

# THE CIRGUS REPORT

Number 22

May 31, 1982

AMERICA'S  
FAVORITE CIRCUS WEEKLY  
OUR 11th YEAR



JACK KING

## Show Dates

Aahmes Shrine Circus  
June 5-6 Pleasanton, Ca.

All American Circus  
May 21 San Bernardino, Ca  
22 Alta Loma  
23 Indio  
24 Riverside  
25 Hemet  
26-28 Norwalk  
29 Costa Mesa

Big Apple Circus  
June 5-13 Queens, NY

Carson & Barnes Circus  
May 23 Kansas City, Mo  
24 Eldon, Mo.  
25 Columbia  
26 Montgomery City  
27 Sullivan  
28 Salem  
29 Ironton

Circus Knie  
May 31-June 1 Rheinfelden, Switz.  
June 2-3 Liestal  
4-17 Basel

Coronas Circus  
June 4-5 Poplar Bluff, Mo.

Dunn Buggy's Suitcase Cir.  
June 5 Dublin, Ga.

Franzen Bros. Circus  
May 31 Lisle, Ill.  
Jun 1 Country Club Hills  
2 Sun River Terrace  
3 Morris  
4 West Chicago  
5 Barrington  
6 Huntley

Great American Circus  
May 31 Greece, NY  
Jun 1 Batavia  
2 Elma

Hamid-Morton Circus  
Jun 3-6 Providence, R.I.

Hoxie Bros. Circus  
May 31 Highland, Ind.  
Jun 1 Wilmington, Ill.  
2 Danville  
3 Seymour, Ind.

int'l All Star Circus  
Jun 5 Bloomington, Ill.

Liebel Family Circus  
May 26-31 Muscle Shoals, Ala.

M & M Circus  
Jun 1 Kearney, Nebr.

Martin & Downs Circus  
May 31 Tillsbury, Ont  
Jun 1 Aylmer  
2 Dresden  
3 Blenheim  
4 Leamington  
5 Belle River

No. Elephant Circus  
Jun 6 Huntington, NY

Pickle Family Circus  
Jun 5-6 Martinez, Ca.

Ringling-Barnum - Blue  
Jun 2-6 Portland, Me.

Ringling-Barnum - Red  
Jun 1-6 Glens Falls, NY

Roberts Bros. Circus  
May 27-Jun 5 Ft. Bragg, NC

Roberts Bros. Circus  
May 31 Barnesville, Oh.

Swan Bros. Circus  
Jun 4-6 Navato, Ca.

Wenatchee Youth Circus  
Jun 5 Leavenworth, Wash

--- OTHER DATES ---

James H. Drew Exposition  
May 31-June 5 Beckley, W. Va.

Elliott Amusement Co.  
Jun 4-6 Detroit, Mich.

Funorama  
Jun 1-6 Lawrence, Mass.

Great Wallendas  
Jun 4-6 Mt. Clemens, Mich

Scott's Medicine Show  
May 31 Hugoton, Tex.  
Jun 1 Garden City, Kans  
2 Great Bend  
3 Hillsboro  
4 Eldorado  
5 Emporia  
6 Manhattan

Tip Top Shows  
Jun 2-6 Manitowoc, Wsc

--- MAGIC ---

Harry Albacker's Magic Cir  
May 29-31 Middlebury, Conn.  
Jun 1-6 Beckley, W. Va.

Pf. Miller-Magic Time USA  
May 31 Hornel, NY  
Jun 1 Bath  
2 Waterloo  
3 Dunmore, Pa.  
4 Lansford  
5 Swift Water  
6 Whitehall

Dr. Now & Co.  
May 29-31 Sonoma, Ca.

### ATTENTION ALL ACTS

Why not let folks know where you are? We'll list your name and date and city you are working in in this section if you'll keep us posted as to your route schedule.

## Festival Circus

by CHRISTINA L. ENGLISH

R. J. Kelroy & Associates, Inc. "Festival Circus" presented another stupendous circus opening its season in Rock Island, Ill. Apr. 17-18. In spite of every conceivable odds in that depressed area of the state (16% unemployment for example) the people flocked in to catch the show.

The lineup was: Overture '82 played by Al and Joan Vernon, Grand Entry Parade of Staffs, The Great Peter's slide for life, The Roberto Troupe, teeterboard, The Luvas Duo, aerial cradle, Clowns, The Knops, perch act, Kenya the elephant, The Zerbini Riders, King Arthur's cats, Intermission.

The Lucky Bros., comedy table, Mlle. De Paree, single trapeze, Kris & Kristina, hand balancing, the Oscanian Troupe, risley, Maya and Thunderbird, sword and ladder balancing, Clowns, and the Flying Aztecas. Ringmastering was done by Ron Kelroy. Lighting was handled by Dianne Shapiro, Mario Zerbini was the master rigger and the floor

was run by Ed Forman and Bob Gray (with directions from Ron Kelroy).

Before, after and at intermission elephant rides were given. It was a tremendous success. At one show alone there was a 45 min. intermission, but not one person left the building. Rather they waited to see the rest of the circus. It was incredible! Even the members of the Grotto waited in line to ride Kenya. It seemed that at each performance the applause from the crowd in response to the acts became louder and longer and more enthusiastic.

As usual the ground floor looked beautiful. Obviously no expense was spared. All the equipment was overhauled, including the 18 ft. truck. All props, stages and cellotex were freshly painted and all the prop boys wore fresh, clean green coveralls. Everything ran smoothly and flawlessly except during one performance when one of King Arthur's cats got a little rambunctious over a missed jump

Of course the Patriotic Grand Finale was included. There were flags waving everywhere and suddenly out of nowhere a huge Old Glory fell hanging into center ring. One reporter from the local TV station asked Kelroy that since he (Kelroy) is Australian why all the American flags and no Australian flag? Kelroy smiled and said "just wait and see."

After the show, and especially during the elephant rides the aluminum handrails around the floor came in handy to keep the crowds in line and away from the animal cages.

I spoke briefly with Mr. Kelroy at one such point and he informed me that although 1982 is mostly going to be "spot dating" as was 1981, from what he tells me 1983 looks like he'll have a full season with two separate "runs" of dates for Winter and Summer, perhaps Fall as well. That remains to be seen.

He has already confirmed several Shrine Dates, which translates loosely to "there'll be plenty of work for the acts who have made the grade."

It's difficult to believe that he has only had his own show on the road for a short three years. It is clear that this Aussie is destined not to come a cropper!

## WANTED ACTS

FOR WEEK OF

July 19 - 24

MICHIGAN AREA

Dogs - Juggling

Perch - Risley - Trapeze  
(No Guy Lines)



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## At Baraboo

by PAUL HOY

Baraboo, Wisc.: Circus World in Baraboo, Wisc., opened its turn-of-the-century ticket wagons for the 24th season on Saturday, May 8th to a good crowd for opening day, and presents a show that is being billed as "The Greatest in Circus World's History."

Program opens with the overture, played very well by a three-piece band, directed by Rick Percy. Ada Smieya, wild animal trainer, is back for another season and assisted by her 17 year old son, Brunon. Veteran clown Jimmy Williams, as "Happy the Clown" is back and doing a great job. Martha and Gabriel Flores, gymnastics and acrobatics are truly a great team coming directly from the big circuses in Mexico.

William "Buckles" Woodcock and his wife Barbara (and she is truly beautiful) and the Woodcock children present their performing elephants, coming to the museum from the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus.

Circus fans from more than a dozen states were present for the opening along with the Fred Bergers from Minneapolis, Minn., the Jerry Schuberts, from Watetown, Wisc., and the Hoys from Sioux Falls, S. D. Missing this year was David and Marjorie Hackett, of Dunedin, Fla.

While visiting with Inga and Tony Smaha, Jr., we found that Tony, Sr., is somewhat improved and is at the Continental Manor Nursing Home at Wisconsin Dells. Also Tony, Jr. informs us that he and his fiancée Susan Hillmer, of Baraboo, will be married sometime this summer.

The Smahas have just purchased a four year old, all white, Lipizzan Stallion named Pluto-Selena. Tony, Jr. is working with the new arrival every day and is surely doing a wonderful job, following in his father's footsteps. Tony, Sr. can be very proud of his son.

We all hope and pray that Tony, Sr., will keep on improving more each day.

## PEOPLE

BIG JOHN STRONG reports his tent show drew exceptional business at Vacaville, Martinez and Antioch, Calif.

## SAMANTHA



Hi I'm back again!

It was a big decision, but I finally decided to return to the circus. I was working as a secretary, for a nice guy, but it got pretty boring, just pecking away at a typewriter all day long.

Besides, I have sawdust in my blood and just can't stay away from a show lot. So, I decided to give up that 9 to 5 job for the excitement and travel of circus life.

Hope you'll all stop by and visit with me every now and then.

TIM TEGGE, VIRGINIA LEE FENTON, KEN and BETTY WILLER, KARI JONES, BOB KELLOGG, SMOKEY JONES, JIM SWAFFORD and RON WHITFIELD were recent visitors on the Circus Vargas lot.

## Shrine Date

by ALTON L. JONES

The Murat Temple Shrine Circus, Indianapolis, Ind. - May 1, 1982.

This show was produced by the Castle International Circus, with Tarzan Zerbini and Cecil M. Byrnes as co-producers, a five day stand at the Indianapolis fairgrounds. They were assisted by General Manager Reggie Armour and Business Manager Robert C. Dunham, of the Castle organization.

Prior to the circus, the Murat Band gave a concert. The grand entry of all the uniformed units paraded the entire ring along with the circus performers, a delightful spec.

First was the Great Huberto with his inclined walk and slide-for-life, along with Maryse Begay on the one arm swing to the delight of the audience. The band was elegantly conducted by Greg Toca, prior to the Starfords and their aerial motorcycle Space Age presentation. Next was the Hawthorn Tigers and the Ada Smieya lions, very well received. Billy Barton provided his usual cloudswing and was followed by a three ring foot juggling group of Barbara, Komedys, Loni, Rosa and Torinos.

The Burger Dogs and Pony and the Marina Dogs brought delight to all the audience and was followed by the Fornasari Musical Clowns. They were well received as well as the next act, the Whirling Wheels made up of Dan Danacheck, the Komedys, Olemedas and Terry O'Brien. The Marquis Revolving Breakaway astonished the audience.

The Chimpanzees were next, the Lenz group and the Burgers. No one can watch them without pleasure. Next were the Olimeda Spanish Horse Fantasy, most capable

performers. Just prior to intermission was an Aerial Space Age production featuring SAS.

Uncle Frank's Pork Chop Revue astonished people who did not know that pigs could be trained to put on an excellent show. The Flying Fornasaris and the Flying Marquis, astounded the audience. This was followed by some of the wizards of the wire, Mr. Playboy Los Latinos, Bello and Aureila, and Terry O'Brien. Winners of the Circus World Championships in London, were the Benici Trampoline act. Their spins and actions were superb.

When it comes to balancing Marco Polo, Little John and the Kolmedys performed in top honors. Then we were treated to the antics of the Cuneo elephants, aided by the Diano elephants.

The final acts were amazing with the sway pole group of the Bauers along with the famous Nerveless Nocks. Eight poles swaying in the top of the arena and interchanging between poles, they had the crowd bending their necks to watch what was going on. It was a wonderful finish to a splendid afternoon of circus.

## Special Event

THE GREAT WIRENGARD, break-away sway pole act, will appear in conjunction with Roberts Bros. Circus at the Ft. Bragg, NC, Spring Fair, May 27-June 5.

Circus producer Bob Earl reports that the Johnson Family acts will be a feature of the special show.

Deggeller Attractions is producing the mid-way and Paul Robinson, Creative Outlet, secured the talent package.

## New Book

by **TONY CONWAY**

Observing clowning from a perspective other than that of a paying customer never was easy. In recent years, the opportunities to meet clowns outside the arena have lessened. So how do you gain an insight into what makes a man or woman a professional clown?

"Clown Alley" by Bill Ballantine provides the reader with details that most people wouldn't think of - such basics as learning how to fall, how to walk, changing facial expression - and why today's clowns must be capable in basic juggling, unicycle riding, acrobatics, even a bit of modern dance.

But that's getting ahead of things.

In providing a close-up view of his eight years as Dean of Clown College, Bill Ballantine moves back and forth between his personal recollections of the under-canvas Ringling-Barnum of 1946 through 1954 and the two-unit arena-format show of the 1969 - 1977 time frame. His familiarity with

the two totally different types of trouping enable the author to explain some of the differences to the readers so as to highlight the reasons for many of the topics included in the curriculum.

Most of this fascinating volume is devoted to the yearly, very demanding single-semester (if that is the term) convening of Clown College. The choice of subject matter and the selection of professional faculty provide an insight into the highly professional interests of "The Dean." And there are insights into the personalities of both would-be clowns and their instructors. This isn't "dream stuff," it is reality.

The word pictures of the Venice, Fla., Winter Quarters in one of the quietest periods of the compound's year are highly accurate and anyone who has been there nods his head and smiles quietly and enjoys recalling small details most of us take for granted.

There's much, much more. Among other things, Bill Ballantine's personality comes through loud and clear. Recollections of his clown compatriots of the 1940's are limited to a few names and even fewer deliberately unnamed men.

Of the "young clowns" of the present era, as might be expected, each and every one identified by name is an achiever and one this reviewer has known and has expected to be one of the better clowns in years to come.

If you recall Bill Ballantine's artwork in "Holiday" and "True" magazines and in his previous volumes, "Wild Tigers and Tame Fleas" and "Horses and Their Bosses," you have anticipated a selection of highly detailed, well defined works. In his artwork, Bill Ballantine is at his best.

"Clown Alley" is published by Little, Brown and Company, at \$18.95. If you follow the contemporary circus in the U. S., you'll want this volume among your circus books.

## Clowns

Clowns with the Carson & Barnes Circus this season are: Jack Jackson, producing; Richard 'Buckles' Peralis, stilt walker; Barry Brazelle; "Flip" Flippen; "Chipper" Parrick; Brian Davis and Rickey Macias.

## Antonio

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## From Florida

by MARJORIE J. HACKETT

For all of you old timers than can remember when newcomers to the world of the travelling circus were called "First of Mays", what better place to welcome in the month of May 1982, than by visiting Circus World's theme park here in the center of Florida, near Haines City.

David and I decided to drive over on Friday, the last day of April, stay at the Holiday Inn across the road and tour the grounds on Saturday. The weather, cool for this time of year here in the South, was perfect. Sunny and breezy.

The gal at the desk put us in a room with a large picture window that looked over to the gay red and white striped big top like building and the rides. The buildings and top, the signs, etc., have all been painted recently so we were viewing it at its prettiest. (Florida sun fades everything very quickly).

We also noted enroute from our Gulf coast home that all of the signs advertising Circus World have been re-done, removing the Ringling Bros. name since the change that took place when the Felds purchased the show from Mattel Corp., leaving Mattel with the park. Inside the park there are many changes with many more to come including the rumored Wild West Show and we thought all of you readers would like to know about some of them.

As usual it was immaculate and charming with trees, paved walks and gorgeous bright beds of flowers. This is not a large area to walk about, so it is a favorite spot for families with small children (who immediately clamor to be painted up as clowns!) and this day, the place was full of happy little kids and a lot of happy "big" kids, too.

They are doing extensive (local) advertising spots and they must be paying off as the attendance, even at this slow season (between spring break and graduation) is way up. We got in for half price (Armed Forces day) but always check with local papers, merchants and travel agents if you plan to attend. There is always some special offer available.

Food served on the grounds is not expensive and you have a choice of indoor eating or outdoor stands. As we entered we were greeted by lively band music being played

by the U. S. Navy Band from the recruit training center at Orlando's Naval Air Station. They played opposite the huge carousel, all of which put one in a "Circus" mood.

You get a printed program folder of the day's events, so noting the time, we hurried to the dome where the participation circus was going on, and where if you are brave enough, you the spectator, can "get into the act". The talented Fay Alexander was catching for flyers at this show, we were so happy to see him and also to meet the young performers, most of whom were new to us.

These youngsters are in all of the shows, Participation, in the arena and in the little musical stage shows as well as the daily parades on the grounds. No wonder the girls were so slim and trim! The announcer was Dan Parson and the band was led by Max Flagg. At the show the announcer was Jim Sanders and the band leader was Roman St. Germain. The arena band is on a high platform over the performers entrance in the style of the European circuses, also in the dome used for the other shows, but they sit right on the stage for musical and clown numbers. I did not get the names of the clowns, but how we enjoyed their greetings to the children and their antics in the shows.

Girls in the shows this day were Robin Locotosh, Betty Jo Howard, Linda Stammen, and Sharon (last name?) who does juggling and unicycle with her partner Tim (?).

Boys appearing were Gregg Hosfeld (Florida State Frisbee Champ) and a Sarasota High School Sailor Circus alumni, Tom Robin (Edelston) from a "flying" family, Mark Lapps, who is a catcher and high wire performer, trained by the Gaonas and Tim(?), juggling and unicycles. There are 7 clowns, girls and boys with their cute faces and colorful and imaginative costumes. Cowboy Gordie Peer also appeared, does whips and ropes, but we did not see him work.

The most exciting and unusual cage act that I've ever seen is this one trained and presented by David McMillan. Your hair will stand on end when you see him put the tigers through their tricks, especially the leap frogging "Hassan" and "Madras." They are joined by "Pancho", a huge lion and later "Nina" a black panther does a turn. After watching all that agility you will love the

(Continued on Page 19)

# Spring Celebration

by TONY CONWAY

It was ideal weather. Dick Flint (should be termed 'producer'?) put together a very fine series of events. John Herriott's professional knowledge provided something special. Ward Hall's particular capabilities added an extra dimension. And mention as yet to be made of the marvels unveiled for an unaware general public. This was "Spring Celebration" of the Smithsonian Institution held both within and on the outskirts of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

Past and present met during this week-long annual event. It's been decades since the last major Wild West Show toured, yet here were major elements of such name outfits as the 101 Ranch Wild West or Col. Tim McCoy's Wild West. Doing the announcing and performing trick and fancy roping and gun twirling was Johnny Rivers. Larry Daylight displayed authentic American Indian 'Eagle' and 'Hoop' dances. Frank Dean showed trick and fancy roping and whip cracking. And

Tim Rivers worked his comedy mule.

In the circus ring 'neath the two-pole, one-ring big top, performance director-announcer John Herriott displayed his dressage horse. The Knops provided separate perch-pole and balancing acts. Mary Ruth Herriott worked her performing dogs, Coco, Jr., provided his clowning capabilities and stiltwalking, and Johnny Rivers showed his trained pony.

Prominent side show owner Ward Hall appeared as his own front talker and inside lecturer and did his ventriloquist act. With him were the Kamahine Troupe (Nettie Paauhua, Gene Falkenburg and Alma Balsam "Queen of the steel guitar") doing both the side show "bally band" and their Hawaiian act; Loretta Fulkerson, tattooed lady; John Trower, sword swallower; Pete Terhune, fire eater, ladder of swords and bed of nails; John Meah, chalk act, and Alma Balsam, electric act. At a different location, John Meah explained and demonstrated side show banner painting.

But there was more - much, much more. A roped-off area near a main entrance was set up as a "clown alley" complete with wardrobe trunks, folding chairs, improvised racks for costumes and the like. On hand to don the greasepaint were Bill Ballantine, Danny Chapman, George Koury, Vince Monzo and Jon Wilkinson.

Several flights up, Peggy Day had on hand 17 costumes brought up from the Sarasota, Fla. workshops of Hagenbeck-Wallace Costume Co. and last used on Ringling-Barnum two to seven years ago. While some of the glittering garments were displayed on mannequins, a number were available in a variety of sizes to be donned by the visitor whose parent, husband, etc., could then capture the moment with their Polaroid or Instamatic.

The specialized skills of the wood carver were demonstrated by three experts who normally spend their time restoring the parade vehicles and other gorgeous memorabilia at the Ringling Museum of the Circus, Sarasota. While displaying photographs showing the step-by-step restoration of the "Griffin" wagon, the "Elephant Tableau" wagon, etc., they were working on the center section of a skyboard of one of the RBBB

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(Continued on Page 18)

## Reid Bros.

by Doc. DAVID E. REID

Reid Bros. Circus played Newport, Ore., under sponsorship of the Lincoln County Shrine Club and played in the open air at the Lincoln County Fairgrounds arena. Two shows were presented, at 2 and 7 p.m. The weather was cloudy and cold and the attendance was fair.

Clowns were Hi Fi and Noodles; Music by Neil Armstrong, organist and Rick Jones, drummer. Kim Dixon was the announcer.

The program: National Anthem; Johnson tigers (9), presented by Joe Via; Wini Mc Kay, Miss Leona, on single traps, One and Jim, cradle; Tina Zamperla, dressage; The Clowns; Roberto Torres, slack wire; Cinderella and her Birds of Paradise; The Zamperlas, unicycles (3); Clowns; Chester Cable, foot juggler; Christinia Ladion's Las Vegas Fashion Poodles; Intermission with a color book pitch.

The Flying Segueras (3); Sir Herman and Miss Constanca, uncaged animals worked on a leash (2 jaguars, 1 leopard); Tony & Co., magic; Clowns; Herman Kraghlois, box-

ing kangaroo Digger; Ann Pike and three elephants (Johnson).

The season has been good in spite of some unseasonably cold weather, for instance it was 5 degrees, outdoors at Lewiston and in Redmond, Ore., on May 8th, there was snow then sunshine, followed by hail.

## Houston Shrine

by JOHN W. BEARD

Acts appearing on the Houston, Texas, Shrine date (first time it was done in the spring) were:

Jorge Barrera, lions; Luxem's Wheel; The Gauchos; Munoz Sisters, high act; Aguilar, perch; Gene Randow, producing clown; Dolly Sisters, perch; Vanois, perch; Statucs from Mexico; Evita, single trapeze; The Gonas, flying trapeze; Althoff's Bears; Terry Parsons, comedy car; the Hanneford, Cristiani and Cuneo elephants; Rosaire, dogs; Hanneford Family Riding Act; Capt. Circus (Dan Smith), cannon act.

# PEOPLE

**NORMA CRISTIANI's** book about circus life, called "Ragbag Cathedral" is expected to be released early next year.

**JIM GIBSON** and his band, formerly with Circus Vargas, were featured at the Palamino Club in North Hollywood, Calif., on April 20th.

**EDITH EVANS**, equestrian, is featured in the "Kingdom of Dancing Stallions" a new permanent attraction in Buena Park, Calif.

**RICHARD DEPTULA** and his son **JASON** were featured on a TV show "P.M." from Cleveland, Ohio, on May 13th. They were shown clowning, and then showed their big circus room and collection to the camera.

**FRANK DEAN** presented a talk on the "Wild West Show" at the CHS Convention in Washington, DC. The talk discussed the origins of the wild west show, the rodeo and the Mexican Charreada, and a comparison of their events.

**EDDIE HENDRICKS**, **JOHN RITTER**, **ROBERT GOULET**, **LEE MERIWETHER** and **IRVIN AND KENNETH FELD** were recently seen on the Circus Vargas lot in Southern California.

**PAT WHITE**, the wild animal trainer with Carson & Barnes Circus, has returned to the show. Baby **NICHOLAS GLENN WHITE** is seven weeks old and doing fine.

**LARRY KELLOGG**, formerly of the Bayfront Center arena and theatre, has joined Circus World Park at Orlando, Fla. Succeeding him at Bayfront (St. Petersburg) is **JIM ROSEN**, who was assistant to the producer

# People

**Heidi Gutis Grogan** left May 5th for a week in Weisbaden, Germany, where she attended an international trade show for pet supplies and accessories.

While in western Europe, she is also finalizing details for the importation of gifts and needlecrafts. These specialty items will be imported to America to stock her new business venture.

She will be opening at the all new exclusive shopping complex, now under construction, in Tampa, Fla. This new complex, 'Palms Plaza' is scheduled for a fall 1982 opening and will consist of twenty-five exclusive designer shops.

**Heidemarie's** "Strictly European" pet boutique, gifts and needlecrafts, will merchandise hi-line imports from Europe.

She will most definitely continue as an active performer with the Grogan's "Starship 3" helicopter act while her mom, **Elvira Gutis** manages the boutique in her absence.

Speaking of the Gutis; they now reside in a home next door to the Grogan property in Riverview, Fla.

**Heidi** was accompanied on her trip to Germany by **Billy Rodgers** where he hopes to arrange various expansions to his business also.

of the Royal Lipizzan Stallion Show.

**BERNARD (Wimpy) MILES**, the clown, was hospitalized for knee surgery at the Orthopaedic Surgery, University of Wisconsin, 600 Highland Ave., Madison, Wisc. 53792.

## In Memoriam

MURRAY POWERS (81), a newspaper man, journalism professor and circus fan, died May 7 at Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, after a brief illness. He was a newspaper man for 44 years, spending 32 years with the Beacon-Journal of Akron. He taught journalism at Kent State University, and throughout his life he was an active circus fan. Survivors include his wife, Ruth, two sons and several grandchildren.

## Hoxie Bros.

by ALMOND KNIGHT

My brother, Harold, and I saw Hoxie Bros. Circus at Dickson, Tenn., April 28th, a Wednesday night. The 6 p.m. show had a small turnout but they put on a wonderful show. General Manager John Lewis made us Honorary Ringmasters and I had my picture taken with Hoxie Tucker.

The program included: The Circus on Parade, spec; Kramer's cat act; Gaona, trampoline; Duos Aerial cradle; Clowns with Hair Growing; Magic, girl vanishes in thin air; Clowns with A Sore Tooth; Dog act; Unridable Mule, a real kid pleaser; Single trapeze with girl coming in on an elephant (excellent act); Intermission.

During Intermission balloons were sold and elephant rides were available. They also set the net for the flying act.

The Flying Gaonas; Goat act (another ex-

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cellent trained group of animals); Clowns with Soft Soap; Kathleen, slide for life with fire works exploding as she lands; Indian Princess dressage act; Jim Silverlake with two bulls in a good act.

Hoxie reported that when he could get a decent lot and good weather he had no complaints business-wise.

I recommend to all readers, if you get a chance to see this show be sure and do so as it is a good one.

## With Beatty-Cole

by SUZI WALLACE

Clowns are the heart and soul of a circus. They keep the show going at all times. P. T. Barnum once said, "Clowns are pegs to hang circuses on."

I'd like to introduce the "pegs" of the Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus.

Sandy Kaye, of Memphis, Tenn., beginning his fifth season with Clyde Beatty, is a striking white face who combines razzle dazzle with the sophistication of European style clowning. He was mentioned in the George Speight "Book of Clowns", including a full page portrait in the book.

Mike Snider, a farm boy from Batesville, Ark., is a zany mixture of white face make up with an auguste style. Mike also has some experience as an aerialist.

John (Eggroll) Kane, of New York, a stand out in all the group performances, is a rolly-polly bundle of laughs.

Tom (Weasel) Weiss, a native of Caldwell, NJ, is a recent addition to Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. with flawless make up and an irrepressible personality in and out of the ring.

Dean Coley, of Santa Barbara, Calif., a recent graduate of RBBB's Clown College, is an irresistibly precious auguste sporting wide eyes and a six inch blue nose.

Robert Temple (BuBu), from Maine, is an accomplished juggler, although he doesn't get to display his talents to the fullest in the show.

John Eckstein, a first year clown, who keeps the pace with great ease. He hails from Pittsburgh.

Miguel Padilla, who calls Sarasota home, Miguel is a 40 year circus veteran and has been with Clyde Beatty for 3 years. He worked with RBBB for many years.

Between shows, haven for the 8 masters of mirth is one of the only traditional tent clown alleys in the country.

My adventure begins with Weasel and Mike escorting me to clown alley. Bu Bu, disappears with a fellow juggler he has met to compare notes.

Miguel wanders in to touch up his simple but effective make up.

Many of the clowns have traveled with

RBBB at one time, but general concencious was a preference to the traditional tent circus, despite the inconveniences and the call to perform double, even triple duty or more. Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus is one of three tent circuses left in the States. The others are Carson & Barnes and Circus Vargas.

Weasel rumbles through his prop trunk, emerges with his Texas swatter and begins to attack Mike's head. Serious conversation turns to mass hysteria.

Eggroll strolls in, but opts not to take part in the shenanigans.

Sanity restored, discussion continues. Despite Miguel's thick accent, we manage to communicate with Mike's help. He loves circus life and delights in telling about working with fellow pros such as Lou Jacobs and Frosty Little. Miguel is a professional in every way.

As 8 o'clock nears, Sandy, Dean and John return to prepare for the next show. Bu Bu reappears and munches a cold sandwich.

Costumes and make up fly as the bell sounds. In the background, the ringmaster begins his opening announcements.

The music starts and the eight delightful merry makers dart for the big top saying their goodbyes on the run.

As I turn to leave, I hear someone yell to me, Looking back to see Weasel running towards me.

He pleads "Please don't forget to write to Circus Report, my Mom gets it."

So, here it is Weasel, and to Mrs. Weiss, wherever you are. Congratulations, you're the proud parent of a bouncing baby clown.

The Photos in this issue were taken by the writer and are identified as:

1 and 2 - Spectacular new murals don the worker's and clown's sleepers.

3 - Veteran clown Miguel Padilla (foreground) poses for the camera, while Robert (BuBu) Temple brushes up on the old W. C. Fields cigar box routine.

4 - Weasel Weiss takes a break between shows in clown alley.



## HOTLINE

May 13 - Sallisaw, Okla. - Four elephants with the Carson & Barnes Circus bolted as the show was preparing to move to Eufaula, Okla. The elephants ran towards a coal pit and plunged off a 30 ft. cliff into about 100 feet of water.

"Obert" a 7 foot elephant was apparently fatally crushed by the oncoming other elephants. The three surviving elephants were coaxed out of the water, but "Kelly" eluded capture until May 14th, when city employees subdued her with a tranquilizer gun.

The elephants had been unloaded from the circus truck when it became stuck in mud, after which five of them bolted, but one was quickly rounded up before it could make it to the cliff.

## PEOPLE

**BOB OWENS** (Spiff) and **BETH BROWN** (Dixie) have joined the Big John Strong Circus and will be working advance for that show.

**JACK KING** has joined the Hoxie Bros. Circus as a phone room manager, and is working closely with **JOHN LEWIS** and **CHARLIE MOYER**.

**GARY RAY** and **BRENDA LEVINE** were married at the United Methodist Church in Grapevine, Texas, on May 29th.

**DOUG MORRIS**, who is with CBS-TV, is currently working on the "Capitol" show, which has become popular with viewers.

## SPRING CELEBRATION (Continued)

cages used through the mid-1940's. In yet another arm of the museum, Gordon Carver had a scale model unloading scene and was building one of his detailed wagons for the onlooking public.

The craft of making clown props and costumes was explained and demonstrated by professional clown David Wisniewski, attired in full clown makeup and garb. Elsewhere were demonstrations of clown shoe making, American Indian crafts, clown wig, skull cap, and nose making, and saddle making.

The Museum's Carmichael Auditorium, named for a former Smithsonian Secretary, Dr. Leonard Carmichael, featured circus related films continuously each day from noon until 5 p.m. while the sounds of not one, but two calliopes filled the air. Youthful Lisa Simones was at the keyboard of the steamer built and owned by Clovis Watkins. Mr. Watkins operated the boiler and controlled the steam with the assistance of his son, John, finance of Ms. Simones. Accompanying the circus performances on a truck mounted air cally was Herb Head. Owner-operator Robert Bruce's truck is, itself, a gorgeously maintained antique.

The Wild West presentation was given in two half hour shows each day while the circus performance was given in three one hour shows each day of the Spring Celebration. Then, on Sunday afternoon, for one show only, the National Concert Band of America presented an hour-long concert of circus music, in concert style. This unique band is composed entirely of musicians all of whom have been members of the Army, Navy, Air Force or Marine bands. John Herriott served as commentator for this event, providing very good explanations of how each musical selection fits into the needs of the circus performance.



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Explaining and demonstrating to the American public just what the circus is and has been in American entertainment is the aim of each Smithsonian Spring Celebration. From listening to members of the public talk to the circus specialists, an observer gets the feeling that Dick Flint, John Herriott, Ward Hall and their associates have been successful. Let's hope that Spring Celebrations will be a part of the Smithsonian programs for years to come.

The Circus Historical Society held its Annual Convention in Washington, DC, in conjunction with the Smithsonian Spring Celebration.

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## Special Show

A special show, produced by Tim Tegge, with the TNT & Royal Olympic Circus title, was presented at Tucson, Ariz., on April 24, under sponsorship of the American Legion. All performances were well attended and the sponsor was pleased with the show.

Acts appearing in the program were: Otto and Gladys Berosini, caged act (tigers, lions, leopards, panther), and their tiger riding horse; Ken and Betty Willer, one finger balance and rola bola; Sylvester and Barbara Braun, whips, ropes, knives; Henry Crowell and Dolores, comedy trampoline, web and single trapeze; Otto Berosini, juggling.

Live music on the organ was provided by Kie Kavanah and Tim Tegge served as the show's announcer, who worked in clown make up and did two clown spots during the show.

## Variety Acts

Variety acts currently on tour with the Harlem Globetrotters include: The Flying Rollers, French roller skating duo; Walter

**LOS CANCHES** are now appearing in Roberts Bros. Circus in England with their exciting combined unicycle and perch act and with **MISS VALERIE** on the Spanish Web.

In past years they have toured South America with Acuarama on Parade (1977-1980), and the 1981 season with Circus Vargas.

### FROM FLORIDA (Continued)

exit, made by Dave riding a tiger striped motorcycle with tiger "Bombay" in the side car, we loved it!

The juggling-unicycle turn by Sharon and Tim is fast, smooth and amusing in the tradition of good vaudeville-music hall turns. Handsome kids who perform and project their good humor out to the audience.

No flying act was aptly named than "The Flying Robins" as they do their fast twists and turns thru the air, they would, indeed put the "birds" to shame. They were preceded by the pretty web girls.

We became fans of Roman Schmidt, when he first appeared with his dancing Rhinoceros, but this day he entered in a Roman chariot pulled by two fast running zebras. We cheered! Anyone who knows animals knows what he is doing is impossible, but there we were looking at them, so for Roman it is not impossible. Then the elephants appeared and he made them dance, sit up, do headstands, etc.

The show closed with a finale "spec" where all of the performers appeared. They are young, good looking and a versatile group, who have no where to go but "up" and we hope they will be entertaining us on shows for years to come.

If you are in Florida or coming here, don't miss it because at least one of your days should be a Circus (World) day!

Wasil, Austrian hand balancing act; Jean Claude, French foot juggler and Barrett Felker, American juggler. All acts are booked through Simone Finner, Hollywood theatrical agent, who will join the Globetrotters in Europe in June, after which she will visit several circuses, including Circus Knie in Switzerland, Circus Jean Richard in France and Circus Sarasini in West Germany.

# True Blue

by GEORGE C. BINGAMAN

The 112th edition of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, Blue Unit, remains true to the Barnum tradition of "The Greatest Show on Earth." Blue is true! Ever since CBS's nation-wide television spectacular in early March I have been entranced with the sights and sounds of the current new edition of Feld's productions. Seeing six (6) performances in Baltimore's Civic Center has only confirmed my viewpoint.

A number of significant changes excite the circus-goer who has seen them all since the Feld's took the helm of the Ringling ship. From the opening "Jump for Joy" the audience is lifted to attention with Nellie Ivanov's fall from the sky cradle. Nellie also sparkles in the Duo Kristov aerial cradle with husband Kristov and then returns to raise the eyes of all as the dazzling partner of the Baron of Bravery Elvin Bale aboard his magnificent meteor-cycle.

The elimination of the opening half big cage act is not missed when the Gautier Family sons, Michael and Kevin trot out two rows of baby elephants and Daniel Suskow caravans six liberty camels in a third oval. When have we seen six camels, five dromedaries and one Bactrian in one ring in America? The concept of this act is "first time ever" despite the recalcitrant group instinct of these animals who are not naturally "at liberty" to depart from the pattern of their peers. Although Daniel Suskow has not had this group very long it is apparent that this French-born expert from top continental shows is a masterful commodore for these great "ships of the desert." I will walk the extra mile for these camels!

The Wild, Wild West is the new super production circus return to America's frontier days employing rough riders, sawdust saloon shenanigans, stage coaches toting children from the audience, stirring Indian ceremonial and climaxing with ponderous pachyderms in a lascivious long mount.

Don Foote's two million dollars worth of costumes is a spectacle in itself!

Never in the Feld tenure have the clowns sparkled as much! Feld's Clown College has now become of age for "by their fruits ye

shall be known." Clown for clown this is the strongest edition of clowning in the Feld decade. It becomes more evident when you reckon the rapid turnover of Joey's, year to year. The replacements have enhanced the overall performance of the entire alley contingent. The come-ins, the walk-arounds, the station gags, the group evolutions are new and hilarious. These buffoons have top instruction, a broad variety of skills and the indispensable boundless energy. Frosty Little's company with Tommy Parish as his boss lieutenant have captured my top award for outstanding performance with a group which has no standout! Clown for clown these Jo-eyes are marvelous and deserve our acclaim,

Elvin Bale's presence is marked in three dare devilish broadsides as the Phantom of Balance on his Wheel of Death, as the Baron of Bravery on his meteorcycle and finally as the Emperor of Excitement on his first time ever mechanical monster. Elvin's partner, Christopher Adams, stands on Bale's shoulders for a first time ever walk around on the balance wheel and fills Bale's role on the human rocket. Bale's monster, probably a prototype of circus to come, is a new device developed to exhibit Elvin's unparalleled dare deviltry in the air.

Two new faces enter center ring in the singing ringmaster role. Dinny McGuire serves up most of the hoopla, while Alice Lynn makes her debut and establishes the role as a feminine vocalist.

I recognized Bela Tabak immediately as he enters with his poodles. You may remember him in the Monte Carlo Circus and previous Blue shows as the outstanding equestrian and pachyderm acrobat who manifests his Hungarian royalty in blood and deed.

The Mighty Michu is back better than ever unveiling new talent in presenting ponies and removing foreign bodies in his center ring farce as a clowning surgeon. Elizabeth and Sandor Raski, Michu's diminutive counterparts have increased exposure adding to the class of this miniature duo.

The Slavovi Riding Family ride alone, deservedly in center ring as their unexcelled display of equestrianism offers a triple

(Continued on Page 21)



### TRUE BLUE (Continued)

high, a three horse jump somersault and an unbelievable fake fall which had me fooled until I observed its precisioned repeat at five more performances!

It is grossly unfair not to wax eloquent about Baumann's tigers, Gautier's bulls, East Europe's teeterboarders and perch acts and the flashy flyers. The King Charles Troupe is now so sharply honed that their basic format has added an explosive finale to their acrobatic charavari. Theirs is a distinctive contribution to twentieth century circus.

My sincere apologies to all the deserving whom I have missed in this honorable mention. Go see the 112th. This Greatest Show

on Earth is True Blue.

Photos with this article, taken by the author, are identified as:

- 1 - Elvin Bale, Blue's Daredevil
- 2 - Mighty Michu, smallest man in the world.
- 3 - Sam Drummond, Clown Alley's Knight of the Boxing Glove
- 4 - End of the Dromedaries

D. R. Miller's Carson & Barnes Circus will be sporting a new co-ordinated set of visual materials this season. A matched theme for ads, lithographs and the program cover was conceived by Charles Bellatti, show's director of publicity and press, and James K. Judkins, circus general manager, and designed by George DaDeppo, Detroit, Mich.

## Do you remember?

by *TED LaVELDA*

The Al G. Kelly-Miller Bros. Circus of 1939 was owned and managed by Obert, Kelly and D. R. Miller. Kelly and Dale Miller had the office and H. V. Darr was the agent (he formerly owned the Darr-Gray Dramatic Co.).

Ted LaVelda had the side show; Harold Crowell was the pit show operator.

Performers included: Freda LaVelda, Isla Miller and Mrs. Moon, swinging ladders and web; Ted LaVelda, hand balancing and contortion; D. R. and Isla Miller, tight wire; Obert Miller, dogs and pick out pony; D. R. Miller, pony drill, posing ponies, comedy mule; D. R. and the writer did clown gags and a table rock. The show was small but presented a pleasing performance.

Near the end of the season a young boy joined the show to take care of the ponies, his name was Vernon Shearer. He learned to do rope spinning and whip manipulation and was known as "Oklahoma Shor-

## Show Notes

by "*Circus Joe*" VALENCIANO

Kirby Grant, better known as TV's "Sky King" was recently seen on "Hour Magazine" hosted by Gerry Collins. Grant who was on the tube with his Sky King series during the fifties, was with the Carson & Barnes Circus for five seasons during the late 60's. Collins, the host, has been on "Circus of the Stars" several times.

A while back I saw an interesting program on the PBS network. It was a half hour show about an acrobatic troupe in China. It showed how they prepared for a performance. They even erected an outdoor theatre, complete with a stage, curtains, backdrop, etc. They set up in a field.

ty". He was with D. R. for many years.

The show closed the 1939 season near Ft. Smith, Ark. then jumped into Joplin, Mo. for the winter. That winter they purchased their first elephant which was named "Hattie". Now D. R. Miller owns more elephants than any show in America.

## Ringmaster Tryouts

(by Kathleen A. Hughes, Staff Reporter for the Wall Street Journal, May 13, 1982)

Most people confronted by balky elephants performing dogs that suddenly bolt for the stands, clown cars that break down or an accident on the trapeze, wouldn't have the faintest idea what to do.

The circus ringmaster knows. He seizes the microphone, as the spotlights focus on him, and belts out a loud, cheerful song, diverting the audience's attention from the disaster. Ringmaster is a tricky job. Shouting "Ladies and gentlemen . . . the greatest show on earth," may be the simplest part of it.

Yesterday 30-odd people showed that American get-up-and-go is still alive. They auditioned for a rare and intimidating job opening: ringmaster for Ringling Bros., and Barnum & Bailey Circus. Nervously clutching photographs, resumes and sheet music, they mustered before a five-judge panel in an empty Madison Square Garden and did their stuff.

"That audition was the longest two minutes of my life," said Steve Hoffman, a 30 year old actor. "I was terrified."

Ron Pollard, a 26 year old, who has served as master of ceremonies for beauty pageants was gloomy about his chances. "Ringmasters always look like Tarzan and I'm only five-eight," he said. He wore boots with tall heels which may have helped.

Earl Anthony, a hulking clerk who wore a rhinestone-studded cowboy hat and sequined purple cape, sang "Never-Never Land" with his back to the judges much of the time. Glenn Simsek, 23, a student, announced that he couldn't sing. He merely boomed out, "Ladies and Gentlemen, the greatest show on earth" and sat down.

Alice Lynn, the only woman who tried out said, "I sang well and I think the country is ready for a ringmistress."

The successful candidate is to be selected in about a month and will be taken to Florida for three months of training preparatory to traveling with the circus starting in January.

Pat Marcus, a spokeswoman for the circus, said the nod is likely to go to someone "who projects charisma and glamor but also whole some family values," someone who is "hand

some, imposing and also able to sing and act." The ringmaster, she observed, is the thread that holds the circus together., the person who introduces the acts.

The job has drawbacks. "We have to wear sequin suits," says Dinny McGuire, a present ringmaster. "They weigh 15 pounds and my back is killing me most of the time." Another problem: Working around animals gets smelly. "Pungent," says Miss Marcus.

## Clowns

Clowns touring with Circus Vargas this season are:

Bruce Warner, George Clyatt, Jeff Sharp, Ray Clark, Dan Bucker, Jim Vaughn and Billy McCabe.

## Circus Day

by BOB WEIGEL

The Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus was in Hagerstown, Md., on May 3-4, with good weather on both days.

On May 3rd, we had a luncheon for some of the show folks. A few of those who attended were: Leanne Stables, Cherie Cunningham, Jimmy James, John Pugh and Bridgette, Tina Storey, Mr. and Mrs. Dave Hoover and Mary Ruth Herriott, Frank Ball was the M.C.

The food for the circus people was provided by a well-known U.C.A. unidentified circus angel. There were about 18 Circus Fans in attendance who paid their own way.

The circus in Hagerstown was sponsored by the Emmett Kelly Tent No. 41. Lawrence Springer and Ed Norman were co-chairman.

My wife, Esther, and I, attended the 4:30 p.m. show on May 3rd and I'd say it was a full house. Their performance was excellent and the band played good circus music.

We saw a lot of friends on the lot and had a wonderful circus day!



**ABOUT NAPCAA** - In just four months The National Association for the Preservation of Circus Arts in America has over 300 members.

I do not have a complete roster of those who have joined. However, I understand it reads like a Who's Who of Circus. How's this for a partial sampling? Buckles, Gee Gee, Cliff Vargas, John Herriott, John Cuneo, Bill Biggerstaff, Rex Williams, Wally Naghtin, even yours truly are members.

When there are serious problems in professional circus circles, personal differences seem to be quickly forgotten to solve matters of mutual concern.

A solution is needed right now to offset employment and cost of living problems currently facing professional variety and circus artists. For further details contact:

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Since the Great Depression, I have tried to maintain a showman's high standard of professionalism to help public morale in a decent manner so the World would be a much brighter place because of civilized entertainment in the best tradition of the American circus and variety stage.

I can very easily see that professionals who live to please need a boost of their own morale also, during difficult times of unemployment. I heartily endorse the NAPCAA plans no matter how grandiose the hopes of this new circus fund-raising effort may appear to those who may be naturally apathetic.

Artists who love American ideals of innovative ingenuity most certainly know best of all the solutions for any unemployment problems which now face us. Hopefully, thru mutual pooling of our own professional expertise as experienced artists and business people there is a workable solution.

Before anyone becomes too hypercritical of NAPCAA, my suggestion is for them to

investigate it more fully and perhaps join. Or at least be kind enough to advance a more practical solution to the immediate unemployment problem within what's left of the circus industry. Most certainly there should be some kind of a renaissance trend.

For those who say a circus renaissance is impossible, I for one say that NAPCAA objectives are possible to attain and desirable. Write and find out more about them!

## PEOPLE

A. W. "Art" MILLER, who is convalescing from major surgery, visited the Hoxie Bros. Circus recently at Doniphan, Mo. Art is semi-retired long-time general agent for many shows.

FRANK BUCK, the legendary big game hunter and explorer, will live again in a new series "Bring 'em Back Alive" on CBS-TV, starting this fall. Frank was born in Gainesville, Texas, in 1884 and was educated in Dallas.

Beginning in 1911, he made many expeditions, all around the world, capturing wild animals. He helped write several books, including "Bring 'em Back Alive" and produced that and several other movies before his death in 1950.

## Happy Birthday

# MAMA

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## A Great Show

by HERMAN W. WALTER

The Royal Lichtenstein Circus was featured during the Petunia Festival, of the annual planting of 2,000 petunias at the Old Market in Omaha, Nebr. Two performances were given, one each day of the festival on May 8 and 9th.

The selection of the Lichtenstein Circus was an outstanding selection, bringing very large crowds to each performance. Professionalism was the word for the performers and program, which was presented in the following order:

Come-in, Nanci Olesen, flute; Welcome, Nick Weber; Poetry and Spiels, Weber; Ladder balancing, Bob Lee, Jens Larson; Jingle Bells and Roman Rings, Larson; "Plough-sharing", all; Gags, Miss Suzie, (monkey); Ball Juggling, Olesen, Lee; Rope Magic, Larry Ryan, Weber, Olesen; Card Magic, Weber; Pin Juggling, Lee, Larson, Weber; "Giles the Giant", Larson, Lee, Olesen; Miss Jill (bear); Escape, Larson, Olesen; Fire Eating, Weber; Dan Rice (horse) and dogs; Poetry, all.

One suggestion by the reviewer, the music furnished on a 50 note Calliola, was circus music, a few minutes of music before the show would create a circus mood.

Weber announced a new policy, no longer will the Circus cross the U. S. each year, but will divide the states into three regions, the West, Middle and East, taking three years to make the complete circuit.

## Liebel Family Circus

The Liebel Family Circus, under the big top, appeared at the Memorial Day Festival at the North Alabama State Fairgrounds in Muscle Shoals, May 26-31. Two performances were given each week day, with three shows on Saturday, Sunday and Memorial Day.

The entertainment package was arranged and promoted by Paul Robinson, Creative Outlet, Largo, Fla. A special "Pay-One-Price" plan included the circus and a midway fielded by World of Pleasure Shows.

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## Exhibit Saved

Alexander Calder's "Circus," a whimsical wire-and-cloth collection of big top performers and animals, will remain at the Whitney Museum of American Art, in New York, thanks to a \$625,000 gift.

The gift, from the Robert Wood Johnson, Jr. Charitable Trust meets the \$1.25 million goal the museum was forced to set to keep the work. The third-generation sculptor died in 1976 and the executors of his estate needed the money to settle taxes he owed in France and the U. S.

Calder created "Circus" in 1926, after a visit to the Ringling Bros.-Barnum & Bailey Circus the year before. He translated sketches of the performers and animals into a set of wire and cloth creations.

While his wife, Louisa, played circus music on a Victrola, Calder acted as ringmaster, moving the characters about as if they were actually performing.

"Circus" consists of a wire tightrope strung across a center ring, with Calder's characters positioned around the ring. The figurines in-

clude a sword swallower, two Chinese wrestlers, a cowboy on a rodeo horse, a chariot rider and a camel.

## Novelty Acts

Several novelty acts have been booked by Simone Finner Enterprises, the Hollywood based theatrical agency specializing in variety acts for revue shows, including:

The Jabczynski Troupe, teeterboard acrobatics in "Razzle Dazzle" at the Las Vegas Hilton Hotel, Las Vegas; Nino Frediani juggler in "City Lights" at the Flamingo Hotel, Las Vegas; The Thuranos, comedy low wire act and Georges LaFaye & Co., Franck black art artists in "C'est Magnifique" at the Aladdin Hotel, Las Vegas.

Ioni, the amazing French Automaton and Billy Earl, ventriloquist in "Paris Vanities" at the El San Juan Hotel, Puerto Rico; Senor Wences, internationally acclaimed ventriloquist in "C'est Paris" at the Condo Holiday Inn, San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Michael Chirrick, juggler in "Follies Russe" at Loew's Monte Carlo Hotel, Monte Carlo.

## CHS Program

The program for the 1982 CHS Convention at Washington, DC, April 21-25, featured:

April 21 - Registration and Festival of Films.

April 22 - Welcome by Roger Kennedy of the Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institute; Dressage Riding in the 19th Century, Ellen Wells; The WPA Circus, 1935-1939, Jeanne S. Burch; Center Ring: The Exhibit, John S. Still.

Circus, a project 20 film about the history and traditions of the circus and its people, narrated by Emmett Kelly.

Tour and View of the Library of Congress circus poster collection.

Felice Navidad: Christmas Season Circuses in Mexico City, William T. Randolph; Notes on the American Circus Corporation, Leonard V. Farley.

Festival of Films, George C. Bingaman; Annual Business Meeting.

April 23 - The Barnum Circus Train, Fred Dahlinger; Poetry of the Pitchman, Steve and Amanda Zeitlin; Tippoo Sultan, Stuart Thayer; The 1905 McCaddon Show, John Polasek.

Spring Celebration; Introduction, Micro-computer Data Base for Circus Information, James F. Stegall; Picasso's Saltimbanques, a film; The Wild West Show, Frank Dean; The Roping Fool, a film on Will Rogers.

April 24 - The Polish State Circus School, Christopher Knop; A Juggling Workshop, Shelly Harris, Bill Fry and Co.; The Barnum & Bailey Triumphant Return Parades, 1903-04, Greg Parkinson.

Center Ring: The Artist, at the Corcoran Gallery of Art; Cocktail Hour; Banquet and John Herriott, master of ceremonies with Bill Ballantine, speaking on Clown Alley.

April 25 - A Celebration of American Circus Music, National Concert Band of America with John Herriott, announcer.



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## Fair Plans

The 1982 Gulf Coast State Fair and Exposition, Biloxi, Miss., will advertise the Oct. 27-31 event as "The Animal Fair."

Carlotta Robinson, of Creative Outlet, Largo, Fla., which operates the Fair for Amusement Corporation of America, has booked Wood Family Shows International Productions of Windsor, Ontario, to provide a Petting Zoo and one ring animal circus. Other animal acts and attractions are being negotiated.

Link Shows will provide the midway for the first time this year.

# Life's a Circus for Jimmy Cole

By JOE KELLY

The two men in a corner booth at the Village Inn were eating breakfast at noon and talking about Emmett Kelly, the clown, about John Ringling, of circus fame, and about Cecil B. De Mille's filming of the Greatest Show on Earth.

A chance to listen in on a conversation such as this doesn't come along often. When it does, you sit back, listen and don't interrupt. And you keep filling their coffee cups so they will keep talking.

"Emmett Kelly was good," said the man eating eggs and sausage, "but he wasn't the best. The best clown ever was Otto Griebling."

"Yes," said the man eating eggs and bacon. "Clowns and other circus people didn't think Kelly was that great. But Kelly was a marvelous fellow and Griebling was a tough guy to like."

**THE MAN BEHIND** the sausage and eggs was Jimmy Cole of Florida. The man behind the bacon and eggs was David Murphy of Trenton Falls.

John Ringling, of Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Circus, was another guy easy to dislike, said Murphy and Cole, long time friends. They said Ringling bought circuses and then destroyed them to eliminate competition.

"Remember those beautiful circus wagons? I cried when he burned them," said Cole. "I hated him."

"Johnny loved money and power," said Murphy. "He was an easy man to hate."

**THERE MIGHT BE** circus people who disagree with Murphy and Cole, but they would listen to what the two had to say. Both men know the circus.

Cole, the 76-year-old owner of the Cole Circus, got his first circus job, selling tickets, in 1924. The circus has been his life ever since. He has gone with the circus from east coast to west coast and from Florida to Canada.

Murphy, who recently retired from his public relations job at Utica Psychiatric Center, was once a circus advance man and, in 1951-52, ringmaster for Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey.

Murphy's friendship with Cole goes back to the 1940s when he helped Cole put up his tent show. Murphy now acts as Cole's booking agent in Central New York.



**AND NOW, IN THE CENTER RING** — David Murphy, above, recently retired from his public relations job at Utica Psychiatric Center. But David Murphy, who was ringmaster in 1951-52 for Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Circus. For many years he was a circus advance man

**THE MEN WERE** eating breakfast at noon because there hadn't been time earlier. They were up before dawn to get to the Utica Memorial Auditorium by 7 a.m. to help get the circus set up for a 9 a.m. performance Wednesday which was watched by about 2,500 laughing, screaming and applauding children.

"That's music to my ears," said Cole.

Cole's circus, no relation to the Cole Brother's Circus, is not a big circus. It is a small, one ring, everybody-does-everything kind of circus. The ringmaster, for example, also does a juggling act, dresses up as a gorilla and runs through the audience, assists in the shows aerial act, and helps unload the trucks with the 20 or so others in the circus.

It's a quality show with talented performer who love what they are doing, but the "Greatest Show on Earth" it's not.

**MURPHY WOULD BE** the first to agree with that. Murphy was with the "Greatest Show on Earth" when Cecil B. De Mille was filming the movie of the same name. Murphy had a "microscopic" part in the movie, but his main duty was acting as a technical adviser. It gave him the chance to watch De Mille up close.

"De Mille," said Murphy, "was a tyrant."

An angry, yelling De Mille was a common sight, said Murphy. A box of gold watches, with De Mille's name inscribed on the back, was always on the movie set, Murphy said. At the end of the day's shooting, a watch would be given to anyone De Mille had racked over the coals.

Cole, who recalls the days when 8,000 and more people jammed under the Big Top of a circus he was working, said he foresaw problems for the circus years ago. Movies and especially television put a big dent in the circus business.



James M. Cole

**THAT'S WHAT PROMPTED** Cole to form a circus that wouldn't need big crowds to survive, a circus small enough that it could play in school gymnasiums.

"I figured that if the kids wouldn't come to the circus, I'd take the circus to the kids."

And that's what he has been doing for 44 years.

"What's the name of the big high school in Utica?" asked Cole.

"UFA," said Murphy.

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## Strange People

The Norman Brooks show "Strange People" is touring with the Billy Burr Fun-O-Rama show this summer. Later the show is expected to be with the Coleman Shows. They will return to the Burr organization late this year, closing at Topsfield, Mass.

Personnel with the "Strange People" show include: Wayne La Charite, manager, magic, fire; Brett Stewart, blockhead; Sabrina (Joan Leslie) and Wayne, blade box; Capt. Don Leslie, swords; Joe Oi Francesca, elephant skin boy; Joan and Wayne, electric chair; Bret Stewart, pincushion. Norman Brooks makes the opening and David King is the front talker.

## Circus Visit

by MATT WILTSHIRE, Jr.

On May 5th, I had the rare privilege of visiting Carson & Barnes Circus in Grapevine, Texas, where they played to a full house.

When I say rare, it is because after two seasons with the show, and only seeing the show five times as I was head Bill Poster. It was nice to be able to see them perform and know that I had paid to see the show and was helping a worthy cause, as this show was sponsored by the Grapevine Jaycees.

The show was great. The performers really did their job in the proper way of good showmanship. The animals all looked good. And above all, Dorey does not look as if he has aged a day since I went to work for him three years ago.

The tent in all of its magnificence looks as good today as it did to me when I saw it in Cleveland two years ago. Although seeing something new that was being added to the show as tear-down was going on, Bruno of Dallas, was there with a new type of ring curb. It was inflatable and was in the blue-yellow and orange colors of Carson & Barnes Circus. It looked great to me and Bruno said that the elephants could walk on it without damage.

Well, by now, the tent was down and the show must move on. Bidding goodbye to Gary, Barbara, Dorey and above all to Ted Bowman, I took my two friends back to Dallas to await another year before seeing my friends once again.

## LIFE'S A CIRCUS (Continued)

"No, the other one," said Cole  
 "Proctor," said Murphy  
 "That's the name," said Cole "I remember back in 1939 we took an elephant up the stairs at Proctor and into the gymnasium."  
 Murphy laughed. "What about that time back in Cleveland? We took the baby elephant into the newsroom of the Cleveland Plain Dealer. The elephant had diarrhea."  
 "It wasn't diarrhea," said Cole "The elevator ride up to the newsroom made him nervous."

**THE ELEPHANTS ARE** gone now as is the menagerie Cole once had. And he doesn't stay on the road as long as he once did. These days Cole limits his tours to three months, keeps his route within Pennsylvania and New York and performs in schools most of the time.

Everybody in the circus calls him Mr. Cole. Maybe because he's been in the business so long. Maybe because the performers in his show respect him so much. He has given breaks to a lot of performers over the years.

Cole remembers when he got his big break. It was 1928. The telegram arrived at his home in Penn Yan, N.Y. It was an offer to join Circus Beautiful, a circus that in its prime rivaled Ringling's.

Circus Beautiful toured the country by train. Its 50 white railroad cars were filled with more than 500 performers, laborers and administrators including Cole, the newly hired assistant treasurer.

"I got \$75 a week, a lower berth and meals."

**BUT WHEN HE** left Penn Yan he left behind his childhood sweetheart.

Cole logged thousands of miles worth of train and truck travel and hundreds of towns and two marriages in the years that followed. The first one ended in divorce. The second was a success.

She was a beautiful, 22-year-old acrobat. He was 60-year-old circus owner.

"She proposed. I told her no. I told her I was old enough to be her grandfather. She said, 'I don't care. I love you.' We got married."

The next seven years "were the best of my life," said Cole. "You have never seen a happier couple in your life."

But the beautiful acrobat had cancer. She died at 29. He was devastated. For many years, the only thing that kept Cole going was the circus, he said. He didn't care about much else.

Oh yes, remember that sweetheart Cole left back in Penn Yan? She married, but also had to cope with grief. Her husband died of cancer several years ago.

Cole stopped by to say hello to the widow last year. He walked into the office of the interior decorating business she operates in Penn Yan.

"We shook hands and then she hugged me and then I hugged her and then she kissed me and then I kissed her and that old spark of 50 years ago was still there."

Jimmy Cole and his childhood sweetheart were married five months ago.

His Florida home is up for sale, and he will move back home to Penn Yan.

As for the circus, Cole has no intention of stopping. "I love it too much."

