

BACK YARD

Volume V, Issue #90

April 30, 2000

Jane Beatty Kuperstock

By Roger Smith

The former widow of wild animal trainer and circus owner, Clyde Beatty, following a courageous battle with a lengthy illness, has died. She was 76.

Born Jane Lorraine Abel on March 9, 1924, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the daughter of Earl and Lillian Abel. Jane was raised in Texas and California, where she studied for a career in music.

Headlining as a singing star in the Empire Room of the Washington-Youree Hotel, in Shreveport, Jane met Clyde Beatty. After their July 31, 1951 wedding at the St. Gregory Hotel, in Bellingham, Washington, the new Mrs. Beatty choreographed, directed production numbers, and designed wardrobe for the Clyde Beatty Railroad Circus for the seasons 1952-1956. She was so credited onscreen for Beatty's 1954 Warner Bros. film, *Ring of Fear*. Their son, Clyde, Jr., was born in 1952. The fourteen-year marriage ended with Mr. Beatty's death of cancer, July 19, 1965.

Abelard-Schuman published Mrs. Beatty's juvenile book, *Davey's Adventures with the Clyde Beatty Railroad Circus*, ahead of schedule, as a tribute to Mr. Beatty, just prior to his death.

At a chance meeting at a Beverly Hills dinner party, Jane met Saul J. Kuperstock. They were married on November 23, 1975, and the union endured happily until her passing.

Mrs. Kuperstock is survived by her husband, Saul, of Florida; son, Clyde Beatty, Jr., of California; a grandson, and several nieces and nephews, in Texas. Within a year of her passing, she was preceded in death by her brother, Earl Abel, Jr., of San Antonio, Texas, and her mother, Lillian Curran, of California.

Jane Beatty Kuperstock died in Florida, on her 76th birthday, March 9, 2000. She is interred with Mr. Beatty and her mother and step-father, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Curran, at Forest Lawn, Hollywood Hills, Los Angeles, California. (Thank you, Roger, for letting us know.)

CHRISTMAS CARD - 1964



The Beattys

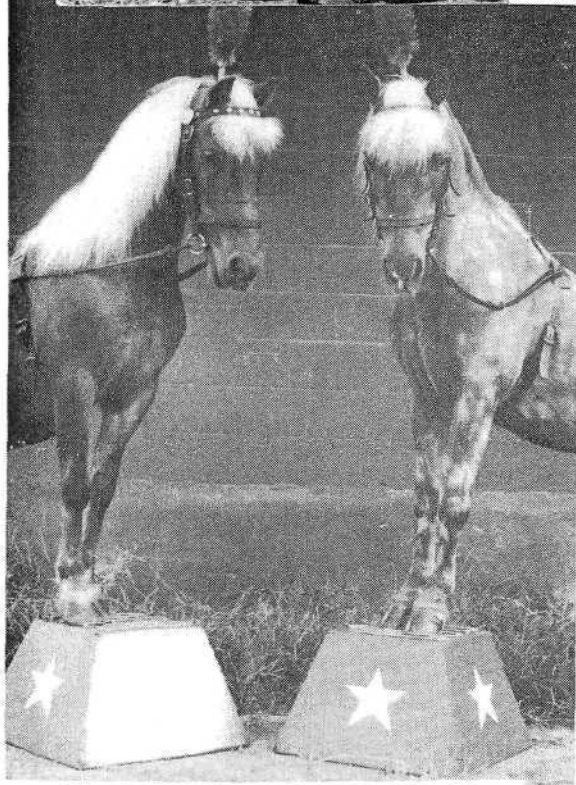
Clyde, Jane & Clyde, Jr.

The Madisons



Junglicland Thousand Oaks

JANE BEATTY in
1965



From The Rich Deptula Archives

ALOHALAND PONY CIRCUS
3027 Alapali Place
Honolulu, Hawaii 96815



SARASOTA 2000 CFA CONVENTION

By Cherie Valentine

What a great time I had in Sarasota! It was great meeting so many subscribers to Back Yard and visiting with a lot of retired performers and also had the pleasure of meeting a lot of current performers. Thanks to **Henry Bush** and his committee for arranging all the performers to take the time to visit with the Convention folks.

The Bull Room was busy with fans coming and going and a lot of visiting between the sellers! And buying among each other too. A special thanks to **Richard Via** for making my visit so special. What a pleasure talking to him and of course, I had to come home with a FEW elephant souvenirs that he had brought from Thailand! Wish **Kent Ghirard** could have come from Hawaii too!

Jimmy Ridenour opened the Bull Room every day by 7:45 a.m. and I anxiously awaited **Bill Strong** to come in to see what he had brought from home for ME to purchase! I came home with a lot of old 8x10s and old programs that he had for sale. It was a pleasure listening to his stories about folks he had worked with and the different circuses he had been on. I also got to visit with **Penny, Joanne and Trudy Wilson**. What memories these folks have!

Bobby Hakes also had tables with circus items for sale. A great treat to see him again and also visit with his lovely wife, **Phips**. Next to Bobby was **Billy Rodgers** and he always brought along his mother, who I believe, is 92 years young! He had a lot of new and old books, programs and jewelry. So, you can see, I had a great time just looking at everything these folks brought.

Next to him was **Kenny Dodd** and his marvelous collection of programs, photos and posters. It was good to see him again, as we worked together on the Beatty show. I purchased a nice collection of old photos from Kenny and also some programs. It is such a nice feeling to have friendships last thru the years! Even if folks don't write or keep in touch, the feelings are still there when you finally do get to meet. **Richard Whitmarsh** had a table full of his music and entertained us with samplings

all day long. What a nice treat! **Mary Jo Zerbini (Logan)** and her daughter **Solange** sold CFA t-shirts and mugs for **Charlotte McWilliams**. Solange was anticipating her new baby any day, so I hope to hear when she has it. It was so nice to see **Mary Jo** after all these years!

Neil Cockerline and **Herb Ueckert** had a great display of old posters, books and photos. I know I brought home several for **Steve Gossard**! It was certainly amazing to see all this old circus memorabilia in one room! **Clark Beurten** had a great collection of items to sell and quite a few circus ties.

Helen Bradley, I believe, sold the most with a lot of circus models. **Ward Hall** also had tables with programs, photos, books and a lot of stories to tell. It was just fun to wander from table to table, listening to the folks talk about their experiences.

In the center of the room, **Rob Houston** had a wild animal cage model of **Junior Ruffin's, Prince Bogino** fame. And it was great to listen to Rob and Junior talk about "Wild Animal Subjugators of African Descent" at the Seminar. Junior has so many great memories and I hope he will write some of them for us! I was lucky enough to listen to him talk in the Bull Room after his regular seminar session. Hopefully, I will have some of those stories in the next issue.

Jimmy Ridenour was busy with his videos and it was great just having him in the room. Although he wasn't feeling well, he still brightened up the room. The one thing missing from the Bull Room this year was his fantastic dog, **Rube**! She was on vacation at a neighbors while Jimmy was helping out with the Convention. As many of you know, she was the "hit" of the Cleveland Convention Bull Room! Thanks to Jimmy for all the preparation he did to make the Bull Room a success. Even if we didn't sell a lot of items, we sure had a great time visiting with each other and that, to me, is very important. Even if folks don't buy that program or photo, it might bring back a memory for them of their circus days and that is the important thing!

Passing Of Our Circus Friends

***Darrell F. Davis**, 93, passed away March 24 in Superior, Nebraska. He was born September 26, 1907, in Minneapolis, Kansas. He was called "Mr. Circus" or "The World's Oldest Balloon Artist." Darrell was a subscriber to Back Yard and I will miss his notes. He always said how much he enjoyed Back Yard and would anxiously await each issue. Rest in peace, my friend.

***Leona Mascioli**, 78, mother of Circus Fans Past President, **Gene Mascioli**, passed away March 29 at her home in Lemoyne, Pa. She was not an official Circus Fan member but was a circus fan. In fact, she was the first person to take Gene to the Circus. Leona enjoyed accompanying Gene to the Circus and Circus Fans events. The elephants and horses were her favorite animals and the aerial ballet and clowns were her favorite acts. Leona is survived by her husband, three sons and two grandchildren and one remaining brother out of 7 brothers and sisters.

***Dorothy Yurkiewicz**, 81, a former rodeo daredevil and stunt rider who turned in her spurs to become a foster mother, died March 12. She performed as Dot Cole in the 30s and 40s after running off with her rodeo cowboy lover at age 15. She rode Brahman bulls, gave sharpshooting demonstrations and had knives thrown at her.

She married Ted Cole at 16, touring with the Milt Hinkle Texas Rangers Rodeo and Sons of the Pioneers and Roy Rogers rodeo companies. She made her mark as the first woman to ride a Brahman bull in a national rodeo. Performing with her husband, she would be tied to a rotating wheel while he threw knives at her. But she always insisted that he have a couple of drinks first, her daughter, Lisa said. "They were afraid that if he were sober, he'd try too hard and he would miss."

Twice married, she had 5 children and raised 32 foster children after moving to Union Beach. She taught her children rope tricks. Stricken by liver problems and diabetes, which blinded her in her later years, she remained active in community organizations. (Thanks to Al House for this article)

***Eliane Knie**, 84, was the 5th generation of her family to appear in their renowned Swiss touring circus. Her father, Eugene Knie and his 4 brothers were descendants of highwire walkers and rope dancers from Austria.

Eliane and her 2 cousins, Fredy and Rolf, effectively ran the performing side of the circus from their teenage years while Eugene oversaw administrative matters.

Eliane was born in Switzerland, August 12, 1915. By 15, she was partnering Charlie Hanke in an elegant pas-de-deux riding act. She learnt her "Jeux Romains" riding act from Alfred Smith and by 1933, she had teamed up with Fredy for a tandem number as well as appearing in the family's tightwire act. During the 40s, Eliane concentrated on perfecting her solo riding act and in 1942, she met a Romanian slackwire juggler, Jacky Lupescu. Although they never married, they stayed together for life and in 1947, they had a son, Charles, who went on to set up his own circus in Germany.

In 1959, Eliane & Jacky had their own show in Switzerland, City Circus. She also presented 9 polar bears. In 1949, they were on the Bertram Mills Circus. She is survived by Jacky and their son.

***Nello Bario**, 81, died in Paris. He was a member of a celebrated Italian family of clowns. He was born in Sweden, 1918, the eldest son of Mancico Meschi, known as Bario. His mother was Eva Magrini, daughter of a celebrated acrobat, Giovanni Magrini. Nello was groomed to join Dario (his uncle) & Bario with brother, Freddy and sister, Tosca.

Nello made his farewell to the circus in Fellini's Les Clowns. He also appeared at the Paris Cirque Medrano and Cirque d'Hiver. Freddy's wife, Henny, and her children still have the Bario Show. Nello Bario never married.

***Anne Mongador**, who has died at 91, married into the most celebrated family of jugglers in Europe and came to excel at the art herself in both the circus and the music hall. She was born in Liverpool in 1908. Her mother had been a member of the first Tiller Girls and encouraged Anne to follow her into showbusiness. In 1926, she was one of the "Bathing Belles" of the water spectacular at Blackpool Tower Circus. She married Georges Chambeyron in 1927. After the war, they performed with their daughter, Ninette. After Georges retired, Anne continued to perform with Ninette until the early 70s. He died in 1959. For the next 40 years, Anne devoted much time to the Lady Ratlings, a showbusiness charity.

She was attached to both Britain & her adopted country, France. "All you have to do is to think English and act French and there you will have the summit of civilization."

RINGLING RED: Fayetteville, NC-5/3-7; Dayton-5/11-14; Columbus-5/17-21; Peoria, IL-5/24-28; Toledo-5/31-6/4; Memphis-6/9-11; Little Rock-6/14-18; Lafayette, LA-6/22-25; San Antonio-6/28-7/2; Houston-7/14-23

RINGLING BLUE: New Haven-5/3-7; Hartford-5/10-14; Hersey, PA-5/17-21; Springfield, MA-5/24-25; Albany, NY-5/27-29; Wilkes-Barre, PA-5/31-6/4; Lexington, KY-6/8-11; Austin, TX-6/15-18; Phoenix-6/22-7/2; Las Vegas-7/5-9; Oakland, CA-8/16-20; San Jose-8/23-27; San Francisco-8/30-9/4

BIG APPLE CIRCUS: Boston-Fan Pier: thru 5/7; Queens, NY-Cunningham Park: 5/11-5/21; Brookville, NY-Long Island Univ.: 5/26-6/4; Chicago-Arlington Intl: 6/10-25; Charlestown, RI-7/2-10; Hanover, NH-7/13-18

Big Apple OOPS!: Wichita-5/4-6; Boise, ID-5/9-10; Medford, OR-5/14

Barnum's Kaleidoscope: Cleveland-Nautica Complex-5/13-6/11.

Carson & Barnes: Ponca City, OK-4/30; Winfield, KS-5/1; Haysville-5/2; Hutchinson-5/3; Great Bend-5/4; Lyons-5/5; Salina-5/6; Abeline-5/7; Emporia-5/8; Chanute-5/9; Parsons-5/10; Pittsburg-5/11; Ft. Scott-5/12

Sterling-Reid Circus: Pueblo, CO-4/29-30; Colorado Springs-5/1-2; Brighton-5/3-4; Golden-5/5-7

UniverSoul Circus: Cleveland: 5/24-28; Columbus: 5/31-6/4; Cincinnati: 6/7-11; Indianapolis: 6/12-16

Circus World Museum: Opens May 6-Baraboo, WI

Circus Hollywood-Atlanta, GA: 5/5-14-Yaarab Shrine

Tarzan Zerbini Circus-Wilmington, MA: 5/15-21

Hamid Circus Royale-Springfield, MA: 5/4-7

Hubler Circus: Berea, OH-6/17

UniverSoul Circus: North Randall, OH-5/24-28; Columbus-5/31-6/4; Cincinnati-6/7-11

Roberts Bros: East Liverpool, OH-6/1

Circus Hall of Fame Museum-Peru, IN-Opens: May 1 June 24-Circus Opening Day

Circus City Festival Opens-Peru, IN-7/15; Circus Parade-7/22

Wenatchee Youth Circus: Lake Sammamish, WA-6/3-4; Fairfield-6/10; Marysville-6/17-18; Union Gap-6/24; Liberty Lake-7/1; Wenatchee-7/3-4; Orcas Island-7/8-9; Edmonds-7/11-12; Roche Harbor-7/14-16; Sequim-7/22-23; Renton-7/26; Moses Lake-7/29; Vancouver-8/4-13; Shoreline-8/20; Federal Way-8/26-27; Metaline Falls-9/2-3; Chelan County Fair-9/6-7

BACK YARD

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E-mail: cdvalen@ilstu.edu. Subscription rates are \$30.00 per year, for 24 issues, within the USA. Advertising rates, payable in advance, with your copy, are: Full page \$30; Half page \$15; Quarter Page \$10; 1/8 page \$5. "The Fox," is written by Jenny Wallenda. Other material is written by Cherie Valentine, unless otherwise identified as to author. Comments by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the publisher. Back Yard is a pro-circus, pro-animal publication, which supports the use of animals which are legally held and properly cared for, in the American circus.

Bentley Bros. Circus: Phoenix, AZ-4/27-30; Glendale-5/3-7; Chandler-5/8-10; Phoenix-5/11-14

***Jack Le White** was the stage name of **Albert Whiteley**. He passed away February 11 in England after a long career as a foot juggler, violinist, acrobat and music hall artiste.

His father Henry, known as Antipodean Marvel, a foot juggler was a descendent of Old Crafty, a tumbler who could juggle a 60 lb. table with his feet. Albert's mother, Leonora, was a trapeze and equestrian artist in circuses from the age of 8.

In later life, Albert found work in television from The Avengers to Crossroads. Among the advertisements in which he appeared was one for Armour Star Corned Beef, in which, dressed as a clown, he dived through a hoop and came up with a tin of corned beef as he sang a jingle. He published an autobiography, *Rings and Curtains*, which he wrote with Peter Ford, in 1992.

Jim Foster, on the way home from Sarasota, saw **Roberts Bros.** arrows at Emporia, VA and stopped to deliver clown shoes to **Cheeko** the clown, **Brent DeWitt**. Now, that is a full week of circus!

News From Carson & Barnes Circus

The U.S. Embassy refused to give their new 14 person Romanian troupe in Bucharest their visas, even though all paper work was in order. Bill Biggerstaff and Jim Swafford visited on their way to see other shows. (We missed you both in Sarasota!)

Colleen & Ron Stewart stopped by for a visit. (Glad to meet you both in Sarasota!) The cookhouse has been excellent, thanks to the training by Hazel Frazier. Errol Maguire's mother, Mary, 92 years young, passed away. Our prayers are with him.

There is a new hat stand on the midway, so be sure to visit it. Baby Jennie is working center ring and she really enjoys performing, thanks to her friend, Tim Frisco. "We have recently acquired videos of D.R. Miller's funeral. We said we would let you know when we received the videos and how you might get your copy. We would like to request that you make a donation to the Endangered Ark Foundation.

The Foundation was established to raise funds to acquire property, facilities and endangered animals and to breed and protect these animals, such as elephants and tigers, etc. This was a dream of D.R. and Isla Miller's. Any donation of \$25 or more will receive a free copy of the video. With your contribution, we can make the Endangered Ark Foundation a success and D.R. and Isla's dream a reality. Please make your check payable to: Endangered Ark Foundation, PO Box 306, Hugo, OK 74743."

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News From Our Circus Friends

*Earl Krauzer writes "The Shrine Circus in Manchester, NH had a full house on opening night with the Shrine Band parading (4/6). The show included a terrific flying act; 3 elephants; a 7-year-old girl, with great stage presence, doing hula hoops; single traps by a Canadian girl, Ruby, was outstanding. Lots of applause from the audience. Of course, Grandma (Barry Lubin) was fantastic as ever and was a big hit with the crowd. The bear act received a lot of Oohs and Aahs as did the dog act.

No butchers were allowed to sell during the show. The Band was better than ever. There is new lighting in the Coliseum. Wayne McCary was visible throughout the performance, doing what the producer should do. It is a one-ring show and a darned good one. It was one of the best Shrine shows that Wayne has ever produced." (It was great seeing Earl & his lovely wife, Bernice, in Sarasota!)

*Ray Govus writes "I saw the Beatty-Cole Circus this week in Murrells Inlet, SC. Everyone we talked to said business was very good-and it was! We attended the matinee on the last day of the 3-day stand and just about all seats were full!

And concession sales looked great-the guy sitting in front of me ate 4 hot dogs! Saw many families leaving with armloads of plastic giraffes, whales, etc. Thought the opening, a patriotic song concert by singing Ringmaster, Jimmy James, and Ringmistress, Bonnie Bale, overly long. Being a long time circus traditionalist-saw my first circus in 1928 (the great Sparks Circus) and prefer traditional Spec or walkaround!

Opening act, Susan Lacey and the Hawthorne tigers was very well received. Glad to see their traveling cages were much larger, which should help appease the animal activists!

Contrary to rumors, they still have elephants, 4 down from 6 last year. The act was very well received and the elephant ride business was great. Was good to see Fred Logan back with the bulls and he said he was happy to be back. While it was obvious to someone who has seen this show so many times-since 1956 when Clyde Beatty was still active-that there was much downsizing-it has been done very tastefully with no reduction in the quality of the acts. The Russian Air Force has to be one of the best flying acts ever! The Dukovis Troupe was a smash! All other acts well received. Heard many people say it was the best circus they ever saw! Hope the rest of the tour goes as well.

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Gee Gee Engesser said the young lady on the left, in the cover photo of Back Yard 3/31-is her! And the other lady on the right is Maudie Moore!

Rescued Circus Elephant in Zoo Breeding

Breakthrough * February 6

An elephant rescued 2 years ago from **Mary Chipperfield's Circus** will help to pave the way for its wild cousins to fill Western zoos with their offspring by artificial insemination.

Zoologists are visiting the **Colchester Zoo** to conduct tests on **Tembo**, a 17-year-old African elephant who should become a father in Europe's first elephant artificial insemination program. His mate, **Sabi**, in Vienna Zoo, has proven five months pregnant. The ultrasound picture of the calf is about six inches long.

Anthony Tropeano, the curator of Colchester Zoo said, "The success of the artificial insemination is the added bonus to getting him into a decent environment. It's the icing on the cake...it would be the cherry on top if he managed to sire a baby naturally with one of our cows. He has already mated with them. If one of them is pregnant, Tembo will father the first elephant to be born at the Zoo."

News From the Ringling Museum

The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art is offering a special opportunity for Venice residents to come and experience the next "Center Ring Talk" on May 17 from 11:30-1:30 in the Wagon Room at the **Museum of the Circus**. For \$16.50, the Venice Senior Friendship Center will provide a round-trip bus tour that includes the "Center Ring Talk," two docent-led tours to the Ringling Museum and lunch. Please call **Maureen Zaremba** at 941-359-5717 by May 12 for more information. For those not taking the special Bus Trip from Venice, "Center Ring Talks" are included with regular Museum admission price.

The speaker this month is **Jeanette Williams**, international circus talent agent. Jeanette was born into the **Williams Family Circus**, a European circus whose fame is world-renowned. She books circus acts all over the globe and will give us an exciting glimpse into circus "Show Biz" and what

it takes to "make it" under the Big Top.

The Ringling Museum presented The Community Foundation of Sarasota County with an award for its \$18,500 sponsorship of the Museum's Season 2000 programs. At a *Circus Center Ring Talk* given by Steven Smith, former Dean of Clown College, the Museum of the Circus Curator, Deborah Walk, presented Wendy Hopkins, Program Officer of The Community Foundation, with a gift acknowledging their grant.

The Foundation funds are being used during Season 2000 for educational programs for the ongoing exhibition, *Boys From Baraboo to Big Top Bosses: History of the Ringling Circus 1884-1964*. The programs are comprised of the popular monthly *Circus Center Ring Talks* series, the *Windjammers Circus Band Concert* and the upcoming *Education Installation Project* at the Museum of the Circus, set for July 1.

Stewart Steans, President and CEO of The Community Foundation said, "We are delighted to be supporters of the educational programs for this exhibition because *Boys From Baraboo* is what John Ringling and his legacy to this community is all about." For more information on becoming a corporate or foundation sponsor of the Ringling Museum of Art, please call Paula Parrish, Manager for Institutional Giving at 941-359-5714.

***The Cleveland Zoo** has a new male Siberian tiger, **Tatja**, from the **Henry Vilas Zoo** in Wisconsin. He is there on the recommendation of the Species Survival Plan Tiger committee to pair with the Zoos three-year-old female, **Gaia**. Also, a male snow leopard arrived on March 31 from the **Houston Zoo**. He will be paired with a female in the Primate, Cat and Aquatics building. On June 8 the Cleveland Zoo will open their new **Australian Adventure** featuring kangaroos, wallabies and walleroos on an 8-acre exhibit.

If anyone has clear photos from the Sarasota Convention, please send a copy along and I will print them in upcoming issues of Back Yard!

DUNDAS HOBBYFEST 2000

By Gary Thomson

Saturday, April 15, 2000

Several members of the Martin Downs CMB Ring #18 participated in the Dundas Hobbyfest 2000 held this year in St. Paul's United Church at Cross and Park Streets in Dundas, Ontario. It is a very picturesque town nestled in the Dundas Valley just west of Hamilton. St. Paul's Church is a very large cathedral like stone church well over a hundred years old. The complete facility includes a Christian education building making the entire complex a group of buildings with some 35,000 square feet available. The show itself takes up about 12,000 square feet with plenty of room for expansion.

The club does not usually participate in one-day shows but several members decided to do this one since it was the first of the season and in a new area. We were set up in the gymnasium with 10 tables available to us. Those attending the show were: Jim Chapman of St. Thomas with his ¼" "Chapman Bros. Circus" and HO "Sanger Bros. Circus", Ray and Isabelle Bottoms of Bolton with there HO "Ray Belle Amusements" carnival, Paul and Grace Pattison of Orangeville with their HO Sparks Circus and Gary Thomson of Lynden with his ¼" "Tom L. Stephens Circus", a few ½" models and a one-table display of Corgi "Chipperfields Circus". Gary Thomson also brought 50 circus posters, which covered the wall at one end of the gym. The doors opened for exhibitors at 7:00 am and everyone was able to set up well before the show started at 10:00 am.

Members of St. Paul's church, who participate in a model railroad club there, run this show. It was the men that used the church kitchen to cater the show. I have not had a better breakfast at any show that I have attended. They know how to run a kitchen. The show also included model trains of all scales, remote control boats with a 16'x36' specially built pond, remote control airplanes and wargaming, as well as a number of vendors. The show had a relaxed and very hospitable atmosphere and everyone enjoyed the day. We were also able to sign up a new member so the day was very worthwhile. The show management is considering the possibility of making it a two-day event next year. If that is the case we will be able to have the entire 5,000 square foot gym which would allow us to increase our display to 30-40 tables. Circus posters could be displayed on all walls to make a very nice display. We should know if this will be done by mid-summer and can then make further plans.

Friends Of The Circus By Wayne Bolz

Friends of the Circus Club held their 3rd birthday party meeting April 9 with President **Dick** (the fisherman) **Maas** calling the group of 45 together. Guest speaker was **Bob Harker**, director of the Sheboygan County Historical Society who talked about museum and circus displays there. A question and answer period followed along with a delicious dinner.

Club officers elected were: **Jim Roberts**, President; **Betty DeYoung**, Vice-president; **Bonnie Wassell**, Secretary; **Cindy Roberts**, Treasurer and **Kathy Schoening**, Newsletter. The group is planning a trip to Circus World Museum in Baraboo and also to visit as many of the 10 circuses scheduled to appear in Wisconsin this year.

Kurt & Heidi's Casady's Critters Petting Zoo and pony rides have most of the weekend booked for the summer with a few dates still open & available. They had been on the road for 16 years as the Aerial Casadys with shows like Roberts Bros., Kelly-Miller and Franzen and remain partially in show business with their new operation under new tents. Their headquarters is Pleasant Valley Farms, near Cascade, phone number 920-528-7711. We sure like each issue of Back Yard." (Thanks, Wayne. Always appreciate hearing from my readers.)

***Regis Amend** reports things are moving forward for **Circus Mania 2000**. The posters are printed the same as the King Bros. posters of the 50s. The speaker will be "**Diamond**" **Jim Parker**. The Gathering Program will be called "Route Book." It will be held in Uniontown, PA Mall September 21-23. A dinner, breakfast and ladies luncheon will be held. Plans call for many displays, vendors, circus videos, snacks and the ever present Bull Room. The event is open to Circus Model Builders as well as the Circus Fans, Circus Historical Society and the Carnival Historical and Model Builders. For more information contact Rege Amend, 794 Morgantown Rd., Uniontown, PA 15401, Jerry Schaub, 1722 Leolyn St., Pittsburgh, PA 15210 or Bob Foster, 18 Lemon St., Uniontown, PA 15401. Visit the CMB web site at www.circusmodelbuilders.com. Rege remembers **Mayme Ward** and said the wardrobe truck on **Mills Bros. Circus** had "Button Box" lettered by the door! We are over the half way mark for Mayme Ward's grave marker, so please send in what you can to help out. Cherie Valentine, 1522 Clinton Blvd, Bloomington, IL 61701. Phone 309-828-0737. Thanks to everyone that has donated so far!

News From Our Circus Friends

Gary Thomson sent in this: **Zurich's Zoo** will broadcast an elephant birth on the Internet when Ceyla-Himali calves next month, the Zoo said 4/18. 2 cameras will carry pictures of the event, which the Zoo is calling an Internet premier. Because the exact date is uncertain, the Zoo will start carrying pictures soon on its Website: www.zoo.ch. Those who don't want to miss the event can leave an e-mail address or phone number where they can be contacted when the birth is getting under way. The Zoo said it would use publicity surrounding the birth to draw attention to the plight of Asian elephants, whose numbers are sinking from the current figure of between 40,000 to 50,000 as people increasingly encroach on their habitat.

***Circus Arts & Acrobatics, Inc.** is pleased to announce the release of our own line of Flying Trapeze Rigs for business and personal use. We sell not just a Flying Trapeze Rig, but a Complete Flying Trapeze Package. Our experienced riggers and instructors will travel to your facility to install the rig and give your employees and coaches a 3-day instruction course on equipment maintenance and basic trapeze safety. We will teach you how to conduct daily inspections on components including cables, carabiners, net, poles, ladders and other safety components involved with this piece of equipment. We will also advise you on maintenance schedules and provide technical support whenever your staff needs it. In addition, we offer continuing education courses and seminars from world-class instructors along with handbooks and instruction manuals on this new and innovative form of recreation and fitness. For more information, please contact our customer service dept. at: info@circusartsinc.com or toll free at 877-Circus.

***Culpepper & Merriweather Circus:** Yucca Valley, CA: A circus elephant escaped from its pen and wandered 3 blocks, prompting frantic calls from residents before handlers caught up with the elephant, April 20. A circus ticket taker was stepped on by the elephant and may have suffered

a broken hip. After the capture, 3 circus horses got loose but were quickly returned without incident.

***Vostok Circus**-Sao Paulo, Brazil, April 10: 5 circus lions devoured a 6 year-old boy after one snatched him from his father's hand and pulled him into the cage. The circus was performing in Recife, 1600 miles northeast of Sao Paulo. 4 other lions then attack the boy. Four of the five were shot by police. The circus had violated safety rules by allowing the public so close to the cages. (Thanks to Earl Krauzer for sending this.)

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Al Dawley wrote that he didn't know the CFA Convention was being held in Sarasota AND he lives there! He said he would have liked to have come by to see all the people at the Convention. I wish the paper would have covered the week-long event and more former performers might have stopped by. At least, the Holiday Inn could have had their sign out front mention the fact that we were there! Maybe they would have seen it. Al said it was the best kept secret in Sarasota!!

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Kelly Miller Circus will be in Sullivan, Indiana May 2 and Paris, Illinois May 3. **Carson & Barnes Circus** will be in Alton, IL May 26 & 27; Litchfield, May 28 and Charleston May 29. **The Circus Model Builders** will hold their show in Arcola, Illinois May 19-20. The **Shrine Circus** will be in Peoria, Illinois at the Expo Gardens, June 8-11. The **St. Louis Shrine Circus** will be at the Kiel Center June 22-25. Unfortunately, I missed **Circus Valentine** in Springfield, Illinois on April 13. Sure would have liked to have seen my cousin, **Raymond!** Thanks to the **Byrd Family Tent** newsletter for these dates.

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***The daughter of Mary Chipperfield** has received a license to keep wild animals at the family farm. The decision to grant the license to **Suzanne Cawley** has been fiercely criticized by animal rights groups in England. The Test Valley borough council received 4,000 letters objecting to the license but said there were no legal grounds not to grant it.

The Frisco Family

By Bobby Gibbs

The year 2000 finds a family of elephant trainers, all young, running a large percentage of the elephant acts in the circus today. The old man of the family, Joe Frisco, Sr., operates a large petting zoo on the major fair circuit and has been a major name in the elephant world for quite some time, both as circus acts and zoo director, from running the Elephant Department at the San Antonio Zoo to Peoria, Illinois.

He is the father of three sons who all followed in his footsteps and have made quite a name for themselves. Joe Frisco, Jr. was in charge of the George Carden elephant herd of 16 including a male ("Joe"). He now presents elephants on the Sterling-Reid Circus tent show. Another son, Tim Frisco, former manager of the Great American Circus, is now superintendent of all the vast Carson & Barnes elephant herd and breeding farm.

He is with the show and has the captivity-born baby female Asian in center ring besides leasing other elephants out to various other circuses. The third son, Terry Frisco, presents one of America's top three-act of African females at various Shrine dates, etc. across the U.S.

So you can see the elephant world has all 4 of the Frisco Family involved and in control. All are first class in their treatment of the animals under their charge. Father Joe can be very proud of his three sons now on the road showing and caring for America's elephants.

A Tribute to D. R. Miller

By Bro. J. Francis Dolphin, M.M.

"The circus is addictive. Some people have called it a sickness. Henry Ringling North called the circus "a jealous wench." Despite the long hours, the wear and tear on your body and on your equipment, the stress of mechanical breakdowns-despite any number of other things that can happen when you travel continually for 34 weeks-if you like the life-style, it is hard to imagine that there is any other way to live."

These words are taken from the introduction of the 1999

Official Route Book of the Carson & Barnes Circus. On the cover is the late D.R. Miller, who founded the great Carson & Barnes Circus in 1937 which has become the world's largest under the Big Top in its 63 years old history. There are many tributes and stories about D.R. Miller and his wife, Isla Miller.

I can recall many years ago collecting the Ringling route books at the end of the season. Today, sad to say, I believe that Carson & Barnes is the only circus that puts out a route book with more than a hundred pages of colour photos as well as a journal of what happened each day as they travel from one town to another and who had visited the show that day. To my surprise, I saw my name as well as my fellow Maryknoll priest, Fr. Paul Sykora, were included as we visited the show just after the sad death of D.R. Miller on September 10th in Ft. Morgan, Colorado, a couple of days after Mr. Miller's death in McCook, Nebraska.

Besides the day to day journal, the circus gives you an account of "24 hours with Carson & Barnes Circus" beginning at 5 in the morning until 5 the next morning. Also, there is an account of Animals on tour and Vehicle Inventory. Also, all the Performers and Personnel of this great circus. As well as the program of the 1999 edition. This route book of the Carson & Barnes Circus is a collectors item. Special thanks goes to L. Sr. Jo Byrne, John Moss, who helped review portions of the daily commentary. Also to Quarter and Mary Cooper, Rich Deptula, Jennifer Edgerton, Beverly Royal and Lane Talbert, who shared photographs to use in the Route Book. Thanks also to Jim Foster, editor of White Tops, who gave permission to reproduce the aerial photo of the Carson & Barnes Circus which appeared in the May/June 1999 issue of the White Tops. Thanks to Bill Biggerstaff and the staff of Graphics 2000 for their advice and assistance. Also to Marsha Moore in Hugo and the Executive and Business Staff-Geary Byrd, Barbara Byrd, Traci Byrd Cavillini, Kristin Byrd Parra, Errol T. Maguire and to everyone on the show as well as circus fans who have contributed to this fine issue in tribute to D.R. Miller. You can get the Carson & Barnes 1999 Route Book by writing its Winter Quarters, PO Box J, Hugo, OK 74743. The circus website is: www.carsonbarnescircus.com which gives you the prices of circus items. The circus now is in Texas and will be heading East toward the New England states in late June. Brother J. Francis Dolphin, M.M., Maryknoll Missioners, 4460 Federal Blvd, Denver, CO 80211(You can e-mail him at: jfrancisdolphin@juno.com)

A PAWS FROM MOZART

By Mozart Valentine

MEOW everyone, welcome back to my column. Sure was happy when Mom got back from the CFA Convention in Sarasota! Wish I could have been with her when she went to visit Linda & Ellian Rosaire! Mom got to see a brand new baby colt and 2 baby llamas along with horses, ponies, goats, Neubian goats, dogs, birds and donkeys! Kay was already on the road or Mom could have seen some of my ancestors!

Mom stopped by to visit Mary Jane Miller at her trailer supply business and got to play with her cat, Amber, which looks a lot like the Back Yard Associate Editor, Wolfgang, my brother, except Amber has gold running thru her coat. Mom had a very nice visit with Mary Jane and Amber!

Mom also stopped by to see Rosie and Fay Alexander. Their dog, part Rotweiler and part Doberman, had passed away only 3 days before. Mom said from their pictures, it was a very beautiful dog. I hope they get another one to take his place.

When Mom went to the Main St. Bookstore, there was a cat lying on a bench at the entrance and another one upstairs, lying under a table on top of a stack of books. Of course, Mom had to pet them.

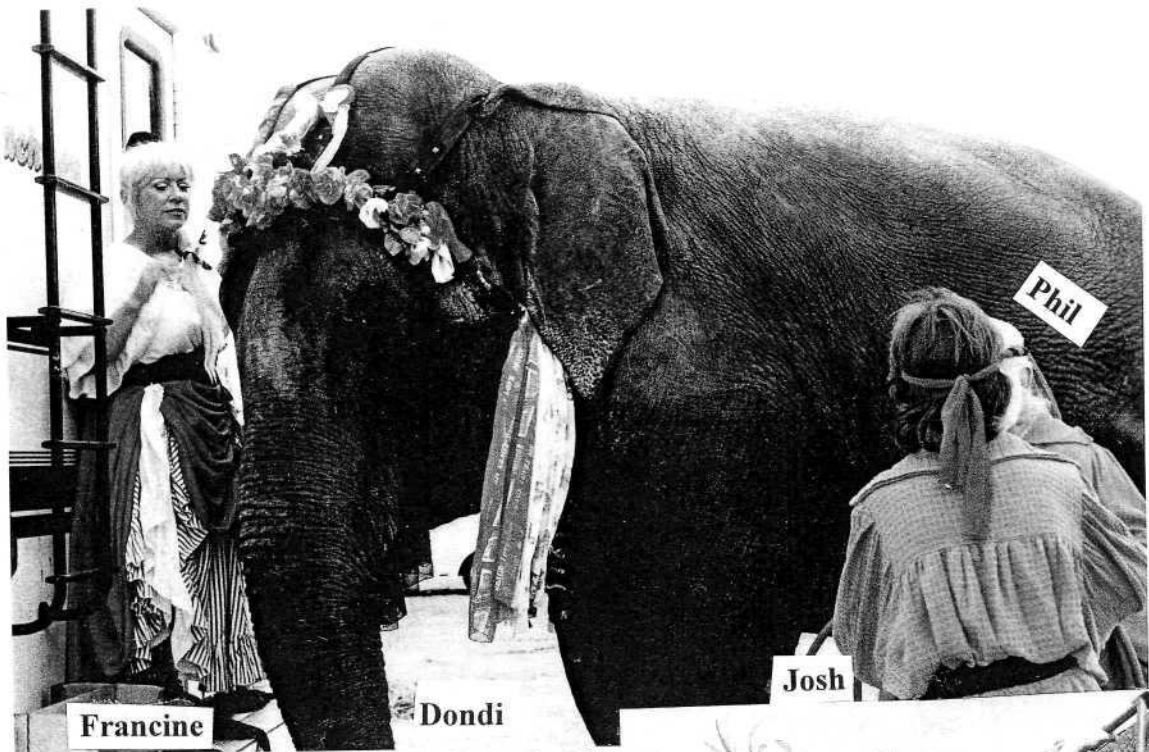
Mom will write in the next issue about the memories of Junior Ruffin, Prince Bogino of Hoxie fame. He has a lot of experience with my feline ancestors! Sue Lenz, from the Ringling show, spoke at the Ladies Luncheon about her life with chimps. Mom taped her talk and that will be in the next issue. Boy, Mom was sure busy in Sarasota! She also talked with Tammy Wallenda and James Cole and saw pictures of Tammy's new cats—the big kind! Tammy will have a new act at Jungleground, near Kissimmee. Hopefully, we will get an update and photos to share with you.

Mom stopped by Jenny Wallenda's home and got to play with her 4 all black Pomeranians and a black lab puppy mix. Say, that's my kind of household, since I am all black too! Mom brought

home a photo that James Cole took of the cat that lives at the Showfolks Club. I will make sure Mom puts that picture in Back Yard! Mom went to see the Hanneford Shrine Circus in Sarasota and saw Terry & Joe Frisco, Sr. and their elephants. Also, Phil & Francine were there with Dondi and their son, Joshua, has really grown! He is 14 now. Also with the show was Brian Franzen and his elephants. Mom said they didn't have a cat act, but had a great dog act! And Ian Garden was there with his liberty horse act.

At the Entertainment night at the Convention, Tina Storey performed with her Pomeranians and Mom went outside to visit with Tina and her husband, John. Mom said she got a lot of kisses from the dogs! I'm sure Mom will remember more to tell me for the next issue, so stay tuned!

I do have a sad press release to tell you about. "The Gorilla Foundation, home of the world renowned gorilla sign language project, regrets to announce the death of our dear friend, Michael, the gorilla, on April 19th. Michael, 27, was born in the Camerron, West Africa and came to the Foundation in 1976. He had been cared for, taught by, and teacher to Dr. Francine "Penny" Patterson, Dr. Ronald Cohn and the staff of the Foundation since her was three and a half years old. Michael was one of only 2 gorillas in the world to have learned a human language. He mastered well over 500 signs in American Sign Language and understood spoken English as well. In addition to his language abilities, Michael was a talented and prolific painter and a lover of classical music. He is survived by his lifelong friend, Koko and his companion, Ndume. Dr. Patterson said of Michael's passing, "We are deeply saddened by the loss of our dear friend Michael. He has been an inspiration to us all. He had a great facility with gestural communication and was a talented artist. His work has been displayed in galleries around the country. He was our group's silverback and we will miss his strong presence a great deal." At 10:45 a.m., gorilla caregiver Megan Dunn saw Michael collapse onto his back in his outdoor play area. Despite valiant efforts of Dr. Patterson & staff, Michael passed away at his home in Woodside, CA. There will be more CFA Convention reporting in the next issue. Mom has been overwhelmed with articles and is still sorting out notes! **MEOW for now, Mozart.**



Francine

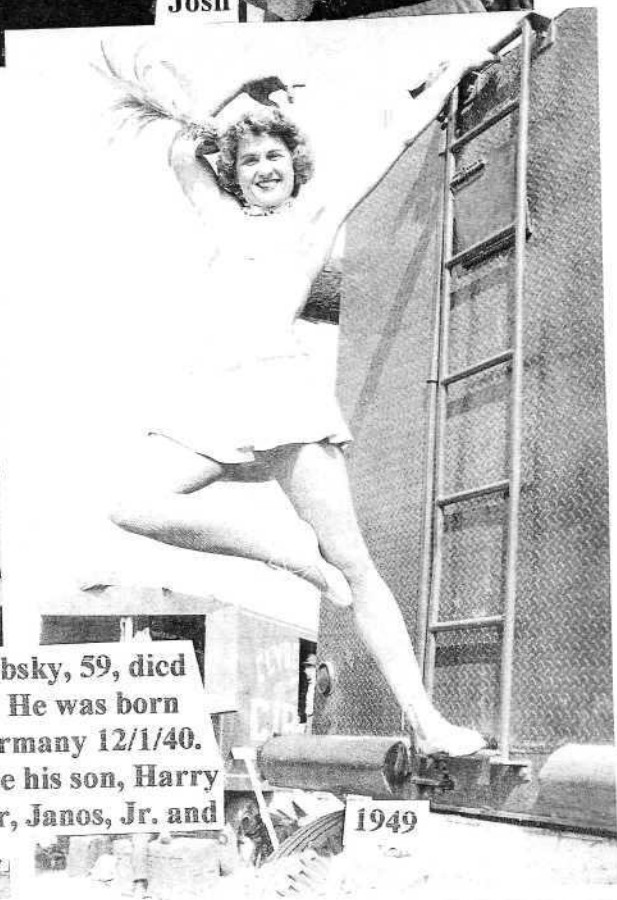
Dondi

Josh

Phil



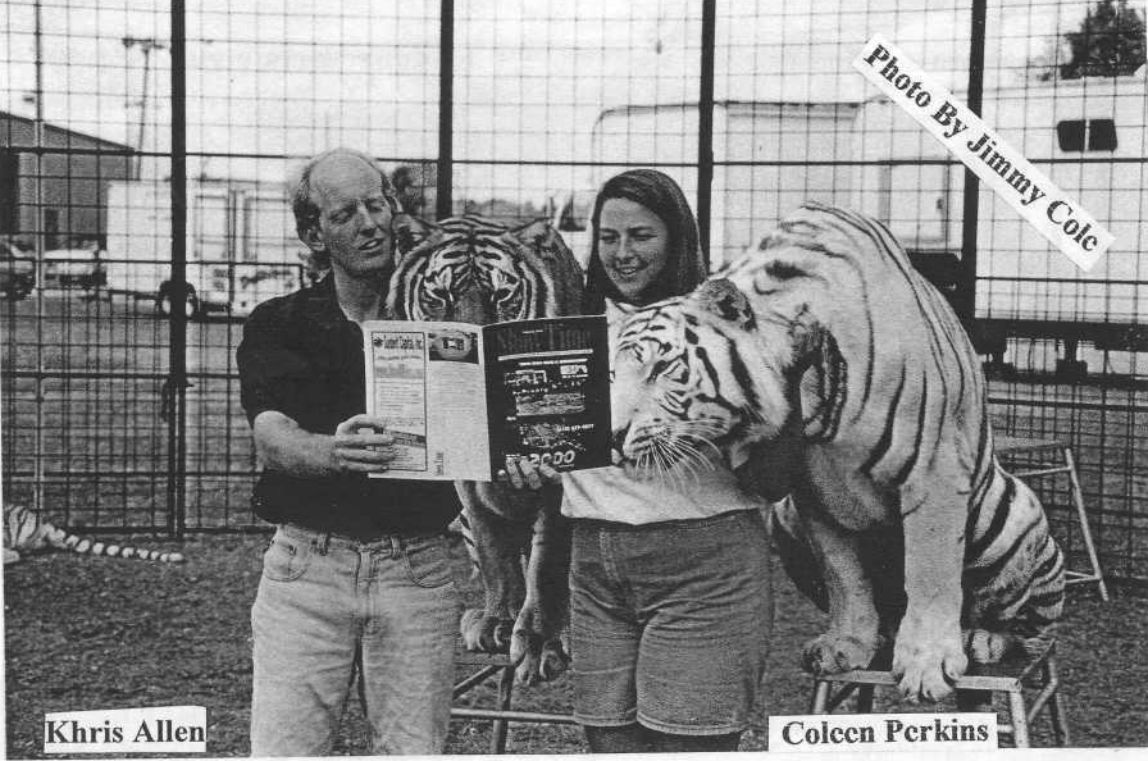
1944



1949

Harry James Dubsky, 59, died 4/12 in Sarasota. He was born in Hamburg, Germany 12/1/40. Survivors include his son, Harry Jr. and a brother, Janos, Jr. and 2 grandchildren.

Photo By Jimmy Cole



Khris Allen

Coleen Perkins