

CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY
September

1946

25c

The BANDWAGON



LION + GLADIATOR BAND WAGON
RBBB 1945

Official Bulletin

CIRCUS

HISTORICAL

SOCIETY

PRESIDENT-J.VAN MATRE
SECRETARY-J.CROWLEY
PUBLICITY DIRECTOR-P.VAN POOL

VICE PRESIDENT-BET LEONARD
TREASURER-W.PIETSCHMANN
EDITOR-J.VAN MATRE

SPARKS CIRCUS
(J.CROWLEY)

Show is owned by the Florida Circus Corp. which is headed by J. Edgar & M. Johnson. This is a classy 3 ring motorized show. All trucks are red and lettered in either white or silver with the letters outlined in blue. Only 4 show owned trucks do not have the title on. Big Top is a 116 ft. round top with 2 30 ft. middles and 1 50. Making it 110x222. Big Top has 4 center poles and 19 quarter poles. There are 8 exits besides the front and back doors. Seating capacity is 3200. Grand stand seats are 10 high and the blues are 15 high. Band stand is built on a truck body and a large cabinet on the truck houses the air calliope while travelling. Vic Robbins has the band of 8 men and the calliope. No menagerie is carried. Two former RBBB bulls are carried and they are BESS and PINTO. Damoo's act has 13 cats as follows:-2 black leopards, 7 spotted leopards, 2 black jaguars and 2 pumas. Red Lundsford is equestrian director and also has the concert and owns 4 horses and 1 mule on the show. All other animal stock on the show is owned by Paul and Mae Lewis who had the LEWIS BROS. CIRCUS on the road a few years ago and their stock consists of 7 liberty horses, 4 small mules, 11 ponies, 12 dogs and 9 goats. Albert Fleet has 2 chimps on the show named MICKIE & MINNIE.

Side show top is an oblong top 40 x80 and managed by Al Tomiani the 8ft. 4 1/2 in. Giant and features Jeanne the half girl, the painless wonder, magic, two joined babies, pop eye, tatooed man, sword swallower and vent.

Cookhouse and dining top is 20x60. Ushers top is 20x30. Band top is 20 x20. Paul Lewis horse top is 20x30.

Show has a nice printed program of 4 pages and sells for a dime. All acts on the program appeared at the show caught with the exception of the Esquedas the Mexican Flying Act that was on the Clyde Beatty Circus last year. Reason for this was the catcher tore some muscles in his shoulder. Prince Damoo has the same cat act as appeared on RBBB last year except the chorus girls did not appear in the arena with him.

The concert led by Col. Red Lundsford and 2 cowboys and 1 cowgirl consisted of trick and fancy riding, trick and fancy roping, four horse catches, crack rifle shooting and pony express.

Show will be the first circus in Maine since 1941 with the exception of RBBB. R. J. Clawson general manager left the show and J. Edgar has taken over his job. T. Kennedy of Fall River, Mass. is sup't. of concessions. A. Maley is sup't. of tickets in the red wagon. One of the spotted leopards had cubs and was not used in the act when the show played at Brockton.

.....

BELL BROS.
(Bet Leonard)

Opening Spec-COLUMBIAANNA with entire personnel.
 Display 2-Dog and pony acts in end rings(B.EWALT & P.HARRISON)
 " 3-Tight Wire(PETE WOODS)
 " 4-Clowns(J.HARRISON,B.THOMPSON,Q.WOODS)
 " 5-Comedy Acrobatics(MACK & JACK MILLER)
 " 6-Hand Balancing(V.LIND)
 " 7-Roping(CHIEF WHITE EAGLE & CO.)
 " 8-LIBERTY ACT(B.EWALT)
 " 9-DOG ACTS(MILLER & WOODS)
 " 10-Spanish Web(J.HARRISON)
 " 11-Barrell Kicking(B.MILLER)
 " 12-Military ponies(B.EWALT)
 " 13-Clowns
 " 14-Juggling Act(DE COLE TRIO)
 " 15-Table Rock(P.WOODS)
 " 16-Tumbling Act(MILLER TROUPE)
 " 17-Bull Act(T.EWALT)
 " 18-LADDERS(MISS EWALT & HARRISON)
 " 19-WHIP EXHIBITION(CHIEF WHITE EAGLE & CO.)
 " 20-Baby Gag(B.THOMPSON)
 " 21-ROLLING GLOBE(K.EWALT)
 " 22-Clowns
 " 23-Liberty Act(T.EWALT)

Show has a six piece band with I.B.DUNCAN leader.Frank Duncan plays the calliope.

DO STAR PERFORMERS ANSWER THEIR FANS
(A.DODGE)

The Big Tops have always held a great deal of interest and admiration for me as a kid.My greatest and most important day in my life was not Xmas or the 4th of July but CIRCUS DAY.I can recall many pleasant memories of that day,the grand free street parades now a thing of the past was one of them.How the gilded caged wagons went rolling by in front of you filled with wild animals of all kinds.In one parade the trainers were right inside the cages with their charges,one trainer I can remember very well was none other than that fine circus trumper and wild animal lady MABEL STARK and her tigers.I received a very nice letter from M.Stark in 1935 and I had always believed big star performers never took the time to bother with letters they received from the public.Which leads me to my story DO STAR PERFORMERS ANSWER THEIR FANS? in other words do they bother to sit down and answer a request for a photograph or a fans letter.I can very well answer that question in one word and that is YES.I have just recently received by mail a very fine autographed photograph from HAROLD BARNES formerly with the Cole Bros.Circus and a great tight wire artist.Yes those daring high wire stars of the greatest show on earth none other than the WALLENDAS also took time out to answer my letter for a request for a photo.In 1944 HUBERT CASTLE then the tight wire star of RBBB honored me by sending me 2 of his photos autographed.CON COLLEANO the present RBBB star also sent me his photo.That lovely lady billed as the high priestess of rhythm aloft with the RBBB who is none other than LALAGE sent me her photo while they were in N.Y.this year.TERRELL JACOBS the

DO STARS ANSWER (CONTINUED)

animal trainer once sent me a letter and I also have autographs of DOROTHY HERBERT one of the greatest horsewomen of our time. ROSIE RIEFFENACH, CHESTY MORTIER, MME. RASPUTIN, DAISY & HARRY DOLL also have sent me things. ALA & NIO NAITTO of RBBB have sent me a very fine autographed photo so you see circus people do answer their fans if their letters are sincere and honest.

In my collection I have 70 books dealing on Big Top life. Many are from the pen of Courtney Ryley Cooper. Some of them are: "Under the Big Top", "Lions n Tigers n Everything", "Circus Day, Canvas Sky, Blue Moon." I hope to reach the hundred mark soon as I often visit out of the way second hand book stores where I have found some really fine copies of circus books. I have a lot of snapshots not yet put into albums, five scrapbooks and many magazine articles on the circus, these I file together and clip to form a magazine. I have posters of RBBB and Cole Bros. I also have route books and programs but my collection is small I guess compared with most of you other fellows but I have a start and expect to increase it at every opportunity. I think at present I am the only resident of Niagara Falls with the circus as a hobby. I have been over to Buffalo, N.Y. to see J. Tracy and his collection and think that he has the greatest and most complete collection of freaks in the country. My latest item is the photo and autograph of CLYDE BEATTY.

The "Sarasota County Chamber of Commerce", Sarasota, Florida, puts out a very nice circular and in it you will find listed among the attraction of Florida the Winter Quarters of RBBB with a photo, the Ringling Museum with a photo and they state this Museum houses a \$30,000,000 collection, the Ringling mansion with a photo, Jungle Gardens, Texas Jims reptile farm. On the inside is a large map of Florida and here again all the above are spotted on the map. The map was designed by BILL BAILEY and makes a nice item to add to your collection.

The act that HARRY KOVAR used to work and that was on the RBBB Circus is now being worked by Cap't BARRY and has played all summer on the HAMID PIER at Atlantic City.

.....
HAMID-MORTON CIRCUS opens in Phila. Pa. Sept. 23 at the Arena for 1 week.

.....

CONVENTION NEWS

The following places have been suggested for the 1947 convention of the CHS. PHILA. PA. (If it is held here it would have to be on either the RBBB CIRCUS or the HAMID-MORTON CIRCUS as they are the only two that come here. RBBB always comes the last week of May or the first week of June, while H-M comes in Oct. or Sept.) NEW YORK CITY, N.Y. (The only show that comes here is the RBBB and that is indoors at the Garden, with the opening in April and running till May) WICHITA, Kan. (Here you would have the choice of many circuses and nearly any month of the summer) DETROIT, Mich. (No information was supplied but it is known that RBBB show here) CLEVELAND, Ohio (No information was supplied with this suggestion) BOSTON, MASS. (Here would be indoors with RBBB at the Garden)

Let us have some more suggestions on this and don't forget there are other shows on the road besides RBBB. Don't let any ideas roll around in your head but take a seat and put them on paper and send them in. A vote will be taken after every one has had time to think of it.

PAWCATUCK CIRCUS VISITS
by FURTILL

Before I tell you of the Circus record of the little town of Pawcatuck let me tell you a little of myself. I was born in the town of Mystic on Mar. 30, 1881, and in Jun. of 1894, joined the Bob Hunting rail road show at Westerly. This was a small 10 car show with open car in advance, and I was an outside program and candy man. In 1896 I was with the J.W. GOODRICH-LAUGHLIN WAGON SHOW as concert and reserve ticket man, and two years later was with the J.W. GOODRICH WAGON SHOW as side show ticket man.

The first Circus to show here was R. SANDS on Apr. 19, 1849. JOHN H. MURRAY came next with a show on Jun. 18, 1875 and on Jun. 29, 1879 the VAN AMBERGH CIRCUS came to town.

The FRANK A. ROBBINS railroad show played on the P.S. Barber lot on Jun. 12, 1888, then came WALTER L. MAIN on Mon. Aug. 20 that same year. With Walter L. Main came the first elephant that was ever shown in this town. Walter L. Main this year was a 60 horse wagon show and came here from Mystic Bridge and after playing here went to Hope Valley. In 1889 came the first cowboys with the WASHBURN & ARLINGTON WILD WEST. In 1890 T.K. BURKS TRANSATLANTIC RAILROAD SHOW came to town and played on the lot at High and Oak Streets. Aug. 18 of the same year saw CHARLES LEE CIRCUS at the Barber lot. This was a one ring wagon show. In 1891 WALTER L. MAIN took to the rails and came here with his show on Aug. 4. T.K. BURK came back again in 1892 and a new wagon show called HARPER BROS. came in at the end of the season. In Aug. 1893 WALTER L. MAIN brought his show here after it had been rebuilt following a bad train wreck he had at Tyrone, Pa. in May. This wreck cost him 5 men, 50 horses and considerable equipment.

1894 was a banner year as four Circuses came to town. Bob Hunting came in first on June 18, ADAM FOREPAUGH came in on July 16, JAMES W. GOODRICH came on Aug. 10 and on Aug. 24 another small show came but I can not remember the name.

On Aug. 2, 1896, W.L. WASHBURNS big 3 ring show came to town and brought with them the first hippo ever to be shown in this town. In 1899 J.H. LAPEARL came for the first time and this also was his first year to come east of the Mississippi. RHODA ROYAL came in after he left. On July 12, 1900, for the first visit to this town came SIG SAUTELLE and he then came back again on July 4, 1902. On this visit he was the last Circus to ever show on the Barber lot.

1904 saw a new lot being used right off of Noyes Ave. and the first Circus to use it was THOMAS HARGRAVES on Aug. 15. Thru the years the following shows played on this lot in this order: -PAWNEE BILL; ROBBINS; LA TENAS; WHEELER BROS; SIG SAUTELLE; DOWNIE & WHEELER; JONES BROS; WILSON; SPARKS; WALTER L. MAIN; COL. CUMMINS; and then GENTRY BROS. & PATTERSON came on Aug. 9, 1924 and showed on the Nichols lot on the old Potter Hill road and was the first and only Circus ever to use this lot. CHRISTY BROS. came on July 20, 1925 and played at Riverside Park and drew the largest crowd in the history of this town to any Circus. More than 8,000 people saw the night show.

1946 Photos of RINGLING BROS. BARNUM & BAILEY; COLE BROS.
at 15¢ each.

Elephant Hooks - \$1.70 - \$2.70 and \$3.70 Postpaid
Reference Book - "As Told On A Sunday Run" - \$1
HARRY P. BOWMAN ROUTE 2 DAVISON MICH.

.....P:.....

A LOT OF A LOTTA LOT TALK

ROLAND BUTLER will be press agent next year for RBBB CIRCUS(YES or NO) SPARKS CIRCUS will be on rails and no fooling about this.

The old show lot at Broadway & Bailey in Buffalo, N.Y. has been sold and this leaves Buffalo with the problem of where to put the Big One next year when and if they come.

JOHN DEL VECHO passed away Thur. Aug. 8th after being sick for three days. Just last Oct. a story was run on this man in the BANDWAGON and I know that all his old friends will miss his letters as well as him and agree that he was a great showman in his day.

PURTILL writes that he does not think that the PAWNEE BILL SHOW ever played the KLONDIKE and that the 4PAW SELLS SHOW never had a short season as stated in last month's story by MADDEN. If anybody can prove which one is correct please send the information in for future printing, so as to keep the records straight.

HUNT BROS. did not use any chairs in Conn. as a Conn. law now states that all chairs must be fastened. Law also states no one is allowed to stand, everybody must have a seat. At night Hunt had to turn them away.

.....P:.....

FOR SALE

R.B.B.B. 1946-1943-1942 Circus Photos. Send 10¢ for List and sample photo. All photos may be returned if you are not satisfied with them. All pics are 3 1/2 x 5 and 10¢ each, send now as offer is only good for one month.

HARRY HEATH 2109 W. Pacific St. Phila. Pa.

HORSE SALE

At last a complete act can be had for one of your rings under the Big Top. An act that you can feature and be proud of, in fact no less than a 8 HORSE LIBERTY ACT

Complete all but to be painted-nothing to file-no excess material-no waste-no need to be a woodcarver or artist-nothing to do but paint. Act complete for \$6.00 (Get a set for each ring & see what a FLASH 8 horses in each ring make) VAN MATRE 3328 H ST. PHILA. PA.

Will trade a large amount of newspaper clippings, route cards, big show tickets, dating back to 1800's for 1/2" to foot scale model circus equipment. Let me hear from those interested.

P. R. HEMPHILL JR. 32 S. Mulberry St. Hagerstown, Md.

.....

The First Annual Picnic of CHS, CFA and CMBOA members for the Maryland section was held at Hagerstown City Park. The following attended:-

Mr. & Mrs. Wagner; Mr. & Mrs. Warner; J. McCurdy; M. Keim; J. MacInnes & son; Mr. & Mrs. Kistler; Mr. & Mrs. Pysher; D. Kline; Mr. & Mrs. Greiner; J. Keefer; Mr. & Mrs. J. Martin; Mr. & Mrs. Hemphill; Mr. & Mrs. J. Harshman; J. Heckman; I. Miller; C. Sappington; M. Lehman; F. Hoover; J. Trovinger; T. Fritts; L. Sprecher; G. Sprecher; Mr. & Mrs. E. Vaughn; E. Virts; and P. Myers. After dinner in the park, they all withdrew to the Washington County Museum where contests were held and prizes awarded to the winners. Several reels of film taken on Tinian Island were shown by J. Martin. R. Warner then showed movies of RBBB, Clyde Beatty, Wallace Bros. Cole Bros. Hunt Bros.

T. Parkinson's-Foreign Circus

In Switzerland Knie Bros. National Swiss Circus is as familiar as RBBB in the States. It's not only their big one but also the only one. Thru newspaper ads I learned that the show was to be in Geneva during the time I was on furlough in the country, and so when our tour group reached nearby Lausanne I took off for the Circus.

In the small surrounding towns and in the city itself there was considerable billing. They use a few 1 sheet date sheets, many herald type half sheets which list the entire program, and attractive window cards. They have Main Street billers who were able to place cards in windows of many exclusive shops.

Asking directions to the show grounds at the American Express office, I learned that it was just off Place du Cirque-a public square near the center of town.

Circus Knie makes a good appearance on the lot. The canvas is new and clean; the other equipment is in good shape and well painted. The big top is a four pole round top and includes quite a number of exits consisting of stairways leading out of the tent from the level of the highest seats.

The front door is more like a sideshow or carnival front because there is no marquee. Instead there is a show front that includes a wooden framework, red curtains, a portable picket fence, and several potted plants. Over the top is a large sign bearing the title in both French & German. Entrance to the menagerie which is by separate ticket similar to U.S. kid shows-is of the same type. There is no banner line, no grease joint, no midway as we know it.

Three ticket wagons are used-two for the big show and one for the menagerie. The latter also takes care of advance ticket sales and there was a long line at that window during my visit.

Arriving on the lot, I took a number of photos and circled the layout a couple of times. I found that things looked almost like they do on a U.S. show. There were generators, pole wagons, canvas wagons, sleeping workmen, and groomsexercising some ponies. One unusual wagon bore the French word TOILETTE in large letters and was a rest room. The other wagons including the many living wagons were white with the title lettered in blue, had very small iron rimmed wheels, and were fitted for use with the shows 2 tractors.

Living wagons of the staff and performing personnel were lined up at the side of the lot and parallel to a main street. It was there that I located the circus business office and tried to talk with Eugen Knie. But we could not get together on the language, so I talked with his Sec.

She was an attractive young woman and hospitable-but her classes in English had made no mention of circus fans. And so we had the usual difficulties. With the help of my CHS card and a Hunt Bros. ticket as well as much gesturing and jabbering, I got the idea across. And she gave me a number of the program booklets in French for Geneva and both French and German editions of the shows attractive courier. I was able to do that much, but I am quite sure she was much more confused about Americans when I left.

After unknowingly waiting thru the wrong and very slow line, I was directed to the correct one where I got a ticket for the menagerie. Circus Knie uses 4 separate tents for its animals-the first for lead stock including camels, yaks, zebus, and llamas-the second containing the 17 horses and 14 ponies in stalls similar to those in U.S. horse fairs-the third with the 4 cage wagons, and the 4th with the 11 elephants.

FOREIGN CIRCUS (CONTINUED)

It was in the cage tent that I first saw an extremely interesting phase of European circuses. Here were a number of artists with their easels set up in front of the various cages and hard at work painting animal scenes.

Being a stranger in these parts and unable to speak to anyone, I was sceptical about going into the big top. There was no performance that afternoon. I did wonder if my unauthorized entrance would result in spending the rest of my furlough in the Geneva jail, but I found there the same easy going informality that I had first seen at Circus International in Luxembourg.

There was a rehearsal in progress. Trainers were breaking some liberty horses and a juggler was awaiting his turn in the ring. Scattered thru out the seats were many more Swiss students and artists sketching again. In the ring, training was halted to pose a horse so that an older man could paint the scene.

This and other evidence emphasized the difference in atmosphere a round European shows. There is none of the hustle and bustle found on American circuses, no hurry, no mad dash to give the shows and move on that night. Those potted plants on the front door give one the first indication of the difference. The lazy like cooperation with art students tells the rest. It is a Continental air entirely unfamiliar, to American circus goers.

Circus Knie is pure, genuine Circus just the same. The smells were the same, the program sounded familiar, kids look at lions the same way, the same haze filled the tents, and there is much of the same circusy atmosphere about the tops, the wagons, the backyard, and the people. When I left the lot I felt that I had seen as much as possible of an exceptionally outstanding European circus - the next best thing to circuses that have kid show talkers, juice joints, reckless efficiency, and 1 day stands.

ARTHUR BROS. CIRCUS - BLOOMINGTON, ILL. AUG. 4, 1945 (BOB PARKINSON) 13 CARS

WAGON #47 Side show	WAGON #75 Marquee and equipment
" 99 Poles	" 66 Power plant
" 4 Reserved seat planks, stringers, jacks.	" 39 This wagon never was unloaded, stringers on side.
" 23 Props	" 89 Big top canvas & menagerie.
" 11 White ticket wagon	40 40 Red ticket & office
WAGON 71 Mother Goose Tab	" 109 Chairs
" 6 Cookhouse	" 27 Blue planks, jacks.
" 17 Concession	" 18 Band equip; props
" 85 Cage (2 lions, 1 leopard)	" 95 Cage (goats)
" 65 Cross cage (monkeys)	" 55 Cross cage (black bear)

All of the above was loaded on 7 flats, 4 sleepers, 2 stock cars. All wagons were ex HAGENBECK-WALLACE leased from GOEBBEL of CALIF.

 BET LEONARD WRITES she saw AL G. KELLY MILLER CIRCUS at CALDWELL, Kan. on the 30th of May. This show has the fastest way of rolling up canvas she ever saw. It does not unlace, the bull goes along and trips each 1/4 pole, they are all threaded together and she then drags them all out to the pole wagon. They also are using a spool wagon. May 31st she saw the COLE BROS. CIRCUS. ART STENSVAD also was on the COLE lot. As usual Cole has a good show and it is all circus from start to finish. Business here was not very good but that may have been the cause of very little advertising. *****