

THE CIRCUS REPORT

Number 8

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AMERICA'S
FAVORITE CIRCUS WEEKLY
OUR 11th YEAR



"MR. RYTHM"

World's Greatest Horse

DOREY MILLER TALKS ABOUT HIS "TOY"

by DAVID LEWIS HAMMARSTROM

There was the buoyant spirit of victory in their voices. They were the venerable Dorey Miller, grand dady of the current American big top scene, his amiable general agent, Jesse Jessen, and their promising young general manager, Jim Judkins. They were talking over the telephone about the relatively successful season just past - about the perenial problems canvas men face; the unique challenges indigenous to contemporary times; and the ongoing optimism that next year's towns will be as good - if not better - than last year's.

Chief optimist, of course, is Dorey Miller, gliding with child-like faith into his 46th year as show-owner, seemingly unaffected by the bleak realities that he and his cohorts on the red-wagon trail face. Was Dorey talking about "cutting back" - or, to use the current euphemism, "streamlining?" Nope. On his tanbark-laden mind was the fond thought of adding to his already imposing menagerie, a hefty team of draft horses. The acquisition would increase the daily nut by three or four hundred dollars. Miller doesn't seem bothered; he enjoys dazzling the public with an authentic taste of heyday circus magic, and he says his biggest satisfaction comes from the crowds who turn out each morning to watch his "toy" unfold into billowing canvas tents.

"If three or four thousand people show up at dawn," he interjects supporting optimist Jesse Jessen, "he thinks he's got a successful day."

When most shows have transferred to extended several-day engagements on larger urban lots, Miller takes special pride in the fact that his is still a one-a-day show. Each morning, he and his loyal crews wake up to a different town and a whole new set of circumstances to conquer. "Thirty years ago, there were twenty big shows like ours. It's a wonderful feeling to see people watching set-up."

"We're the biggest thing in town," enthuses Jessen. Indeed, it's the free show at dawn - the colorful unloading of animals, people, rolls of canvas and props - that helps stimulate activity at the red wagon ticket coun-

ters, according to the Carson & Barnes officials. While their costs have tripled over the past six years, ticket prices have remained extremely cordial (last season's top was \$6.15). Maybe that's why Dorey casually confesses, "We don't make any money to speak of." In order to survive the skyrocketing costs of transportation, other expenses are kept to a minimum. "I pay less than anybody else in show business. I've been able to pay my bills." Nor is he afraid of the so-called Reaganomics, believing that circuses tend to benefit when the economy is "a little tight." Families are more inclined to stay at home and patronize the entertainments that come to their neighborhood.



Carson & Barnes enjoyed its "best spring ever." Business, however, took a disappointing slump after August. Jessen attributes the drop, in part, to the smaller, less aggressive sponsors he was forced to engage in late season. "Booking the larger sponsors is becoming more difficult. They require more meetings before a positive decision can be reached. In the smaller towns, it's easier to get the groups together."

Dorey's formidable expanse of canvas poses another problem for general agent Jessen, who must locate grounds large enough to accommodate it. "Lots are becoming harder to find in the East. The population explosion makes land more difficult to come by." The new Italian-made vinyl big top - alternating orange and blue sections, with the word "Carson & Barnes" emblazoned repeat-

(Continued on Page 6)

SHOW DATES

Castle/Zerbini Circus
Feb. 5-7 Ft. Wayne, Ind.

Garden Bros. Circus
Feb 25-28 Toronto, Can.

Ringling-Barnum - Blue
Feb 23-28 Greensboro,
NC

Ringling-Barnum - Red
Feb 23-24 Augusta, Ga
26-28 Columbia, SC

Tripoli Shrine Circus
Feb 24-28
Milwaukee, Wisc.

- - - OTHER DATES - - -

Disney on Ice
Feb 23-Mar 7 Cleveland,
Ohio

Holiday on Ice
Feb 23-28 Portland, Ore

The Plunketts
Feb 27-Mar 7
Minneapolis, Minn

- - - MAGIC - - -

It's Magic Show
Feb 23-28 Cleveland,
Ohio

David Seebach
Feb 27 Kalamazoo, Mich
Mar 1 Rochester, NY

DOREY MILLER (Continued)

edly around the sidewall sections - is possibly the most gorgeous piece of canvas architecture ever to hit the sawdust trail. It requires 430 feet from stakeline to stakeline.

Dorey is a great fancier of animals, which also requires space, and, concerning the advent of various animal control laws, he has

scrapers. There is real pleasure in walking his quady, if tarnished midway; in dodging mud puddles to greet a swaying elephant with a handful of peanuts; in handing one's ticket stub to a suspicious-looking character in musty overalls; in sitting down on a rickety old board to behold a noisy, glittery splash of action in five real rings.

And when a herd of thundering elephants



some interesting observations to make: "Ridiculous. Animals feel secure when they have escaped or gotten lose and are found and returned to their quarters. The do-gooders are a little off base. They want to give more rights to animals than to the public. I don't think the public really wants this, not if they knew what was happening. Animals are a part of everybody's culture. Some towns don't have zoos. We're familiar with animals. The animal is better in captivity than in the wild. If the wild is good, why don't people want to leave their houses for the wild? As far as exercise, wild animals get as much in the circus moving from cage to cage as they do in other habitats. Ours die of old age; in the wilds, they could starve."

About Carson & Barnes Circus, there is a sense of something truly old-time. The ambience it evokes is slightly on the tawdry side; may that never change. The world has enough "plastic" happenings to offer; Dorey's strange, collection of odd-shaped trucks and equipment is wonderfully anachronistic in a sterile and sanitized age filled with quiet, invisible technology and cold, efficient sky-

comes careening down the hippodrome track through a blaze of sawdust and barely escapes brushing those in the front-row seats - clearly, the event is not top hat and tails at the met; not some celluloid video replay flashing safely on a screen; or a spotlighted group of musicians from afar blasting their way through tons of amplification. No, it is circus - here and now, raw and poetic, both.

Dorey talks of the diversity of big top entertainment. "There are hundreds of acts, many different types. Think of the variety of wire walking acts." (he, himself, once walked the rope). He disputes the notion that once you've seen a circus, you've seen them all. "Every circus is different," he says stressing that the way the acts are arranged has a lot to do with the impact of the program. Some of Dorey's performances are sporadically entertaining; others are true gems. A highlight of last year's shows was a display of three top trapeze troupes, flying simultaneously. And circus fans were rejoicing over the band's adherence to older refrains and tempos from a by gone era,

(Continued on Page 7)



DOREY MILLER (Continued)

rich in brassy crescendos and full-throttle marches.

Dorey is always visible somewhere, wandering in and out of the tent, presiding gracefully and with undying dedication on the edge of his tattered, brilliant, half realized, half imagined paradise.

Circus - is many forms, this one uniquely American. "We're almost extinct," says the top man, unruffled by the mounting odds out there in the real world against trouping. Dorey is talking about winterquarters . . . "We have got 50 to 80 men working, eight welders. A man from the Beatty-Cole show called, he wants to come to quarters. I said, 'come on.' . . . and he's talking about a team of draft horses, and about being impressed by his young new college-educated manager, Judkins, and about how new impressarios will rise up to keep the whole rigamaroo intact and on the road. "We make 'em", chirps Dorey, confident that the likes of Judkins (and the bookimg Cliff Vargas, and now hopefully, John Pugh) will carry on. Can they?

Miller, Jessen and Judkins were tickled about the season past and casting their confidence on the future - looking forward to more new towns at dawn and to the challenge of generating fresh excitement with each new set-up.

"No one is disappointed in the a.m.," says Dorey with the spark of enthusiasm. "Horses . . . camels . . . zebras . . . truck after truck . . . weirdos and characters around. It can only happen at a circus. We all have so much ham in us whether we know it or not. The circus is a home - a different world. Circus people are dedicated regardless of the conditions."

"He indoctrinates us," offers Jessen. "We are working for a man whose a legend. We want to help further that alligence that successful shows have to one man. He makes us believe it's fun."

He's still on the road!

Reminiscing of a Winter Spot

by PAT BISSONETTE

In the mid-1940's when the show season ended some circus and carnie side show acts used to book into Hubert's Museum in Times Square on West 42nd St. in New York. The front part of the store was an Arcade, the marquee blared, "Flea Circus," in the rear was a bally platform, ticket box and murals of the circus on the walls.

All acts were downstairs in the large museum with various size stages and dressing rooms lining the walls. Acts performed every hour from 2 p.m. to midnight with Thursday off. Some worked the two week minimum to most of the winter or the new season opened, off time was spent replenishing wardrobe, buying or making and painting props.

In jackpot sessions performers mentioned circuses and shows they had been on such as, Ringling-Barnum, Cole Bros., Dailey Bros., Clyde Beatty, Sparks, Mills Bros., Arthur Bros., Kelly-Miller. Carnivals carried several side shows on the back end, Royal American, Cavalcade of Amusements, Beckman & Gerety, Mighty Sheesly, Johnny J. Jones, the old World of Mirth, In those days they had everything from Geeks to class acts and Dick Best had a good side show.

Hubert's Museum and three other Arcades were owned and operated by two brother teams, of Max and Mike Shafer and Fred and Bill Shork, all nice guys to work for. Max was President of the National Showman's Assoc. then and he liked to book the acts himself, going down to Coney Island and watching the acts in the World Circus Side Show and other shows along Surf Avenue, he also put ads in the old "Billboard" each fall.

During the four years I was there, Mel Griffiths, organist and calliope player and I were talkers. It seemed strange at first working a tip only a block away from the Paramount Theatre with its Big Bands and Celebrities, there was a never ending flow of people from opening to closing, coming to see the show. In fact, Walter Winchell once mentioned in his column, "Penny Arcades which are more profitable than intellectual dramas, more evidence proving there is nothing more hickey than the 'Big Town'".

The Inside Lecturer was Jack Elkins, off Ringling Side Show ticket box and second opener. He was an act by himself, ramrod thin, aristocratic bearing with his shock of silver hair, needlepoint waxed mustache, resplendent in his tuxedo and with excellent diction. During a break I went down to listen to his delivery and told him he should be a Ringmaster or Equestrian Director, this Englishman just stared at me with his cold blue eyes and said, "Kid announce the next acts, I'm going to lunch."

That's how I met the new act, "Waldo the Great," Waldo should never be seen on a full stomach, you see he drank water then swallowed live mice and regurgitated them. Nearly half the audience brought up their dinner gals buried their faces in their boy friend's chest, sailors puked on the steps, well dressed gents vomited hanky's full, one very beautiful lady (a movie star) came up with her index finger to her lips to say, "How could you . . . present this act here?" The Porters loved him, but Waldo didn't stay.

Alex Linton, sword swallower, also from Ringling, stayed a couple of weeks each year he swallowed a red neon tube sometimes in his act. I could never understand when the tube lit up his throat, how anyone could say, "Fakel". Estelline (Pike) the Famous Lady Sword Swallower appeared occasionally too.

Genial barrel-chested Sailor Jim White caused a bit of a stir during his act, especially when he removed his teeth on stage before bending a rail road spike he had in a steel pipe in the floor. Only once did I see some one challenge his offer to duplicate his act for \$1,000 and it was a Minister.

On the next stage was Magician Don Mc Iver, just off Hunt Bros. Circus. Don did the Electric Girl, Headless Wonder and Blade Box, he also pitched tiny Bibles you needed a magnifying glass to read.

Around to the right was "Amok genuine Bontok Head Hunter from the Philippines" Amok did a dance in Moro tribal costume and weapons while relating his people's conquests. He was a WWI sniper, he sold rings and a brochure of his Tribe's history.

The show got lively with R. C. Lucas as,

(Continued on Page 21)

From Florida

by MARJORIE HACKETT

Have you ever wished you could turn back the clock of time to the days when life moved at a slower pace; uncluttered by radio, television, etc.? Well, the chance to do that for just one evening was offered us recently when Mae Noell called to invite us to the "Fifth Annual Medicine Show" on Sunday, Jan. 31st, at the theatre of the Masonic Temple in nearby Tarpon Springs.

It is only 7 miles from our home and when we arrived at the hall, it was already filling up with patrons for this benefit performance for Electra Chapter No. 18, OES. Kids were "hawking" popcorn up and down the aisles and a refreshment stand had been set up in the back of the hall with hot dogs (David ate two of those!), doughnuts, soft drinks and coffee. Programs went for 25c, designed by Mae, they will be collectors' items.

This is the last performance for the Noells, but perhaps some of you were lucky enough to have seen them at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, last October.

Neither David or I have ever seen a medicine show, except in movies, so we were eager to see this production. We were not

let down in any way, it was great and I cannot remember laughing so much as we did this evening.

Just imagine you live in some remote section of the country back in the 1900's before the passage of the pure food and drug act and billposters announced that a "Free Show" was coming your way.

The program was as follows: Ventriloquist, Bob Noell, Fashion Plate, Mind Reading Act Velda (Noell) Deddo, Songstress, Sherry Shelton, Fashion Plate, Intermission, Me and My Shadow, Edith Benjamin and Eleanor Bell, Fashion Plate, Magic, Bobby Noell, Pete in the Well, Mae and Bob, 2 Fashion PLate, Room 44, the Cast.

The Fashion Plate ladies (members of the Eastern Star) were Betty Garrick, Eleanor Bell, and Edith Benjamin who came on stage in pantomime, dressed in an assortment of old clothes, not the least amusing of which was the gal who got herself done up as a very funny imitation of Phyllis Diller, but all of them were excellent.

Mae Noell produced and directed the whole show, Bob Noell, the son is an accomplished magician; his sister Velda Deddo did the mind reading turn and would put Johnny Carson to shame. Sherry Shel-

(Continued on Page 19)

R-B Red Unit

by LLENRAY J. YARNELL

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, Red Unit, is on the road for its second year as the 111th edition. I saw the show in Lakeland, Fla. on Feb. 2-3.

The show is almost the same as last year. The performance director is Tim Holst who is assisted by Jeffery Loseff. The Ringmaster is still Kit Haskett.

The program still sells for \$2.50 and has the same poster of Gunther Gebel-Williams as last year. The program is as follows: Opening Spec, Our Circus Toast to You, with Gunther Gebel-Williams entering riding with a tiger on top of the elephant; 20 tigers, Gunther Gebel-Williams (he leaves the cage with his leopard neck-line trick); La Tosca, cloud swing; Count Kristo, balancing; The Leaps; 2 rings of Wally Naghtin bears and Mickey Antalek's chimps; Clowns; Aerial Spec, The Good Ship Ringling featuring Miss Marguerite Michele's hair hanging act; 12 liberty horses by Gunther Gebel-Wil-

liams (the act was presented on the evening of the 2nd, but not on the 3rd); Circus Clowns; Flying Trapeze with The Flying Farfans and the Flying Vazquez; Clown number; Mike Keever, Eric Braun and Lou Jacobs; Dolly Jacobs on the Roman rings; Circus on Parade spec; Intermission.

Clowns; Leopards (I counted 20) presented by Henry Schroer; Clowns; Miss Anna's Russian Wolfhounds; The Lonas Dogs and The Eric Braun Dogs; Clowns; Teeterboard by the Parvanovi, the Dukovi and the Kovatchevi; Clowns; Elephant Spec Jungle Drums presented by Gunther Gebel-Williams with Tina and Buffy Gebel and introducing Dickie the giraffe; Gunther Gebel-Williams elephant teeterboard act; The Carrillo Brothers, high wire; The Urias Troupe, Globe of Death; Finale, three ring send-off, on Tuesday night Gunther Gebel-Williams rode two horses Roman style during the finale, but not Wednesday night.

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George Lockhart

George C. Lockhart, the famous elephant trainer was accidentally crushed to death by one of his elephants at Walthamstow, a station near London, England, on Jan. 24, 1904, while unloading the animals from a train. It was said that the elephant became frightened and pressed against Mr. Lockhart crushing him to death.

George Lockhart was regarded as one of the greatest animal trainers in the world, and his act created quite an impression in both Europe and America.

His family had been in the circus business and he made quite a reputation for himself as an elephant man.

With three elephants, he made his first appearance in America at Proctor's Pleasure Palace on Sept. 2, 1895, staying in this country about two years during which time he played the leading vaudeville houses.

After returning to Europe he retired for a time, but again exhibited his trio of elephants on the Continent in 1902, and remained active until his death.

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Circus Talk

WALLACE G. WINTER, CFA member of 40 years, gave a talk to the Scottish Rite group about his collection of over 2000 photographs of lot scenes and performers of the circus world. His talk was to give the group interest in the ticket sales of the coming Castle Circus at Bellingham, Wash., on June 24th.

Bellingham has always been a good circus town. Ferinni Circus showed Whatcom in 1889, and Adam Forepaugh showed in Fairhaven in 1894. These were two of the three hamlets that became Bellingham in 1904. Also, circuses showed Bellingham before they cleared the border into Canada.

In my 76 years, I have seen 55 circus performances, each a different one. I have been on the lot of some circuses but was not there long enough to catch a performance. One was Golden Bros. at Blaine, Wash. in 1937.

Bullard Bros. Dog & Pony Show played through the San Juan Islands west of Bellingham in 1915 and went broke and its equipment was left to deteriorate at Mitchel Bay. The iron steps from the wagons are in the Friday Harbor City Museum. A sail boat was made using some of the oak from the wagons.

Shrine Shows

by MIKE SPORRER

Regarding Shrine Circuses and my statement that San Francisco had the first west coast Shrine Circus (CR - Nov. 9, 1981).

Mr. John F. Polacek sent a copy of the March 7, 1908 Billboard story regarding the Los Angeles Shrine Temple sponsoring Sells Floto Circus. The story on Page 22, reports that it is the first time an order has taken complete charge of the circus in this way.

As I understand the article both Los Angeles and San Francisco sponsorships were under canvas.

During the 1920's, Lewiston, Idaho Shrine produced a show with booked acts, while other Temples as in Detroit and Minneapolis were presented in auditoriums.

HOTLINE

JERRY LIPKO reports that his performing chimpanzees are the proud parents of a baby female chimp which was born on the morning of Feb. 11th. The new addition has been named "Rosie."

Cole's All Star

by GENE MASCIOLI

Jimmy Cole's All Star TV Circus is out again for the 1982 season, touring the north eastern U. S. I attended opening day, Jan. 16th, at Halifax, Pa. Both performances - afternoon and evening - were filled with an all around circus line-up, but due to the terrible weather, the audiences were small (advance sales were pretty good).

The program offered: Introduction of Billy Martin, ringmaster; The Bouvays and Miss Elizabeth, webs; Billy Martin and assistant Cheryl Frye, rola bola; Oscar Macias, hand stands, with the famous one finger stand, assisted by his wife Elena; Gorilla Parody presented by Billy Martin and Cheryl Frye; The Bouvays, a bar act that is unique and the first time in this area, a real crowd pleaser; Intermission.

Foot juggling by Miss Elizabeth; The Tele-

phone gag; Miss Rebecca on the ladder; The Stroginooffs, beginning with Russian dancing then turning into tomfoolery with a touch of balancing and tumbling and ending with a pie in the face; Oscar Macias, cloud swing, with a few gasps. Sara Macias was in charge of the audio portion of the program.

PEOPLE

BILL BIRCHFIELD reports he had a very successful Christmas tour in California and Nevada. Joining him on that tour were John Sampaga, ventriloquist, juggler and plate spinner, and Martial Arts expert Robert Ames.

HARRY ALBACKER, magician, was featured in a special article in the Pittsburgh, Pa. Post-Gazette on Feb. 4th.

Fine Paid

John Weinhart, an animal exhibitor from Glen Avon Heights, Calif., recently agreed to pay a \$500 fine to settle a charge that he violated the Animal Welfare Act, a U. S. Dept. of Agriculture official reports.

Dr. James D. Roswurm, veterinarian in charge in California for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said Weinhart accepted the fine and a cease-and-desist order without admitting or denying charges that he transported animals for exhibition purposes on nine occasions without a USDA exhibitor's license, as required by the Animal Welfare Act.

HOTLINE

Jan. 23 - Band leader Clement Toca was hospitalized in the intensive care unit at Butterworth Hospital, Grand Rapids, Mich. after he collapsed on the bandstand as a result of a heart attack during the matinee performance.

Show Visit

by Circus Joe Valenciano

The writer enjoyed a visit with the Hortons after they played dates for Tommy Bentley and Chuck Clancy. Dates played were at W. Chester, Pa., Dec. 5-6, Lowell, Mass., Dec. 9 to 10, and Wilmington, Dela. Dec. 12-13.

Acts appearing on the bill were: The Dionnes, a 3 person juggling act; The Wonder Bears, presented by Rex Horton and assisted by Mark Bronson Horton, and Cindy Martin of the Roy Huston Magic Troupe; Mr. Slavin, announcer, comedian and singer; perch act by the Dionnes, followed by a production number with the Mark Charles Dancers, six beautiful girls, all done up in red costumes and feathers with big head dress to match, which were made by Chuck Clancy. Intermission followed.

Then came Magic and Illusions by Roy Huston & Co., he was assisted by his wife, Susan and two girls; Balancing by the Dionnes; the Los Gauchos, colorful Argentine dancers and a Reindeer production featuring the six lovelies as Santa's reindeer, which lead up to Santa's arrival.

Music was provided by the Parker Duo on organ and drums.

FROM FLORIDA (Continued)

ton played the piano and sang and what can I say about Bob Senior's role, only that had he been in the right place at the right time as a baggy pants comedian, I don't think Red Skelton would ever have topped the billing!

A candy pitch at 50c and 25c was a riot with practically everyone in the audience getting some free trinket or or one of the larger prizes donated by the OES ladies. Bob Noell contributed the candy and trinkets. He also video-taped the entire show along with the son of (former equestrienne director) Roger Boyd down from Georgia and it was taped for radio for a series called "Florida Folklore."

We are sorry to know that Mae and Bob are "hanging it up" but as we drove home, still laughing, glad that we had the opportunity to witness this performance. Mae is busy with a new book called "Free Show To-Nite". We look forward to reading that one, the Noells like a lot of show business people are multi-talented and we feel proud to be counted among their many friends.

It's Showtime at "Gibtown"; Florida State Fair time; Plant City Strawberry Festival Time down here right now and the best weather in the entire United States. Wednesday evening we watched Greatest American Hero on TV . . . far out that cannon act on the circus! Do you suppose any one will ever do a "real" circus theme movie? We keep hoping!

Showfolks

New officers for the Showfolks of Sarasota for the upcoming year are:

John Herriott, president; Ralph Schappacher, vice president; Mireille Arnosie, second vice president; Fatima Brahim, secretary; Genevieve Porter, treasurer; Eugene A. Nock Jr., editor.

Members of the board are: Jenny Anderson, Elly Ardely, Dolly Copeland, Harry Dubsy, Pete Ivanov, W. E. Lawson, Jack Stagg, Eugene A. Nock, Jr., Flo Olson Theron, Nedra Gonzales, Toni Scott.

East Coast News

by FRANK ROBIE

It should be a three ring performance and probably everyone will be there. John Herriott and Mary Ruth are scheduled to appear for the Smithsonian Spring Celebration Apr. 22 thru 25th.

Center Ring: The Artist, two centuries of circus art bows once again at the Corcoran Gallery of Art on the 24th, and wisely enough the Circus Historical Society will hold it's annual convention there. Will you be there? Write: Richard W. Flint, P. O. Box 23575, L'Enfant Plaza Station, Washington, DC 20024, for information.

The most beautiful Dorothy Hamill came to the Byrne-Meadowlands Arena in The Ice Capades spectacular with a WOW performance. The far east spec called "Flight to Kismet" was a real knockout. We peripheral people of N.J. are delighted to catch the best before it goes into NYC where the show will play until Feb. 7th at the Garden. Their programs are \$2.00.

Hanneford Circus will appear at County Center, White Plains, NY, on Feb. 13-15. Again this year the CFA of Bridgeport, Conn the Popo DeBathe-Eddie Allen-Bill Browning Tent No. 108 will honor the Hanneford family. Last year all the ladies of the show received red roses.

Phone crews are busy for the Salaam Temple Shrine Circus to be held April 20-25 at the Mennen Arena, Morris Plains, NJ. This has been a strong Hamid date for many years and last year's show was the best of many seasons.

Producer Phil Napolitano's 11th annual extravaganza All American Circus will open on April 28th for five days at So. Mountain Arena, West Orange, NJ. This is a Coronas Circus production.

Opening date for Ringling Blue at Madison

Square Garden will be Mar. 31st and anyone wishing to join the Felix Adler Tent for that evening should contact Al House, 10 Lehigh Way, Oakland, NJ 07436 and send a check for \$7.50 each, plus a stamped self-addressed envelope for return of the tickets.

"The Best of Burlesque" in which Michael Chirrick and Sharon are featured was taped for HBO at the Sahara, Reno. No release date as yet. A double honor occurred when the Evening at the Moulin Rouge Paris troupe played the Sahara-Hilton recently, Michael Chirrick was asked to do his juggling act in the show when a performer became ill, which he did, and when that show was taped for HBO he was again asked to perform. The release date on this show is also not known, but it should not be confused with the Paris-Moulin Rouge version now appearing in which Michael's uncle Montega is featured.

Coronas Circus

BY CIRCUS JOE VALENCIANO

The Coronas Circus Productions are in the process of producing some major illusions. The one that is currently being built for the upcoming spring Shrine dates, is a brand new version of Sebastian's "Motorcycle thru the Girl Illusion". It is being built of stainless steel and plexi-glass.

Also, the Coronas Productions have signed some new dates for the coming season. They include: Omaha, Nebr., Little Rock, Ark., and Denver, Colo. Several other dates are pending. The Coronas will put out two units in order to show at Atlanta and Omaha at the same time.

A WINTER SPOT (Continued)

"Chief Woo Foo" a short but muscular black man playing rhythmic bongo drums to the snake dancing of the lovely Princess Waggle, who raised her own pythons and boa constrictors. Lucas started out on the Sells-Floto and Hagenbeck-Wallace shows with a Bed of Nails, Shards of Glass, Bamboo splinters and ate fire, this year he had been with the Canadian Conklin Shows.

The Flea Circus was the high point of the show, at an extra charge. Prof. Roy Heckler came out of his enclosure, made a brief pitch promising to feed the fleas from his arm and they would see a flea pull wagons 100 times their own weight. Then a man with no right hand, whose name I have forgotten, sold tickets and made change as fast as those with two hands.

For those who wished to forgo the flea presentation the Girl in the Gold Fish Bowl and artifacts from the Collyer Brothers Mansion then recently exposed, plus old surgical instruments, etc. In the interim were other acts, Eddie Marino did pocket magic, his wife "Excella" was a contortionist, Charlie Phelan, strong man, a former Olympic contender who kept up a humorous monologue while tossing around iron balls, dumb bells and lifting several people on a plank on his back, a Fez topped Arabian juggler who kept saying, "Kude Kude" all during his act.

Jean Carson the Tattooed Lady just off David B. Endy Shows, she had a lot of very colorful work from her neck to her ankles. Her husband Jack worked the long range lead gallery, he contracted an ear infection and died that fall, Spencer Tracy used to shoot the 22's when in town. Jean's peculiarity was while on the road she never answered letters, she marked most "Refused."

The Blow-ff was Albert-Alberta and his brother, half and half's. Elkin's spiel was, "These hermophadites could never become a Mother or Father." Alberta lisped and pranced about, then sold an "Expose" implying the photo-brochure would 'show all' but 'not to open the sealed envelope on the premises because of N. Y. law.'

There were usually ten acts, others were, Zippo the Clown, a Japanese in American white face who did a Risley foot juggling act, think he was off the Goodman Wonder Shows, a combination circus and carnival.

Also appearing was Sealo, Elephant faced girl, Joe Allen, human corkscrew, Harold Smith, he made music from water glasses, Wm. Dirks, cleft-faced man with two noses, mouths and a painted third eye on the middle of his forehead, Princess Ann, midget, Yoshi, Japanese dwarf, whose mother ran a cork gallery on the 52nd St. Arcade.

Other clowns at different times were: Jo Jo Bumstead and Red Cunningham, who claimed people would put money in anything, to prove this he attached a coin box to a pillar in the Arcade putting a 5c card above it with no instructions. At the end of the night we counted \$1.35, manager Mike Read said there were no beefs all night.

One night after the show closed Mel Griffiths recently from the Paradise Revue on the Cetlin & Wilson railer, and I walked out on 42nd Street's neon valley with its seven movie theatres and the Gaiety Burlesque. A hustler in tight fitting silk skirt swiveled by followed by an eager conventioner with his electric prod who just couldn't resist giving her a tingle, she reciprocated by flattening his Fez with her purse!

Hubert's Museum was patronized by people from all walks of life, from the panhandler to the Mink and Tuxedo set, even movie stars dropped by. 42nd Street has been called the hub of the universe (among other things) in the City that never sleeps. To work there we had to have a New York license, the class was, Common Show Attendant, cost was \$10.00 - the boss paid for it.

Does anyone out there remember these shows - Wm. Bazinet & Son, Harry "Polish" Fisher's Golden West, Curly Spear's Magic Empire, Goodman Wonder Shows?

ANIMALS FOR SALE**HAND RAISED**

- 1 Baby Cougar - 4 mo. old
- 1 African Lion - 4 yrs. old
- 1 Ostrich (M) - 2 yrs. old

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ABOUT CLOWNING - Most of you will recall the Ed.Sullivan Show on TV. It ran for 22 years and was at one time the top Sunday evening variety video program.

For all those 22 years, Mark J. Leddy was the New York based talent scout. There was a lot of prestige connected with his chores and his credentials were so highly regarded that arena doors opened easily for him when he presented his card.

And, on one occasion he found himself seated in the VIP box at one of America's largest circus productions being sponsored for a charitable cause.

The circus chairman stood proudly next to Leddy and said: "What do you think of it?" Just then a character who could easily have qualified as the world's worst clown stumbled past the VIP box. The clown's make-up, costume and general behavior

were terribly amateurish.

Leddy replied to the circus chairman: "Why this is just great! I see from the props and equipment that you have a very spectacular event here. I see some spectacular aerial ringings hanging from the girders. You must certainly have a lot of wonderful ground acts, from the props that I see around the rings. And, from the cages and animal props that I see on the floor, I anticipate that this circus is going to be tremendous. But tell me please! Where did you get that clown?"

The circus chairman turned pale. He put a finger to his lips, "Shh" he said quickly, as he shuddered. "Not so loud. That's brother Smith, he owns the building."



by LLOYD E. JONES

Fred Shields a leading contributor to *Genii* in its early days and over a long period of time, died Jan. 19th. A friendly fellow, well versed in card magic and sleight of hand, he will be sorely missed.

Bill Severn's latest for the magical neophytes is "Magic With Rope, Ribbon and String." A big 6x9 in. with 293 pages and fully illustrated by John Garcia, it bears a price of \$9.95. As with all of Severn's books it has much that is new and when old ideas are used they are so changed they become almost new. For example: did you ever consider doing a rope release from a bar of soap? Much can be considered impromptu and those requiring preparation can be readied with minimal trouble. Another book that not only gives you magic to use but also tells you how to entertain. It's a good buy (post. 86c).

By the way, Bill Severn's next book, late this summer, will be on Impromptu Magic and will come from a different publisher.

My "love" of the postal system is no secret. But did you know the poor Canadians have to pay 35c to send a letter to the U.S? And 30c in that great nation. Overseas costs them 60c, which I believe is airmail and even at current exchange differences it's high.

George Thurston's Magic Shop in Oildale, Ca., is being closed. George suffered a stroke last year and is in a nursing home. Closing the store means his wife will move him to Bakersfield, and give him - she is sure - better care. He has a long road to cover for recovery.

Sid Lorraine, after his last hospital visit (his second) is out and doing quite well. While another Canadian, Bruce Postgate, laid low by a stroke is improving rapidly, I am told.

Faucett Ross, noted card magic authority fell down stairs during the holidays and has been in great pain ever since. He insists he is ok, but friends are urging him to get treatment if for no other reason that he might be able to sleep stretched out instead of sitting up as he is currently doing.

Circo Bells

by BOBBY GIBBS

Circo Bells, playing in Mexico City, was in the Olympic Pool Building, and featured several wet acts in addition to other circus numbers.

The "wet" acts include a Fire Dive, a Chain Escape, Clowns (both in the water and on the floor), and High Divers.

The flying act was set up over the water, in something different. This group also worked on the trampoline. Other acts were: Elephants (2) formerly with Carden, Hunt, and Vargas, Dogs (4), Chimps (2) big ones that go out into the audience for photo session, Juggling by a boy, similar to Wally Eastwood and foot juggling by two girls; Then there is a group of 6 girls who do dance numbers.

Music for the program is via tapes.

He is 81 years of age.

The first two volumes of "4000 Years of Juggling" by Karl-Heinz Ziether, available in English, German and French is said to be out. The first volume has 120 p. and 290 photos and weighs nearly 4 lbs. It covers juggling from the earliest recorded mention in 2000 BC to 1945. Each copy has a price of \$100 and I can provide you with the name of the U. S. supplier. Vol. 2 is supposed to be out in June of '82.

More sad news, noted bibliographer Raymond Toole Scott has passed away. His assembled books and memorabilia on the circus was presented to the University of Santa Barbara, when the British Museum showed little interest. He will live forever thru his four volumes on Circus and Allied Arts and a fifth volume, presently unprinted, is expected to be issued. A meticulous researcher his two volumes of Bibliography of English Conjuring led to his checking the major libraries world-wide to assure accuracy. In his early years he served as a circus director and as an aide to the famed magician the Great Carmo. His passing is a great loss.

Now, I'm off to Hollywood (no, not a screen test) but to attend the Cavalcade of Magic at the Hollywood Roosevelt. If it's good I'll let you know.

Remembering

by BILL WOTSCH

One of the things we kids in Cleveland saw in 1928 was a convict ship. This ship was an old wooden vessel, about 100 years old.

Posters were tacked on posts around the city to announce the vessel's arrival. When it did arrive it was docked at the foot of the High Level Bridge.

I think we paid 25c to go through the ship and see the cells and torture methods that were used back then.

The vessel was said to have been used to take prisoners to Australia. It was a sailing ship with high masts, etc.

On the top deck was a torture thing called "The Iron Maiden." It was of iron, and shaped like a mummy, inside and on the door there were steel spikes. When a convict was placed inside the thing and the door was closed he didn't have a chance. It was a gruesome form of torture.

Back then we also had a chance to see

the ship "Admiral Byrd" which was said to have sailed to the Antarctic. It was very interesting.

In those days with no TV, anything that came to town was interesting and we all flocked down to see it.

Please

Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow;
Don't walk behind me, I may not lead;
Walk beside me, just be my friend.

Misc.

Firefighters in the east recently announced they were "severing all ties" with a firm in Florida that was handling a promotion for a show this spring. The organization reportedly was using names of charities that the firefighters felt should not be used in the promotion activity.

Show Program

The program for the Saladin Temple Shrine Circus (Jan. 22-31) at Grand Rapids, Mich., featured:

"Be A Clown" entrance of performers in clown wardrobe; National Anthem; Introduction of Circus Manager, P. P. Ed De Young and current Potentate; Deborah and Roverta, neck loop, slide-for-life; Overture by circus band directed by Elizabeth Toca; The Winn Troupe, 2 aerial motorcycles; Tarzan Zerbini, 12 lions, 3 tigers; Clown Wedding with Toby and Janet Ballantine and Lee Marx; Indian-themed Aerial Fantasy with 8 girls on Arrow/perches with rope ladder attached beneath, featuring Patricia Zerbini Thomas as Princess Thomasina who makes her entrance on a horse and performs on a Revolving Arrow-Ladder; Los Apaches (3) juggling (Dionnes); Scott's Unrideable Mule; The Dionnes, perch pole; Allejandro, on the bounding rope; Baby Bunny, elephant presented by Sylvia Zerbini; Jorge's Unpredic-

table Car; Welde's Bears (5); Western Theme production number with 5 single trapeze girls in ensemble, featuring Miss Lisa (Bauer) with swinging trapeze; Los Gauchos (3) Argentine dancers; Intermission.

Rudi and Sue Lenz, chimps (4); Flying Ibarra's (4), flying return act; Clowns with The Duck Hunt; Les Michels (3), head-to-head balancing; Vivian's Royal Boxers (8), football playing dogs; Karl and Michael Winn, wire walk with cross-over; Circus elephants presented by Gary and Patricia Thomas (6 bulls); The Fearless Bauers, triple sway poles; Grand Finale with entire troupe.

Staff for the circus includes: Tarzan Zerbini, producer; Reggie Armor, manager; Col. Lucky Larabee, ringmaster; Gary Thomas, animal supt.; Jacqueline S. Zerbini, aerial director; Jorge Rosell, performance director; Toby Ballantine, producing clown; Bobby Huber, prop boss; Clement and/or Elizabeth Toca, musical director; Greg Toca, percussionist; Calvin Drover, lighting; Janet Ballantine, wardrobe and Craig Bonde, assistant animal supt.



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Banquet Date

The Robert Dover Tent No. 112, is having their Spring Banquet on March 20th, at the Embers-Quality Inn, Carlisle, Pa.

National CFA President Jim Saunders will be the featured speaker and a great "After Show" of entertainment has been planned.

Those wanting to enjoy an evening of circus stories and fun are invited to attend this big event.

Ice Show

by BRUCE "Charlie" JOHNSON

I visited the 46th edition of the Ice Follies and Holiday on Ice at the Los Angeles Forum. The bright, energetic show played to a full house the last day of their run in Los Angeles.

The young cast features many making their professional debut, including Doug-gee Marie with her jump act. She plays well to the audience, has excellent rapport, and works hard to sell her unusual act. After one of the evening performances in Los Angeles she performed a somersault over a parked car, which received coverage on the local television newscasts.

Exciting leaps and spins abound with John Carlow getting particularly good response for his piston rolls.

Another act that stood out was that of Wayne, Brenda and Greg. Wayne Armstrong and Brenda Johnson first won the crowd over with their display of pair skills and then Greg Ladret as a photographer blundered into the act. From then on Bre-

nda became a prop to be swung and thrown about by her partners. Their choreography was clever and their timing was right on the button.

The star of the show was the troupe's veteran, Hans Leiter with his two clown turns. Appearing first in Romeo & Juliet, and later in Hello Dolly he brought down the house. This skillful clown knows and uses all the classic tricks of ice comedy, and when he uses standard clown gags he takes them one step farther, making them fresh and exciting.

The gorgeous costumes were designed by Don Foote, and the sets were designed by Bill Bellin and Reid Carlson. The undersea set using black light was beautiful, but the other sets relying on backdrops and small set pieces lacked the splendor and special effects often associated with ice shows.

The principal skaters were Andras Sallay & Christina Regoczy, Almut Lehmann & Herbert Weisinger, Ken Johnson, Linda Harries, Doughdee Marie, Wayne Armstrong, Brenda Johnson, Greg Ladret, John Carlow, Elizabeth & Peter Cain, Allen Schramm and Hans Leiter.

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