Plaza bldg. in Sarasota and was very impressed. The Cole All Star Circus opens this week (Jan. 12) at Oxford, Pa., and closes April 1st at Sidney (NY).

SNAPSHOTS: KLARA and LEO MASCITTO's baby due in Feb... CIRCUS VARGAS day and dated Ringling in the Tampa/St. Pete area... Reno's Nugget Club owner JOHN ASCUAGA gifted LIBERACE with a gold ring depicting the flamboyant pianist cradled in the trunk of BERTHA, that club's trademark pachyderm... The new performer presenting the Cuneo 17 act is HORST MERKEL from West Germany... and the man who trained those incredible parrots on the GUNTHER GEBEL WILLIAMS' Special is RAY BERWICK of the San Diego Wild Animal Park... DONNIE and GAYNOR JOHNSON picked up their new Boles Aero 5th wheel in Hollywood after attending the Las Vegas fair convention... CORKY PLUNKETT and CHRIS JAMES were stagehands on the Teenage America Pageant airing out of Dallas... ELVIN BALE debuts his new "rocket" act on RBBB... HARRY THOMAS appeared in the Wallenda film with his tigers, taped during the annual Showfolks Circus... Diddyknow hand-balancer DANNY CAREY, now with Int'l All Star, started his career at age 14 with JIMMY COLE and was on that show four seasons... GEORGE DA DEPPO outdid himself on this year's artwork for HENRY BARRETT's Flint (Mich) Shrine Circus promo... RBBB Blue opened Dec. 29th in Venice (Fla).

NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT: LOTTIE BRUNN did two cruise ship dates, one in the Atlantic, one in the Caribbean. "One cruise," she said, "lasted 11 days and I only did 2 shows."

An Owner-Producer AND a well-known Ringmaster, both of whom have had serious drinking problems,

(Continued on Page 25)

A Happy and Prosperous 1978

TO ALL OUR
CIRCUS FRIENDS EVERYWHERE

The Tegges

EARL - TIM - LOUISE

TNT & Royal Olympic Circus

Update

Before a horror-struck audience of children in Cincinnati Gardens last April 19th, circus aerialist Nancy Giordano fell 28 feet from a swinging trapeze and landed face-down on a concrete floor only about five feet from a group of youngsters. The 29-year-old trapeze artist, taking part in a special matinee performance of the Shrine Circus, suffered multiple fractures of the jaw, elbow, wrist and a leg. She was hospitalized in serious condition in Cincinnati for several weeks before being released to go home to Southern California for further hospital care.

In a recent letter from Escondido, Calif., Miss Giordano reports, "I am doing quite well, and am still months ahead of schedule in recovery."

Her letter to William M. Welsh, Syrian Temple circus administrator here, says she has recuperated to such an extent that she planned to fly to New Orleans to visit her fellow performers in the Hanneford Circus this month.

"I am very excited, not having seen them since the Cincinnati circus," she said.

And she added she expects to resume working in the circus next spring.

"Surgery to remove pins from my left elbow was performed in October, after which I was able to begin a weight training program to build strength necessary for my act," she wrote.

Miss Giordano said she expects to undergo two more operations, one next month and the other possibly next May.

She expressed gratitude to the Cincinnati Shriners for everything they did for her after the tragic fall.

"A more wonderful organization just doesn't exist!" she wrote.

(The above article has been copied from a Cincinnati (Ohio) newspaper, sent to Circus Report last month by Bob Hoban).

The Tulsa (Okla) Zoo has acquired the elephant "Sneezy" on loan from the zoo in Memphis (Tenn) as a replacement for "George" who died on May 2, 1977;

The 1978 edition of the Guinness Book of Records has two pages devoted exclusively to circus feats.

Available: AFTER MAY 22, 1978 and 1979

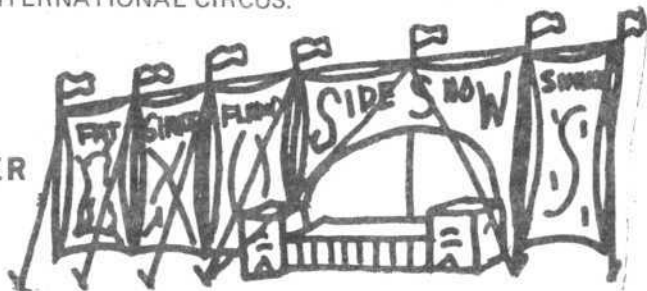


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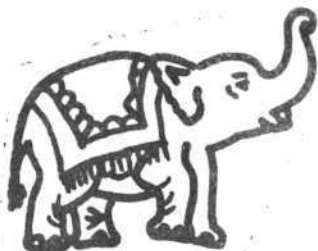
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PEOPLE

JERRY DIGNEY, former National Public Relations Director for RBBB, has been appointed National Public Relations Counsel for the Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus. Digney recently opened his own agency, The Flack Factory, in Orlando, Fla.

SEIGEI IGNATOV, juggler with the Moscow Circus, has been made an Honorary Member of the International Jugglers' Association. He was presented with a special certificate at the conclusion of the show's performance in New York City on Dec. 22nd.

FRANK DEAN, western star, has authored an article called "Knots To Hold Your Horse" which appears in the Jan. 1978 issue of the "Western Horseman" magazine.

KEN KURTZ, convention chairman for the CFA's 1978 meet, reports that **HARRIET BASTON**, sales manager for the Dearborn Inn has informed him the first registration for the big July 2-5 convention has been received. The first registration is for **BOB** and **ETHEL WELGEL** of Ellicott, Maryland.

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Show Report

The program for the 44th annual Hadi Shrine Circus (Nov. 24-27) at Evansville, Ind., was produced by L. N. Fleckles, with Ernie McLean serving as announcer and Jack Cervone directing the band.

Featured in the show were: Theme from Star Wars; Spec; The Kniesleys and The Pharoahs, aerial; Guy Gossing's tigers; Susan Sheryll's Royal Afghans; Cimsie's Wolfhounds; Barbara's Fantasy Animals; Jorge's Unpredictable Car; Johnny Laddie, unsupported ladders; Martin Youth Group; The Great Lamberti; Mr. Rhythm, horse; Clowns; the Flying Lar-rays.

In the second half were: Nielsen's juggling; Kalmas, rola bola; Johnny Zoppe's Rhesus Monkey Revue; Clowns; the Hortobagyi's, teeterboard; Clowns; Walt King's elephants; Aerial Ballet, featuring Sonja Zoppe; the 1977 Hadi Temple's Star Attraction "Bat Man" (Adam West); The Quazars, rocket ship; Grand Finale.

The book "End of the Game" published by Doubleday, selling for \$9.95, is a photo book showing the destruction of elephants in Africa.

WANT TO BUY

ANIMAL ACTS - FEATURE QUALITY

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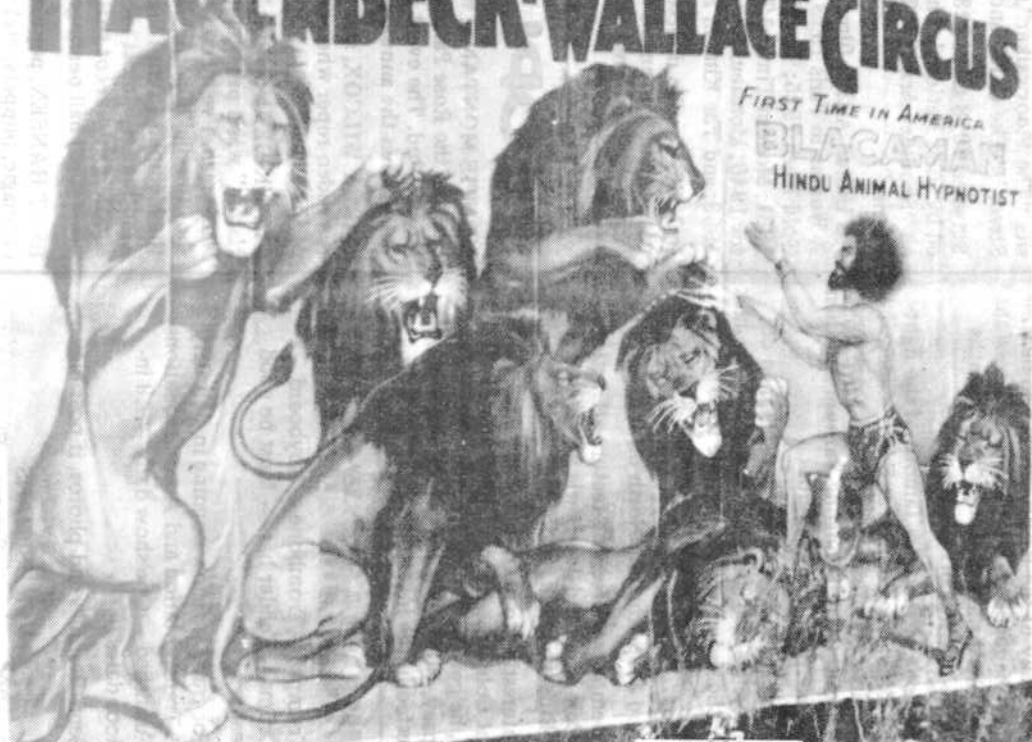
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Show Data

Many people who were associated with the world of boxing went on to become circus employees. Because of their connections it was only natural that they joined the Ringling-Barnum Circus. To most of them it was their ticket out of New York's ghetto, offering a chance to get away from the fight game.

Many of these people worked with Ringling-Barnum under canvas as ushers, prop men, as wardrobe people, ticket sellers, porters and you name it. Many of the RBBB ushers also became ushers at the regular Friday night fight sessions in New York during the long winter months when the show was off the road.

Probably one of the most famous of the fighters who joined the circus was Eddie Mader, the heavy-weight contender. For several years thru 1948 he toured with Ringling-Barnum and then joined Cole Bros. for 1949-50.

Mader was the top reserved seat salesman on Cole Bros. He also served as bodyguard for Jack Tavlin, the show's owner. At one time he was in charge of the white ticket wagon and the pie car. He later served as bodyguard for Art Concello and John Ringling North on the big show.

Jack Dempsey toured as a feature attraction with Cole Bros. and Joe Lewis was featured on Daily Bros. in 1950.

It is interesting to note that when Jack Tavlin bought Cole Bros. Circus from Zack Terrell in 1948, he got the money from his friend Jack Dempsey, Billy Rose and several other people interested in the investment.

Film Work

Charlie Chaplin, who appeared in many films during his lifetime, often wrote, directed and starred in the movies. He made his debut for Mack Sennett's Keystone Films in the one-reeler "Making A Living" in 1914. That year he made 35 one and two-reel shorts, plus the six reel "Tillie's Punctured Romance."

Between 1915 and 1918 he made 14 shorts and the four-reel "Carmen". He also appeared in 12 shorts in 1916 and 1917, including the classics "The Floorwalker", "The Rink", "Easy Street", "The Cure" and "The Immigrant."

Between 1918 and 1923 his films were released by First National. The nine comedies included "Shoulder Arms", "The Kid", and "The Pilgrim".

His United Artists films, all full-length, were: A Woman in Paris 1923 (directed only); The Gold Rush 1925; The Circus 1928: City Lights 1931; Modern Times 1936; The Great Dictator 1940; Monsieur Verdoux 1947; Limelight 1953; and The King in New York 1957.

In 1966, Chaplin directed and made a brief appearance in Universal's "A Countess from Hong Kong" which starred Marlon Brando and Sophia Loren.

PEOPLE

MONTIE MONTANA, western star, was featured in the Rose Parade from Pasadena (Cal) on Jan. 2nd. The event marked his 45th appearance in the annual parade.

LARRY WILCOX, star of TV's 'Chips' show is a rodeo roper when he is not working in front of the camera.

FRANK DEAN writes: The late "Slingshot Hamm" was a professional roper and sling shot marksman. I've heard he was as good as "Slingshot Charlie" a performer we worked with at the Memphis (Tenn) State Fair. Charlie did a shooting act, almost identical to the stunts that shooters do, except that he used a slingshot, using small ball bearings as his shot.

BERT HANSEN, popular west coast entertainer (magic, puppets, etc) was recently hospitalized for major surgery, at Mt. Zion Hospital in San Francisco, Calif.

MUSICIANS WANTED

Trumpet - Trombone - Keyboard -
Drums - Fender bass - Must be good readers.

For traveling show opening in February -
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Send Resumes and photos, if possible to:

MUSICIANS

Box 205

Sarasota, Fla. - 33577

PEOPLE

HOXIE TUCKER has sent his big Gorilla Show to Circus Vargas for the 1978 season. The unit opened with the show at Tampa, Fla., and is operating under the direction of Charles and Jessie Moyer.

TOMMY BENTLEY has a pre-paid ticket and invitation to attend the Easter opening of the Austrian National Circus. He says he will be there.

JACK GOBBLE recently purchased a new Holiday Rambler motor home. He reports that December marked his 40th year in show biz.

THE LANCELOT LINK CHIMPS are on tour with the Panamerican Circus, Inc., in Central America. After that tour the chimp act goes to the Orient for a series of show dates.

YEARS AGO

Walter L. Main Circus
Pittsfield, Mass. - June 13, 1933

The cookhouse arrived about 10 p.m. last night consisting of a truck (No. 35) and a trailer. The truck is yellow and black, while the trailer is red.

All of the rest of the show arrived early this morning, coming from Amsterdam, N. Y.

The tents are: 2 pole big top; 3 pole cookhouse; 3 pole side show (with 8 banners and 3 ticket boxes); 4 pole menagerie; 2 pole No. 2 side show (with 3 banners and one ticket box).

In the menagerie they have one elephant, plus a small one; 8 ponies; 5 horses; one donkey; four camels and three cages (monkeys, hyena, black bears, lions).

Altogether they have 44 trucks and cars with: pole truck, poles and stringers, canvas, seats, electric plant, menagerie, side show, elephant, small elephant and ponies, horses, poles and stakes, animals, cookhouse, concessions, props, ticket wagon, frozen custard, plus house cars and private units.

They have a one ring show and use merchants tickets offering a 10 cent admission. The regular admission price is 25 cents. One show was given in the afternoon at 2 p.m. and four shows were given that night running from 8 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.

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Experienced elephant man who can work an act and help care for elephants

Man to learn to work with bear act, possibly take over the act someday.

Man to stay permanently at our winter quarters. Take care of the facility and take care of any animals we might leave there. - Living accommodations furnished.

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The town of Prairie du Sac, Wisc., will never be the same since "Barbara" the circus elephant ran through the Maplewood Rest Home this past summer. Circus Fans will be interested to know that the home has made up a beautiful poster with 5 action photos of the elephant run and the damage. The posters are for sale and information regarding their purchase can be obtained by writing to: Pat Kelly, 103 John Adams St., Sauk City, Wisc. - 53583.

PEOPLE

JACK BENNETT is going to tour with the new GOPHER DAVENPORT circus this season.

DON MARCKS is preparing an all new magic show which it is hoped will bow early this year. In the meantime he continues to do M.C. work in California, along with his magic features.



PEOPLE

GARY THOMAS has taken over the Hubert Castle Circus elephants, replacing PEE WEE and JO ANN PINSON, who will be working independent dates for 1978.

SR. JESUS FUENTES, of Mexico's Circus Union, recently visited with the MANUEL KING family and BOBBY and ROSA GIBBS.

MANUEL KING has returned to his home in Texas after spending two weeks in Puerto Rico looking at talent for several shows.

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Anyone can

Because of financial problems, Jack and Margie Lynch, operators of the Loboland wolf preserve near Gardiner, Wash., are putting their wolves up for adoption. However, you don't you don't get to take a wolf home, what the Lynches want is sponsors who are willing to pay \$20 a month to keep an individual animal in food.

"For as little as \$20 a month, any person can adopt a specific wolf," Lynch said. "We'll put this person's name on the wolf's pen, and the foster parent can visit his or her wolf at any time."

The animals at the preserve include 87 buffalo wolves, remnants of a sub-species that once roamed the plains with the bison. When settlers wiped out the buffalo, the wolves lost their food supply, and when they began preying on cattle and sheep, settlers all but wiped them

out.

Loboland is a non-profit foundation set up about 1920 by Dr. Edward McCleery, a Pennsylvania physician who persuaded government trappers to give him the last several buffalo wolves taken alive.

He turned a wolf preserve in Kane, Pa., over to the Lynches in 1961. They moved the operation to the state of Washington six years ago.

The Lynches support the preserve with admission fees, but the number of wolves has grown and winter is a bad time for tourists.

"We have 150 hungry mouths to feed and each mouth needs more than 35 pounds of meat or dogfood per week. We're having a hard time providing the food," Lynch said.

NOTICE

ATTENTION ALL CIRCUS PRODUCERS, PROMOTERS, PERFORMERS, Etc.

There is a persistent rumor to the effect that I, Bill Schreiber, have undercover ties to the Internal Revenue Service and am a part of some IRS tax enforcement program.

Let me state here and now that as of August 4, 1976, my sole employment has been with Big John Strong, a fact of which I am quite proud.

My ties with the IRS ceased once and for all on July 31, 1976, when I freely tendered my resignation from that organization to pursue my lifelong ambition of joining the circus.

It is therefore especially disturbing to me that such nonsense should prevail.

That the IRS should embark on a scrutiny of the circus world shortly after I quit and joined the Strong Circus is, however it seems, only an unfortunate coincidence.

My energies lie solely with the Strong Circus, and any rumors or gossip to the effect that I am an undercover agent for the IRS are not only laughable but outright lies.

BILL SCHREIBER
Mgr. Big John Strong Circus

Holiday Feature

Irvin (Rickey, the Clown) Romig recently completed several Industrial Christmas parties and entertained for several organizations.

The biggest and most impressive was for the Ford Motor Co., of Romulus, Mich., where the program was held in Allen Park Municipal Auditorium, with 1,200 employees attending.

Romig's Piano Roll Vagabonds and their Caliano (a combination of piano, chimes, and wooden whistles) gave off a unique sound with the old-time tunes, played for the come-in.

Irvin Romig opened the Variety Show with a song; Al Jolson style and did comedy magic.

Miss Janet Smith followed with a novelty tap dance, then came Rickey's Rascal Dixieland Band with son Chris Romig doing two trombone solos.

This was followed by a comedy bull fight with Ed Currie, Scott Kerstein and Ellen Banfield featured.

Next was Miss Cheryl Senko's Acrobatic act and Rickey's cowboy rope spinning number, ending with the big loop.

Rose and Rickey and their trained K-9's were next and finally the show was closed by none other than himself — St. Nick.

Since that time Irvin did a spot TV commercial for the Lansing Michigan Catholic Arch-Diocese which will be aired in Saginaw, Flint and Detroit.

..... George DaDeppo

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Show Acts

Probably one of the strongest performances ever seen on the Leonard Green produced Emmett Kelly, Jr. Circus, starring Emmett Kelly, Jr., was unveiled at the Sunrise Music Theatre Circus Festival in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., on Dec. 25-31st,

The Emmett Kelly, Jr. Circus was presented under Hoxie Tucker's new, blue round top, and provided an admirable showcase. Mr. Tucker also provided the seating, lighting, generator and the regular Hoxie big show midway.

Adjacent to the circus proper was a Carnival Midway. Neil Sedaka headlined the Music Theatre.

The all-star talent line-up included: Overture with Charles Schlarbaum, director/trumpet; Jerry Maas, organist; Giles Austing, drums.

Following the introduction of Emmett Kelly, Jr., were: Lilli-Ana, leopards; the Hernandez, rola bola; Miss Aerialietta, trapeze thriller; Emmett and a rope gag; Ethel's Greyhounds; Randy and Sylvia, forehead perch; Kim Kristensen, long-rein dressage; Emmett and Nancy, comedy magic; Billy Earl, sword balance; Jo Ann and Sunny, seal act; the Hernandez Troupe, teeterboard; Emmett and feather gag; Bonnie & Clyde musical comedy; Prince Najvez, aerial; the Hoxie Bros. baby elephants, presented by Johnny and Laura Walker; Finale.

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SAWDUST TRAIL

This column may not be regular for the next few weeks while the writer recovers from his 6th heart attack - my fifth since 1965. This time your reporter thought he had brought the "final tear down". I would like to thank Ken Benson for filling an engagement for me while I was in the CCU Unit and for writing a column. Thanks to the many friends who wrote and called to check on my progress.

Reliable information coming to this reporter is that Joe McMahon has left the Beatty-Cole organization and will be replaced by Bill English. Bill was formerly with Royal Hanneford and several years ago was with the Beatty organization. It is rumored that Joe has gone to the Hoxie show.

Gopher Davenport has purchased several animals from the La. Purchase Gardens & Zoo for his World Wide Jungle Wonder Circus. Plans are to have a free zoo of over 100 animals on the show this year.

Information reaching this reporter from Peter Luvas, owner of Dixiana Circus, states they will tour in '78. A beautiful brochure has been received that pictures the show's features. Pete says that despite a rough start in '77 the season ended on a happy note. A new ticket office is being built and several old trucks will be replaced. A route has already been laid out and fans everywhere will be watching for the show.

The Dec. '77 issue of 'Popular Mechanics' carried a nice article on Elvin and Jeanette's big \$70,000 Continental bus which is their motor home. The couple is with RBBB's Blue Unit.

Word has been received by this writer that the Gopher Davenport Circus was aired on CBS-TV twice. Those who have seen it said it was quite good.

Many tented shows will open their 1978 season under new canvas. Among them are two of the largest shows on the road - Circus Vargas and Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros., with Hoxie Bros. following close behind. The latter show lost their top in a storm in late 1977 and had to bring out their old round top.

My thanks to the following: Ken Benson for his daily visits and who gave me a copy of the Charlie Baumann book "Tiger, Tiger" and "50 Years Under Canvas"; Earl Allen for his concern and who gave me 6 Merle Evans records; Hardy O'neil for the book "Logistics of the American Circus"; Gopher Davenport and E. J. McDaniels for their long distance phone calls, and to the many other friends who wrote and sent cards.

..... M. L. DUPONT

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CIRCUS MEMORIES

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In Memoriam

The death of the silent movie genius Charlie Chaplin has left a saddened world which remembers his humorous pantomimes that transcended all generations.

To many he was only known through the ageless films that portrayed him as a baggy-pants tramp, evoking at one moment hilarity and the next tears. He left a style of humor that never will be matched.

Chaplin will live forever in his films, twitching his brush mustache and tipping his battered derby, and we are grateful for that immortality.

And that is the way he should be remembered, not for the controversy he caused off the screen with his numerous marriages to child brides and for his political views which appalled an uneasy America during the Cold War.

We laughed at this genius' comedy on the screen and chastized - indeed banned him from the United States - for his politics.

Yet, while we made distinctions between his screen performances and off-stage life, Chaplin

always contended there was no difference in what he was saying.

On the screen, he portrayed the little guy, the underdog who was a victim of the system. And we laughed and laughed.

Off the screen, he defended the little guy. We said he was associated with communism and we scorned him. What irony!

In his later years, when the Red-baiting turmoil of the 1950's was far behind, we recognized him for the towering giant of an entertainer that he was. He was given a special Oscar in 1972 when he was 83 and in 1975 he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II.

Genius, egocentric, controversial, shy, tyrant, or whatever label given him, he will always be to his millions of film admirers the Little Tramp shuffling down that endless road, twirling his cane and looking for his next episode.

The book "Mathew Brady and His World" by M. Kunhardt, includes several photos of circus giants, midgets and wedding photos of the famous Siamese twins Chang and Eng. The new book sells for \$19.95.

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PEOPLE

DAVID and MARJORIE HACKETT attended the Ringling-Barnum Blue premiere at Venice, Fla., as well as the Sarasota Showfolks New Year's Eve Party. They were joined by LAURAMAY (McKenzie) PETRILLO, her mother MILDRED McKENZIE, Mr. and Mrs. RALPH LANE and BILL and LUCILLE LANE.

MILONGA CLINE and her son JOHNNIE spent Christmas in California visiting her family as well as Mrs. NORMAN CARROLL and her son KEVIN.

MIKE WINN, suffered only minor injuries when he fell while setting his high wire across the big Knott's Berry Farm (Calif.) on Dec. 23rd. The accident occurred as the wire was being rigged for a "sky walk" on New Year's Eve,

GALATEA, a stripper at San Francisco's Safari Club uses an illusion in her act, thus she becomes the Statue That Comes to Life."

RUSSELL T. WARNER is improving rapidly after undergoing surgery for removal of a cataract.

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Magic

The Christmas season brought out many annual Christmas promotion shows, most of them featuring magic acts. Bill Blysnor's dates had Phil Chandler; Alan Hill's dates had Tom Ogden; Bill Hill's dates had Troy Mulligan; Ron Bacon's dates had Dick Johnson; Jim Nordmark's dates had Jerry Conklin; and we presented Magic Time USA for Mearl Johnson's dates.

Many legitimate theatres are also using magic shows for the holidays. New York City has "Merlin's Magic Circus" at the Enter Media Theatre. The Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia had Dick Gustalphonson. The University of Pittsburgh was presenting David the Magician. After we finish Mearl Johnson's dates we take Magic Time USA into the Morris Stage in Morristown, N.J., for 5 days.

Our recent tour took us through Colon, Mich., and I had a nice long chat with Greg Bordner while picking up supplies. Things are always buzzing at Abbott's, if you doubt the art of magic is not flourishing — just go to Colon and see the huge amounts of apparatus being shipped out every day.

Jim Nordmark is framing quite a magic show for his second unit. Understand that Jimmy Douglass is building sets. Ken Griffin is building the levitation, a flower production is coming from Abbott's and Joe Eddy will be the magician.

We have a few old stand-bys back with us for the Christmas tour. Sister-in-law Chela Diaz is back with us as well as Dick Stuart on the organ, who came on after Jack King left. Rabbi, the clown, who has been with our show off and on over the years is also back. Rick Percy is conducting the band and doing a fine job. Our new stage manager is Bob Owen. Mike Bourbon was on for awhile as Santa Claus.

We will be in Sarasota winterquarters in January and February, getting spruced up for the

Holiday Feature

A Christmas show for the G.E. Club in the mid west, presented on Dec. 17th featured: Dick Seegar, organist; Wow, the Wizard, announcer; The Widgets, acrobats; Susan Sheryll's Royal Afghans; Wow, the Wizard; and the Wainwrights in a program that ran approximately one hour.

On the following day (Dec. 18) a Christmas program was presented for the Victor Products Division of the Dana Corp., at Robinson, Ill. Featured in this show were: Danny Martin, announcer; Johnnie Laddie, unsupported ladders; Erik Adams, chimps; The Wainwrights, trampoline; Susan Sheryll's Royal Afghans; Danny Martin, balloon sculpturing; The Widgets, acrobats; Johnny Zoppe's Rhesus Monkey Revue and Vic Hyde, a one man band.

1978 season. We are under contract to Mearl Johnson's North American Productions and open for them in the north east in March. Our route will be in CR, visit when you can.

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PEOPLE

C. C. DAY and wife are spending the winter at Donna, Texas.

ROBERT OWENS, artist, has a number of his clown portraits in department stores this winter, and reports they are selling well.

JOHN (Yo Ho) and "COOKIE" MAC KAY, husband and wife clown team, have been spending the winter at Shreveport, La.

BILL WILLIAMS (Cotton Candy, the Clown) worked several Christmas dates in the San Francisco (Calif) area this past month.

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BILLY BARTON (Continued)

are NOW and have been on the wagon, much to the relief of their friends and families. I mention it here only to encourage these gentlemen to keep up the good work.

The JOHNSONS had been razzing the PLUNKETTS about their dormant rose bushes while Donnie and Gaynor's "over-bloomed", so Cleo purchased artificial flowers which he attached to the branches. The floral design might have appeared genuine except Cleo got carried away and tied pink, red, yellow, white and orange buds to the same bush. Either out of frustration or embarrassment or both, immediately after Thanksgiving the "barren" rose bush suddenly bloomed!

See you down the road, luvs.

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CIRCUS CHAMPIONSHIPS (Conti nued)

JUGGLING - Bob Branson, Germany; Kris Kremo, Switzerland; and Victor Ponce, Argentina.

STRONG MAN - Sheff Amer, Egypt; Ivan Karl, England, and Samson, England.

THE WINNERS: The Flying Terreis (it was announced they will henceforth be known as the Flying Cavarettas), popular with the British Queen and commoner, achieved top marks with their skill, grace and beauty.

Manfred Duval, repeated his success of last year and carried off the trophy once again with his superb high wire act.

Jerry, Jimmy & Jonny's trick riding just beat the English Mohawks.

Kris Kremo, a young juggler with a minimum of props and maximum of skill and showmanship, took the trophy back to Switzerland.

Samson, the strong man from England, was first with an impressive and attractive presentation.

An interesting aspect on the last night was a live televised interview with circus buff Burt

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Lancaster. He regretted his absence and explained the intricacies of the triple somersault. He also introduced the Burt Lancaster Trophy, which together with a large cash prize awaits the first artist to perform the quadruple somersault on any television show. The lovely Terry Lemus attempted the quadruple shortly after his announcement, but failed to make it. The Rock-Smith Flyers had achieved several faultless three-and-a-half's during the weeks event.

(Continued on Page 27)

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CIRCUS CHAMPIONSHIPS (Continued)

In addition to the competing acts, Mary Chipperfield appeared with her seven tigers and also introduced her new Exotic act consisting of Grey's zebras, Bactrian camels, guanoco, highland bull, Tibetan Yak and a young giraffe.

Elephants from Miss Chipperfield's and from Gerry Cottle's circuses were presented by Carlos McManus. The French Santos Julian Family with their excellent cycling act also appeared. Cottle's clown group was augmented by clowns No-No and Gary, and Pierre Picton with his Crazy Car. Hoppe's Unrideable Mules provided an uproarious finale.

These Circus World Championships are attracting world-wide attention, and it looks as if they will become a permanent feature of the London autumn season, a most welcome addition to the circus "back-end".

The book "Hometown USA" has a photo of an old livery stable which has posters of the Buffalo Bill Show on it's front. The book also contains three photos of the John Robinson Circus parade.

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PEOPLE

GARY RAMSEY, former circus promoter, and BRIGETTE BARBARA CONRAD, were married last month and now lives in East Berlin, Mo. They met at Little Rock where Gary was serving with the Air Force.

CINDY MARCELLI DONALDSON was returning from Maine after a Christmas show, last month, when a semi-truck skidded and side-swiped her car. Her parents, ROLAND and JANIS MARCELLI were in New Jersey doing shows at the time. Her husband Paul and parents were all relieved to know that she came through the ordeal uninjured. Damages to her car amount to \$950.

ROBERT E. COLLINS, a regional marketing director for RBBB, authored an article called "Marketing Under the Big Top" which appears in the Nov.-Dec. 1977 issue of "Communications Marketing" magazine.