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Our 10th Year

Number 7

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## Report

### COUNCIL INVESTS IN CIRCUS

(From the Toronto Star, Jan. 22, 1981)

The Canada Council has made its first investment in a circus and has become part owner of a Vancouver satirical review.

Through its new venture capital fund, the council has bought a one-tenth interest in Circus Tivoli, a new European-style circus with its own blue and gold "big top". It will start touring this spring. The investment is \$25,000 in the \$2.5 million venture.

And for \$1,000, the council bought a one-twelfth interest in a planned U.S.-Canada tour of Half-Human, Half-Heartache, a comic musical review by the Clichettes which opened New Year's Eve at the Vancouver East Cultural Center.

Walter Learning, theatre section head of the council confirmed the investments were made out of a \$200,000 fund set up last year to buy into privately sponsored shows with the prospect of earning a profit.

Normally the council pays subsidies to performers, writers, artists and arts organizations out of its \$50 million annual budget. Its new plan to buy shares and take a risk in show business ventures is to encourage commercial production.

Circus Tivoli is being organized by J. Sergei Sawchyn, a former general manager of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and executive assistant in the Conklin carnival shows, who brought the Moscow Circus to Canada for a seven week tour some years ago.

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Learning said it will differ from the three-ring circuses produced by Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, and the carnivals operated by the James F. Conklin Toronto organization since, in the European style, attention is concentrated on one ring in the big tent and the show is a self-contained unit.

World's Fair, the English trade paper of the circus world, gave banner play to Circus Tivoli, saying it promises to be a grand show and something novel for Canada, "travelling the country in a brand-new Italian big top built by Canobbio in red and gold inside and rich blue exterior."

"The circus ground will be completely fenced in like European shows, with an ingeniously designed front built on three large trailers."

Sawchyn plans to bring circus acts from various European centers, but to have facilities - including mobile home accommodations - built here. Circus Tivoli will be the first world-class circus built in North America in more than 40 years.

The deal with Bill House of Toronto, producer of the Clichettes, called for remounting the original production of Half-Human, Half-Heartache, with Pam Brighton directing and Jim Plaxton redesigning the show.

A 13 week tour of Vancouver, Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Toronto is part of the deal, but the tour may be extended.

As an investor, the Canada Council would share in any profits earned by the shows after the initial investments are paid back.

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Feb 17-19 Hawthorne, Ca.  
20-23 Cerritos

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Ringling-Barnum - Blue  
to Feb 22 Atlanta, Ga.

Ringling-Barnum - Red  
Feb 17-22 Greensboro, NC

---- OTHER DATES ----

Billy Barton  
Feb 18-23 Hartford, Conn

David Copperfield  
Feb 19-Mar 18 Lake  
Tahoe, Nev.

TNT & Royal Olympic  
Feb. 13-16 Mission Viejo,  
Calif.

## NOTE . . .

The Ringling-Barnum personnel photo printed in Circus Report, Feb. 2, 1981 - page 15 - is a Kelty Photo, taken at New Haven, Conn. June 13, 1934.

(Thanks to Jim Hoye).

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# REPORT

## BRITISH WINTER CIRCUSES

BY JACK NIBLETT

Despite the poor business experienced during the summer, the number of winter circuses in England was about the same as usual with seasons from three to six weeks; and from reports and from personal observation I would say that business, was generally speaking, very good.

For the first time since Bertram Mill's circus ceased to operate at Olympia in 1957, London had a major circus in its midst.

This was David Smart's Super Circus, still under canvas in a well-heated tent in Battersea Park. Mr. Smart had a slightly less ambitious program for his winter season, but it was a very good program, more suited for the family audiences which were well in evidence during the holiday season.

David's program ran as follows: Yasmine Smart with Arabian horses; Elaine Baranton, foot juggler; Alun Davies, poodles and collies; the Di-Lellos, Italian clowns; the Bradfords, Russian swing (including leaps over 7 horses) The Jarz, flying trapeze; Pat Bradfort, equilibrist; Biasini Family, cyclists; Dany Cesar, "Man in the Moon"; Sir Robert Fossett's elephants; Grand Finale Spectacle. There were also two acts in which the audience were invited to participate - learning to walk the high wire and the riding machine for would-be bareback riders.

I understand that David Smart will be running circus seasons on this site for the coming summer and Christmas seasons.

Belle Vue Circus Manchester had fewer international acts than usual, but the program was swift-moving and has proved very popular. Acts included the Svenson Juniors, riding comedy; Martin Lacey's lions; Duban Nicol, trampoline; Joan Rosaire with the Won-

der Horse Goldie; Gina, aerial revolving hoop; Hsiung Family, Chinese acrobats; Beverley Roberts, camels and horse; Tommy Roberts, elephants and horses; the Bruksons, low wire; the Darix, balancing act; the Santos Family in three acts (1) cyclists, (2) juggling, (3) comedy vaulting. Clowns Jacko Fossett and Little Willy appeared throughout. This may well be the last circus at Belle Vue. The Kings Hall Building in which the annual circus is held is the only building left standing in this once popular amusement park and zoo, and it is rumored that it is also due for demolition. It is hoped to save the circus, which is one of the institutions in the North of England and beloved by artists and fans alike.

Sally Chipperfield ran a couple of weeks at Bristol and then moved to Birmingham for a similar period. Sally had her husband Jim Clubb presenting a group of lionesses, or a group of tigers, while she showed the poodles, monkeys and pony. Jim also had the Russian bears and the exotic group of mixed animals. Artists included the Mohawks Red Indian Riders; Clarinda, pigeons and magic; the Hassani Troupe of Arab acrobats; the Kedellos, equilibrists; Zana and Nina Hassani, the double corde lisse; Miss Danielle, solo trapeze; Frankie Paulo & Co., musical comedy; Togara, fire eater; Jimmy Scott, comedy table act; Western spectacle with the prairie ponies and full company. Jimmy Scott with Bubu and Frankie Paulo were responsible for the continuity clowning.

The "original" Chipperfield Circus run by Richard Chipperfield and his son "Dickie" ran a tenting season at Enfield, near London, and were favored with mild weather. As usual animal acts predominated and there were groups of lions, polar and black bears, and tigers presented by members of the family; also elephants, liberty horses, high school horses and parrots, plus the "rid-

(Continued on Page 23)

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## REPORT

### CIRCUS SUES OVER TAX BILL

*(From the Sarasota (Fla) Herald-Tribune of Jan. 29, 1981 - by Tom Watson).*

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus has sued Sarasota County over a \$45,600 tax bill for its circus trains and the property carried inside.

The suit was filed in 12th Judicial Circuit Court by circus attorney Granville H. Crabtree, Jr., against County Property Appraiser John W. Mikos and County Tax Collector Rebecca Eger.

In it the circus says that a 1979 change in the state tax code prohibits Mikos from levying an assessment against the circus property that is not located in Sarasota County year round.

The suit says the property and trains are used exclusively for the presentation of performances throughout the United States and Canada.

The performances are scheduled far enough in advance to permit each of the circus' two shows to have a two-year run.

The suit said since 1967 the circus headquarters has been located in Washington, DC.

In Venice the circus maintains "caretaking"

# Circus Photos

**CIRCUS PHOTOS — 8 x 10"**

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1 - Aerial view of Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey winter quarters in Sarasota 1926 - 1960.

2 - Winter quarters scene 1926 - 1960

3 - Winter quarters scene inside practice building 1926 - 1960

4 - Aerial view Ringling Fire (1944) at Hartford, Conn.

5 - Ground view of Ringling Fire at Hartford, Conn. (1944).

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facilities and operates its Clown College for six weeks each year. Assessments of \$7,745 for the Venice facility are not disputed, the suit said.

The circus schedules only 12 performances a year in Venice the suit said. Mikos assessed the circus property because it is located in Sarasota County on Jan. 1, the day assessments are made.

In 1979, the legislature amended the state tax law to say only property of businesses located for an entire year preceding the assessment date can be taxed, the suit said.

Mikos ignored this provision when he assessed the rolling stock of the circus, the suit says.

John Dent, the attorney for Mikos, said the change in the tax code does not change a thing as far as the circus is concerned.

The law was written, he said, to protect cer-

(Continued on Page 21)

# Report

## WAGONS ROLL TO FLORIDA

Two famous, original Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus wagons, owned by Jerry Booker, of San Mateo, California., were loaded for their last trip at Booker's ranch in San Mateo, on Feb. 7th. The wagons are enroute to Circus World Park in Florida, where they will go on permanent display.

The sale was arranged with the help of Chappie Fox, a vice president of Ringling-Barnum Circus at Circus World, who has been a long time friend of Booker. Fox is recognized as a historical circus wagon authority and he praised the safekeeping of these priceless wagons by Booker.



Jerry Booker (left), President of Show Ring Corp., San Mateo, Calif., and Chappie Fox, V.P., Ringling-Barnum Circus, recollect the great days of the old American Circus involving the two historical wagons which are enroute to Circus World Park at Orlando, Fla.

The two wagons represent great circus history: Wagon No. 88, largest and weighing nearly 5 tons empty, was used on H-W Circus as a chair or wardrobe trunk wagon. A monster size wagon, built of all steel sills, angle iron side braces, steel angle corners, screw brakes and famous St. Mary's wheels with 6" tires of steel. Once it was unloaded it served as a dressing room wagon on the circus lot for the famous Clyde Beatty who rose to stardom as an H-W feature wild animal performer. It was built by "Cap" Curtis a master heavy wagon builder in the H-W Circus winter quarter's shops at Peru, Ind.

Wagon No. 54, was the original cook house water wagon of the H-W Circus (of the two

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## Miscellaneous

The Beatty-Cole Circus is scheduled to start its 1981 under-canvas tour in Florida on March 15th

Circus Maranatha, operated by Tino Wallenda Zoppe, presented two shows on Jan. 31st at the Bradenton Christian School in Bradenton, Fla.

Le Clique Fantasy Players are reportedly set to play at the Playboy Resort Hotel in Atlantic City, N.J.

No. 54 was used at various times on the H-W Circus and is considered the oldest because of its all wood construction throughout). Constructed of all wood sills, sides and body construction, it is 11 ft. long, with side racks, screw brakes, St. Mary's wheels with 6" steel tires and carries a steel rectangular water tank inside the wood body. It is believed to have been built by Tom Tucker, American Circus Corp. wagon builder, as early as 1917 or 1918 at the H-W shops in Peru, Ind.

Both wagons were on Howard Bary's H-W Circus, leased from Ringling, making the trip to California in 1938. Louis Goebel, animal dealer and show equipment collector, Thousand Oaks, Calif., bought them at the dispersal sale of that circus in Sept. 1938, at Baldwin Park, Calif. They were then used for movie rentals and props.

In 1962, Booker acquired them from Goebel for use by Concar Enterprises and on "The Belgian Horse Fair" with Booker touring them via rail as far as Dallas, for the show's date at the 1962 Texas State Fair.

Since that time they have been stored and used by Booker's Show Ring Corp. in the San Francisco Area.

They represent two of the rugged, well-built, massive wagons that have carried circus history across America. On the great St. Mary's wheels they rolled with the golden era of the circus in America.

**REPORT****ANIMAL OWNER TO FIGHT OFFICIALS**

*(From the Longmont, Colo., Times-Call of Dec. 5, 1980 - by Steve Krizman).*

It didn't surprise Dr. Robert Hawkins of Longmont when he recently lost a skirmish with the Weld County commissioners over his wild animal farm near here.

But the battle is far from over, he said. "This could drag on for a couple of years. It could drag on for 10 years if you wanted it to."

Hawkins was denied a special use permit for his menagerie, which includes 13 lions, tigers, leopards as well as numerous other species of goats, sheep, deer and elk. The cats are housed in a barn, caged in cement and chain-link. The hoofed animals roam on Hawkins' 80 acres in the shadow of the Fort St. Vrain Nuclear Power Plant.

Hawkins said he didn't fight too hard for the special use permit. "It was a foregone conclusion," he said. "No matter what I had to say, they (the commissioners) were bound and determined to deny the permit."

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Many salvos were fired Hawkins' way before he agreed to apply for the permit. The county filed suit, saying he is violating zoning regulations. Hawkins argues the regulations pertain only to dogs.

Criminal charges also are pending against Hawkins as a result of his battle with the commissioners. The county told Colorado Wildlife Dept. officials the doctor's farm is in violation of zoning regulations, so the department revoked his private parks license.

Without the license, Hawkins was in violation of state law. When cited for that violation, he also was cited for illegally selling big game to an undercover Wildlife Division Officer.

Although he later produced papers which proved the mountain lion he sold to the undercover agent was from Canada, and thus not governed by state regulations, the charge was filed against him in Boulder and Weld courts.

"They're taking my tax dollars and everybody else's tax dollars to fight something that doesn't matter," Hawkins said. "I think that because I'm a doctor, they (the commissioners) want to tear me down and try to make themselves a name."

The fact that he is a Boulder County resident, while his complaining neighbors are Weld County voters, also could explain the reason behind the commissioners' attack on his farm, he said.

Neighbors first complained of smells coming from Hawkins' property. In fact, Hawkins recently lost his permit with the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture when he refused to make im-

(Continued on Page 19)

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## PEOPLE

MURILLO & ULYSSES, balancing act, have been held over for the 1981 season at Las Vegas, and just recently they taped a new segment for the John Davidson TV Show with JOE CASTRO conducting the band.

Also set for appearances on the John Davidson Show are: 3rd Generation Step, acrobatic act; Paul Fidler, illusionist and the Gauchos, novelty act.

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**PEOPLE**

**MIKE DAVIS**, comedy juggler, was a guest on the John Davidson TV Show which was aired the afternoon of Feb. 2nd.

**DANNY DANIELS**, Organist, Comic Juggler, etc., is keeping busy with his One Man Variety Show, and has also started taping organ music, cassettes, etc.

**MICKEY ROONEY** and **RED BUTTONS** will star in the upcoming TV movie "Jack Thumb". The film was originally titled "The Clown."

**MIKE GORMAN**, circus ringmaster, and **JIM SWAFFORD**, of Burbank, Calif., were seen visiting Circus Vargas at El Cajon, Calif.

**RALPH HELFER**, animal trainer, was the subject of a special report in the Omaha

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(Nebr) World-Herald on Nov. 5, 1980. The item told about his affection training programs.

**TOBY CIRCUS BALLANTINE** is producing clown with the Hubert Castle Circus, where **JANET BALLANTINE** handles wardrobe and costumes for the many clown specialty numbers.

**GENE MORELAND**, of Van Nuys, Calif., has refurbished his miniature circus, which is now ready for a full summer of receiving visitors.

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**OWNER FIGHTING BACK (Continued)**

provements to the ventilation of the cat barn. An acrid smell of amonia chokes visitors to the cat house, but no odors are noticable outside. Hawkins explained that in cold weather, he closes windows while he heats the cat house.

"The USDA guy told me to just open up the windows (in the wintertime), but I thought it was more important to keep the animals warm," he said. The smell is not nearly as bad in the summertime, he said, and the amonia smell is not harmful to the animals.

A Weld County Humane Society inspector said he agreed the animals were well cared-for. Improvements in lighting and ventilation were recommended, however.

Since the commissioners filed a zoning violation suit against Hawkins, Hawkins said he has made about \$5,000 worth of improvements to comply with county requests. Those include fencing around his property and dikes to protect against flooding of the Platte River. It was the worry of a 100 year flood that turned the scales against Hawkins at a recent commissioners' hearing, however. Commission-

ers said they were not convinced Hawkins' precautions against a major flood adequately ensured that the animals would not escape.

The commissioners also said the game farm does not fit in with the rest of the farmer neighborhood. A couple of farmers told the commissioners the nearby lions, tigers and leopards spooked their cattle and caused them to lose weight.

With the loss in the special use permit battle Hawkins is back to the zoning violation battle in civil court. The suit has been held in abeyance until a decision was reached about his permit.

Should he lose that suit, Hawkins said, there are ways he and his lawyer can fight to keep the farm in operation. "I plan to keep on fighting as long as I can," he said.

## Miscellaneous

The Funs-A-Poppin Circus played the Riverside, Calif., area the week of Feb. 5th, the same week that Circus Vargas was also playing that area.

**SPECIAL****FORMER COUNSELOR NOW A CLOWN**

It was while performing for the first time as an amateur clown at the famous Barnum Festival in Bridgeport, Conn., that Mike McCarthy, a professional social counselor, decided to run away and join the circus, full time!

In his professional debut, the 40 year old New Englander is fulfilling a lifetime dream of "children of all ages" and has run away with the 1981 edition of Circus Vargas, "America's Big Top Giant," now playing dates dates in Southern California.

The lanky buffoon, whose personal philosophy on life rings with simplicity "live one day at a time" will greet more than a million folks - ranging in age from one to 10? - on his 46 week, nation-wide tour as Circus Vargas' official greeter and ambassador of laughter.

McCarthy says that counseling and clowning share many parallels. "The object of both," he says, "is to make people of all ages feel comfortable so that they can cope with the

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many complexities of modern life. In counseling, as in clowning, it's fulfilling to shed some positive light on people's life experience. After many years of counseling, I decided it was time to adapt my interest in helping people to the world of the circus and the unusual field of clowning.

And while the jovial, white-faced McCarthy is kept busy with his traveling chores, there are limited opportunities to curl up on the sofa of his home on wheels and practice magic, watch a football game, or listen to some classical music. In the meantime, a fortifying dinner is always part of the evening ritual, too, and a passerby could easily catch the tempting aromas of one of McCarthy's special supper dishes, his most favorite being golden cream chicken.

To make use: 4 chicken breasts, skinned; 8 oz. fresh mushrooms, sliced; 1 can cream of mushroom soup; salt and pepper to taste; Oil; Paprika.

Saute the chicken and mushrooms in oil until golden brown. Place chicken in casserole, add mushrooms and top with soup. Bake at 350 degrees for ¾ hour, basting frequently with the soup. Before serving add dash of Paprika. Serves four.

**CIRCUS SUIT (Continued)**

tain types of businessmen from being taxed twice for the same piece of equipment.

For example a heavy equipment company located in Pasco County has a piece of earth moving equipment in Sarasota County on Jan. 1, Dent said. Under this law, it cannot be assessed by Mikos. The company would pay taxes on its equipment in Pasco County. Mikos has been sued yearly since 1971 by Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus over its tax assessments.

In 1979, the Second District Court of Appeals ruled that Mikos could assess the rolling stock of the circus because it is permanently located in Sarasota County. The court ruling applies to circus taxes between the year 1972 and 1976. The ruling did not take into consideration the change made by the legislature in the state law in 1979.

Dent said in making its decision the court based its decision not on the length of stay in Sarasota County but the permanency of the circus operation in the county. Each

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year, the circus train leaves the "stream of commerce" and is located inside the county, he said.

At present, Dent said, his office is attempting to collect approximately \$500,000 in back taxes from the circus as a result of its victory in 1979 in the Second District Court of Appeals.

Hagenbeck-Wallace, Inc., a company that makes costumes and builds sets for the circus, is suing over its tax assessments on exactly the same grounds.

# MAILBAG

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR . . .

*(The following item has been reprinted from a recent issue of the McAllen, Texas, Daily newspaper).*

Open letter to the personnel of Circus Vargas.

We the residents of the Good Samaritan Center want to extend our sincere thanks for, not only a spectacular performance, but even more so for the courteous manner in which personnel saw to our comfort. Thanks especially to "Horse" who arranged to have the tent flap open in order that we might have

easy access to our seats from the Salvation Army bus that transported us from the Center.

Also thanks to the two ticket takers, Danny and John, for their gentle consideration. Last but not by any means least, to Bonnie Goelner goes a very special thanks for coordinating the most enjoyable "Circus Party."

Circus Vargas, you are beautiful people. God love you. We do.

Residents of the McAllen Good Samaritan Center.

By Geraldine Duke, Activity Director.

**BRITISH CIRCUSES (Continued)**

ing machine". From Mary Chipperfield's Circus came her exotic group and also her farm yard revue. Humans included Les Perris, foot juggler; Spiderman Chang, cloud swing; Louise Gerrard, leopard illusion; Neil Thomas, rola bola and comedy car by John and Charles Chipperfield.

Hoffmans took over the Stadium, at Liverpool, and had a successful run at this usually not very popular hall. Hoffmans had Johnny Roberts with lions, kangaroo, chimps and plate spinning (John is very versatile); Ivan Karl, strong man; the Garcias, hair hanging; perch and Russian swing; Tonya Roberts, rolling globe; Tommy, Sean and Mary Cooke clowning; Richard St. John, cloud swing and ringmaster; Hoffman's horses, camels, llamas and high school horse presented by James Conway.

Hoffmans also had another unit operating (under canvas) in Dublin. This show featured Geoffrey Hoffman's foot ball playing dogs; the Karl Brenner family with illusions, ghost entree, aerial ladder and solo trapeze; Sue and Ray Grays, comedy ladder; the Jock Mc

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Pherson family with their western act and clowning; King Fu, Chinese specialty; Otto Europa, balancing act; Hoffman's five elephants, horse acts and lion/tiger group presented by Geoffrey or by Colin Timmis. This is the first visit to Ireland by this circus and they plan visits to other main cities in the Republic.

There was a small circus in West Bromwich run by Philip Gandey, an un-assuming show, with small animal acts largely from Gandey's own resources, plus balancing and juggling acts by the Delmarrs, trapeze by Peter Lepino and his daughter Tracy, and musical clowning by veteran clown Alec Halls.

The show with the longest run in the British Isles is the Kevin Hall Circus, Glasgow. This circus is municipally controlled and always features some good international acts. This year's bill included Robert Bros.' elephants; the Svensons, comedy bareback riders; the Wychewoods, magic with poodles; the Castros, high wire; Barbara Morris, seals; the Ash tons, risley and the Rastellis, international clowns.

Despite the spotty season of last year and rumors of well-known shows coming off the road, I notice that the advertisements are going out for acts, staff and "useful people" as usual, and I expect that we shall see most of our friends out on the road again this year.

**PEOPLE**

**MARGARET** and **WADE BURCK** are the parents of a baby boy born last month in Florida.

**JAY COCHRANE**, skywalk artist, will perform a Skywalk Endurance (living on the wire 24 hours a day) for three weeks starting Feb. 18th at the Puerto Rico National Exhibition in San Juan. The event is expected to gain international coverage because of earlier skywalks in downtown San Juan.

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