

CIRCUS REPORT

Number 2

February 15, 1983

AMERICA'S
FAVORITE CIRCUS WEEKLY
OUR 12th YEAR



WILLIAM "Boom Boom" BROWNING

Show Dates

American Cont'l Circus
Feb 18-21 Richardson, Tx.

Castle Circus
Feb 18-20 Albuquerque,
N.M.
26-28 Minneapolis,
Minn.

Chipperfield/Cottle Circus
to Apr. 10 Hongkong

Circus Vargas
Feb 15-17 La Puente, Cal.
18-21 Hollywood
22-24 Long Beach
25-27 Huntington Bch
28-Mar. 1 Monrovia

Cole All Star Circus
Feb 15 Hinsdale, NY
16 Shinglehouse, Pa.
17 Holland, NY
18 Bradford, Pa.
19 Kane

Ford Bros. Circus
Feb. 27 Conroe, Texas
(Opening Date)

Garden Bros. Circus
Feb 18-19 Cornwall, Ont.
24-27 Toronto

Hamid-Morton Circus
Jan 28-30 Roanoke, Va.
Feb 9-14 Hartford, Conn.
18-20 Binghamton, NY
25-27 Topeka, Kans.

Wm. Kay Circus
Feb 19-20 Madison, Wisc.
23-27 Milwaukee

Kosair Shrine Circus
Feb 2-6 Louisville, Ky

No Elephant Circus
Feb 14-19 Ft. Lauderdale, Fla
21 Winter Haven
22-23 Orlando

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Olympic Int'l Circus
Feb 28-Mar 21 Chicago, Ill

Ringling-Barnum - Blue
Feb 9-20 Atlanta, Ga.
22-27 Raleigh, NC

Ringling-Barnum - Red
Feb 15-16 Albany, Ga.
18-20 Chattanooga, Ten
22-27 Greensboro, NC

Royal Hanneford Circus
Feb 22-27 White Plains, NY

Swan Bros. Circus
Feb 18-27 Indio, Calif.

TNT & Royal Olympic Cir
Feb 18-21 Mission Viejo, Ca

Zoppe's Circo Italia
Feb 11-13 Buffalo, NY
17-20 Rochester

--- OTHER DATES ---

Disney Ice Odyssey
Feb 15-27 Boston, Mass.

Disney World on Ice
Feb 15-20 San Fran., Cal.
22-27 Portland, Ore.

Marathon Band Concert
Feb 26-27 Concord, Calif.

Virginia Slims Tennis Meet
Feb. 21-27 Oakland, Calif.

Felix Snipes
Feb. 4-6 Los Ang., Calif.
11-13 Newhall
18-20 Vernon, Texas
25-27 Memphis, Tenn.

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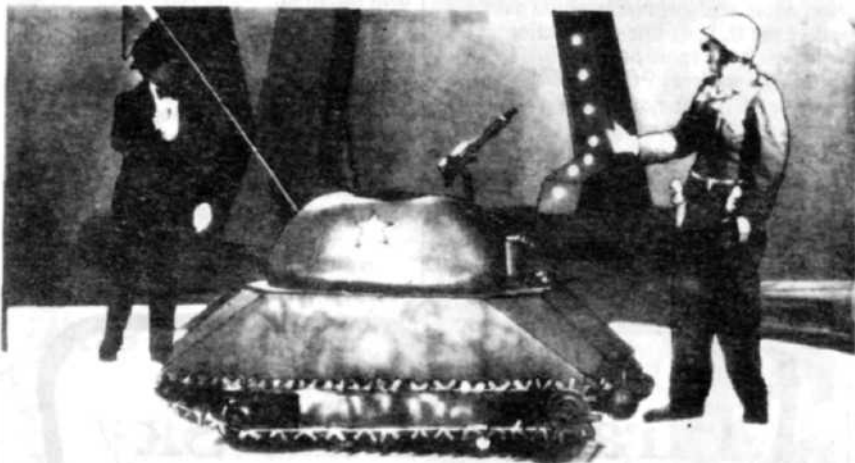
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The Red Unit

LLENRAY J. YARNELL

The 113th edition of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus (Red Unit) is on the road. I saw the show during its run at the Bayfront in St. Petersburg, Fla., from Jan. 4 thru 10th.

As in recent years, the taping for the TV Special was done at the Bayfront. The TV special will be on CBS with former boxer Sugar Ray Leonard and his son as the guest hosts. No date was stated as to when the special will be aired.

The newspaper ads state there are no increases in the price of seats this year. Also, the programs still cost \$2.50, but there is no poster in the program as there has been for many years.

Once again Tim Holst is the performance Director, Jeffrey Loseff is the Assistant Performance Director and Keith Green is the Musical Conductor. Dinny McGuire, who was the ringmaster on the Blue Unit last year, has replaced Kit Haskett, who had been ringmaster on this unit. Alice Lynn, who worked with Dinny in singing solo and duets last year has also joined the Red Unit.

Noticably missing from the Red Unit this year, compared to last year are: there is no aerial spec, no leopard act and Gunther-Gebel Williams does not have his giraffe, Dickie, with him.

The special guest star with the 113th edition of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is The Pink Panther. The Pink Panther makes a number of appearances in the show.

The program lasted 2 hours 45 minutes and ran as follows: Opening Spec, On With The Show, with Gunther Gebel-Williams riding Roman style on a pair of Morgan horses with a lion on each horse; The Globe of Death, featuring the Urias troupe; The Leaps; 3 Animal acts - Hall's Baboons, the Mickey Antalek Chimps, Michelle Antalek and Mark Oliver Gebel, goats; Clowns; 3 Aerial acts - The Franconi Duo, Miss Lisa, Satin; Liberty Horses - Sigrid Gebel and

Tina Gebel in the outside rings with 6 horses each and Gunther Gebel-Williams in the center ring with 12 horses; Clowns; 3 rings of teeterboard with The Kovatchevi, The Dukovi, The Parvanovi; Clowns; High Wire with the Carrillo Brothers; the Big Spec - The Pink Panther Joins The Greatest Show on Earth, during the spec, Mark Oliver Gebel once again rides 2 baby African elephants, Roman style; Intermission.

Clowns; Gunther Gebel-Williams and 19 tigers, including the white tigress, Maharanee, Gunther exits the cage with his leopard neckline as he did last year; Sway Poles with the 4 Fearless Bauers; Clowns; 3 rings of dogs - Eric Braun, Lona, Tina Gebel; Dolly Jacobs on the Roman rings; Elephant Spec, pachyderms proudly prancing down Broadway with Gunther Gebel Williams and Mark Oliver Gebel; Gunther Gebel-Williams' elephant teeterboard act; Clowns; The Flying Espanas over both rings one and three; and the Closing Spec, Flamboyantly Fond Farewell, with Gunther Gebel-Williams riding Kongo, his African elephant, with a tiger on the elephant.

Japan Tour

Phil Temple's "World Wonder Show" engagement in Japan "was very successful." The tour was for five weeks and included a total of 67 shows, twice each day.

The show was presented and booked by Sankyō Promotions, and included on the program were: The Abulets, high wire, an act from the "Chinese Acrobats of Taiwan" troupe, Howard Baker, English escape artist, with illusions presented by Phil Temple, assisted by Donna Paxson, Angela and Patrick Martin.

HOTLINE

Jan. 23 - Del Mar, Calif. - An employee of Circus Vargas, William Beggers, 35, suffered neck and back injuries when he was attacked by an elephant while the circus was playing at the Del Mar Fairgrounds.



COL. E. T. BALE, Sr.

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World Championships

BY JACK NIBLETT

The Circus World Championships of 1982 were held in London at Eelbrook Common, Fulham, on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 18-19.

This prestigious event has been cropped in style, somewhat, since its conception, from five days to only two, and the number of competing artists is smaller, but it is still an important date in the circus calendar and it is possible to see some of the world's finest circus performers in competition.

Staged in Robert Bros. magnificent six-mast Hippodrome Circus tent, and hosted by Norman Barrett, the doyen of English ringmasters, the two day event attracted large numbers of circus artists, fans and city folk, and generally plenty of excitement.

The categories this year were: Flying Trapeze, Cycling, High School and Supertroupe and were judged on content and performing excellence.

Honors for the Flying Trapeze went to the USA with the splendid Flying Redpaths closely beating their opponents from Chile, The Flying Valencias. Katja Schuman (Denmark) lost the title which she had held since 1976 to Manuela Beloo (Holland) in the High School category. Both girls gave immaculate displays of Haute Ecole.

Cycling awards went to the Micheletty Troupe (France), the losers being the Santos Troupe, their relations and friends from the UK. The verve and brilliance of the Rodogols (Mexico) with their springboard act just snatched the victory from the Balkanski Troupe (Bulgaria), equally spectacular with their springboard. Both acts could truly be called "Supertroupes."

The judges were distinguished European Circus Directors, and included amongst their numbers Carl Semback-Krone, Moifa



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Orfei, Eli Berneweiss, Bobby Roberts and Peter Jay.

There were many visiting European artists and friends and fans to be seen amongst the audiences. I also spotted Michael Crawford, star of the long-running London production of "Barnum" at a rehearsal - taking a look at the real thing!

Bull in new home

"Cindy" the elephant, branded as one of the meanest and most ill-tempered elephants ever kept at the Point Defiance Zoo in Tacoma, Wash., was transferred to the San Diego Wild Animal Farm Park last month.

Since arriving in San Diego she has been described as being very calm

Circus in India

By N. V. ESWAR - Reprinted from the Daily Variety of July 28, 1982.

Though a century old, the big top in India is still not a very big entertainment medium despite the fact that it is popular in rural India.

In an effort to save the circus from extinction, a delegation of the Federation of Indian Circus Owners recently met India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and asked that areas in the major cities and towns be made available for performances at reasonable rent.

The group rent a circus troupe has to pay in a city like Bombay is as much as \$312.50 per day, while it was only \$62.50 per day a decade or so ago.

The delegation also requested that the government exempt circus performances from entertainment tax.

The first circus troupe to perform in India on a commercial scale made its bow in Maharashtra in 1891. Today there are some 200 circus troupes in India. Of these only

12 are major troupes, moving from town to town on a national scale. The rest are all purely local.

Some 50 troupes operate within the radius of a few townships, while as many as 138 troupes operate in rural areas, performing in the open fields after the summer harvest of the rice crop.

Some of the big circus troupes have between 125 and 450 artists and 70 to 150 animals working. It is estimated that the total number of artists working with the Indian circus troupes is well over 10,000. Most of them are children and teenagers.

The average daily expense of a circus troupe varies from \$1,000 to \$1,750 per day, depending on the size of the troupe and the location.

Some of the well-known groups are the Great Eastern, Venus, Amar, Bharat, Kamala and Raymond Circuses. The Raymond Circus is said to be the oldest troupe in operation.

Though Maharashtra was the birthplace of professional circus in India, the tiny state of Kerala on the west coast has a virtual monopoly in the trade in that it operates most of the troupes, and well over 90% of all circus artists are drawn from the state.

Some of the important performers receive \$200 to \$375 per month, while the average performers receive anything from \$75 to \$125 per month. All get free boarding and lodging.

In large cities like Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Madras and Bangalore, the circus companies use the four-pole system with a radius of 110 ft. for the arena and accommodations for 12,000 people.

The circus arenas in small towns have a reduced radius of only 85 ft. with accommodations for 6,000 people. Most other circus troupes, operating in the rural areas, use one and two-pole tents, with smaller arenas for 750 to 2,000 people.

Apart from the exemption from entertainment tax, which some of the state governments give, the central government allows lower fares and freight charges on the railways for circus personnel, animals and its props. Most troupes, however, have to use road transportation while setting up their tents in towns and villages.

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(Continued on Page 24)

Show Reports

by NORMAN J. BORGER

The fall tour of Borger Bros.-Circus Berlin, which was our 20th anniversary edition was from Sept. 18 to Nov. 21. Business on the tour was exceptionally good.

Among the acts which appeared at the various engagements were: John Armstrong, The Karpis Duo, foot juggling, the Kursawes unicycle and bicycle, Joyce Rice, batons and whips and ropes, Steve Elsthain, magic and rope escape, Ken Bengé, magic and juggling, Paul Bachman, Hard Luck Harpo, comedy bicycle, Leon and Luba, unsupported ladder, The Indian Princess, production with tomahawk juggling and hoop dance, The Freddie's, rola bola, Johnny Joker, comedy, The Juggling Jester, Mr. B, unicycles. Clowns were Sunshine and Rickie.

Had not read anything about this, but the readers will be interested in knowing that Bud Jeffries, who performed with his wife Edna, as The Aerial Jeffries and also did a doll dance act as Jeff and Lita, passed away on July 25, 1982. He is survived by his wife, Edna and a daughter Lita.

We went down to Hammond, Ind., for the Carden Shrine Circus. Since neither the running order or the acts listed in the program were correct, here it is as I remember it and recognized the acts:

Eddie Schmitt, tigers; Aerial Cradles with Lar Rays and Garcias; Clowns; Rola Bola, David Conners and Ari; Clown Car; Miss Marki, birds, dogs and ponies; Rietta, rocket to trapeze; Eddie Steeples, bears; Cuccillo, trampoline; Aerial ballet with Cathy English; Victor Julian's Dogs; Intermission.

The Flying Larrays, Gorilla Number; Unicycles and Garcias; Jugglers; Elephants and The Wallendas. Al Leonard was the ringmaster.

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PEOPLE

BILL IRWIN, former clown with the Pickle Family Circus, is featured in a comedy special filmed for release on the PBS-TV system. The show is called "The Regard of Flight."

THE AMAZING RANDI, magician, and URI GELLER, psychic, debated the subject "Magic or Miracle" in a special NBC-TV program on Feb. 8th.

NICK MARICICH plays the part of Zorro in a display offered by the Walt Disney's World on Ice Show. One of his feats is jumping over a series of barrels.

The Garcias, cradle acts and juggling were Oscar Garcia. Cathy English was very good. Lee Maloney was listed as bandmaster, but we did not see him. They did announce at the start of the show who the band leader was, but I couldn't catch it.

Elephants Saved

(Reprinted from the Western Morning News, England, of February 2, 1982).

Four baby elephants would be dead today if they weren't in a circus.

Mary, Lily, Suzie and Dickie were the only survivors of a cull in a Zimbabwe national park which wiped out several complete herds of more than 1,000 elephants.

And last night, a circus chief used them as an example to hit out angrily at animal protestors who have dogged his show since it arrived in the South-west.

Mr. Chris Bartrop, ringmaster of the famous Circus Hoffman, appearing at Clennon Valley, Paignton, said:

"How many of those protesters can honestly say they have saved an animal from death?

"Throughout the world the shrinking number of national parks are becoming increasingly overcrowded. And zoos are not always viable.

"Circuses have saved the lives of countless animals throughout the world, and I wished sometimes these self-appointed guardians of animals would remember that."

Last week circus activists picketed the circus when it arrived in Paignton, trying to turn customers away.

Mr. Bartrop, 34, said: "We have a romantic notion of animals in this country. But believe me, if cows and horses were not bred to be eaten or worked by humans, they too, would be wiped out.

"And if it's simply the act of training an animal which offends them, why don't they picket Barbara Woodhouse (dog trainer) because she uses exactly the same techniques as we do.

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The Dallas Fair

BY BOB STODDARD

The line-up for the 1982 Dr. Pepper Circus at the Texas State Fair, produced by Gil Gray, included the following:

Clown warm-up with Johnny Peers (producing), Gary Ray (Patches) and Bobby Golden.

Cleo Plunkett was the ringmaster.

Castle's Bears with Jimmy and Tapa Hall and Isabelle Luvas; The Great Huberto slide for-life; Ring 1 and 3, hand balancing by the Ramos Troupe, Ring 2, perch with the Pablo Martinez Trio; Clown Dogs with Johnny Peers and Patches; Ring 1, Woodcock's leopard was scheduled but didn't work because Barbara was in the hospital. Pam Zoppe & Co., had their chimps in the center ring and Pete Luvas and Tajanna worked their small elephant in ring 3; Risley Troupe; Clowns in The Photographer; Ring 1, rolling globes, by the Ramirez Sisters, Ring 3, The Unicyling Hall Family. The center ring was empty because Herbie Weber was ill and didn't walk the wire;

Pete and Petrova in the center ring with Pete Luvas in the cradle and 9-year-old Tavanna doing this for her second year while mother Isabelle was on the ground. They

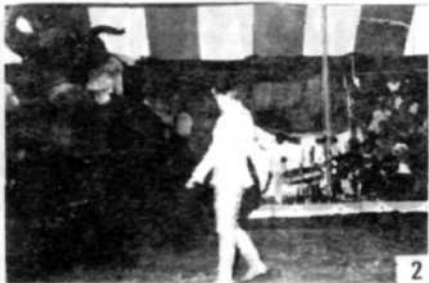
didn't do the break-away and I missed that. The Corallas Sisters did loop-de-loops in both ring 1 and ring 3;

The show stopper was the Zoppe Indian Riding Act, which is fast, loud and exciting. Roger and Pam Zoppe and Co. (with-out 3 year-old daughter Dallas, who had a bad cold) brings the crowd to their feet; Iron jaw by the Claudia Sisters; Buckles Woodcock presented the Woodcock elephants (3), leading up to the finale.

Visitors on the lot included: Pom Pom Donoho, Kay Rosaire, Patti Gatti, Aurelia and Irvin Hall, Chu-cho and Chu-cha; Max and Gertie Craig; Peggy and Joe Zoppe; Denice and Antonio Almeda; Leon and Vicki Adams; "Snuffy" (rodeo clown) and Barbara's mother and sister.

PEOPLE

MARK KALIN, illusionist; STU SCOTT, comedian, and DICK FRANCO, juggler, are featured in the show "Razzle Dazzle" currently playing at the Hilton Hotel in Reno.



At the Dallas Fair

The above photos by John Manning include:

- 1 - Patches (Gary Ray) and Bobby Golden
- 2 - Buckles Woodcock working elephants
- 3 - Tapa (Luvas) Hall and Jimmy Hall
- 4 - The Ramirez Sisters - rolling globe act

- 5 - Johnny Peers and dogs
- 6 - Jimmy and Tapa Hall, juggling
- 7 - Gerald Burns at work
- 8 - Tajanna Luvas on Kenya with dad Pete
- 9 - Pam Zoppe and Bob Stoddard
- 10 - Tapa and Jimmy Hall

New Group Planned

BY BOB STODDARD

Forty-six clowns attended the dinner at the main restaurant in Traders Village during the second annual Clown and Circus Days event to discuss the formation of a new organization to be called "The Texas Clown Association."

The group represented every geographical part of the state except the far west El Paso area. They came from Amarillo to Corpus Christi and from Longview to Odessa.

The idea for such an organization was brought up and discussed during the National Convention in Albuquerque, and it was decided at that time that our event would be a good opportunity to get the ball rolling.

The opinion seemed unanimous that such an organization would be beneficial to all and they elected a steering committee to draft a set of by-laws necessary to become incorporated by the State of Texas, and to become tax-exempt as a non-profit organization. They will report their progress at a special meeting in Kerrville, when they have their mini-convention Dec. 3-5 1982.

The committee members include: Rosalie Perryman, Dallas area; Clifford Wood, Kerrville; Dorothy Braley, Corpus Christi; Richard Wade, Houston; Wayne Veale, Odessa; Joyce Wilkes, Longview is secretary.

THE STANEKS, vaulting act, was featured on the TV show "That's Incredible" shown the evening of Jan. 31st.

Children of all ages -

BY BOB STODDARD

Ladies and Gentlemen . . . children of all ages . . . we direct your attention to the center ring . . . the youngest wire walker in the world . . . at two years old . . . the great Carlos Obando the second . . .

Carlitos (Little Carlos) bows graciously to the audience and to his family and proceeds



Carlos Obando II walks across the wire as his father watches and gives advice.

Photo by Dave Paczak

to walk across the wire, with his parents Carlos and Carol Obando, veteran high wire performers, looking on from below.

Young Carlos has been walking the wire since April 18, 1982, when he became the youngest person ever to walk across a wire and was entered officially as such in the

Guinness Book of World Records.

The feat was accomplished at the M&M Shrine Circus in Sioux City, Iowa.

Actually, the boy turned three soon after he took the world's record away from it's previous holder, who happens to be his sister Pamela Michelle Obando (now five years old) who had held the record since she was three.

She spent her first week on the wire at Seminary South Shopping Center at Ft. Worth (Texas) with the TNT & Royal Olympic Circus the last week in October, 1980.

Pamelita (Little Pamela) still works in the family act and now does splits on the wire and performs without a balance pole.

She also does a graceful adagio dance (and other incredible feats of balance) on her father's shoulders while he balances himself on the rola bola.

Ecuador's Carlos Obando became an American citizen in Buffalo, NY, on June 9th, 1982, while playing a Shrine Circus date in that city.

The Obandos formerly were stars in Los Obandos, a six person high wire act that worked at heights up to 50 ft. until Pamela was born. Since then they have worked as "Poppini Company" on the low wire.

Show Notes

BY BOBBY COX

At the Dallas State Fair, Red Hartman was running a novelty stand, and they put up a huge ride alongside him. It blared rock and roll music for all 17 days.

Herbie Weber was with the Gil Grey Circus along with the Oscarians and Cleo Plunkett.

Ward Hall had a Freak Show on the Midway and Billy Loter was seen working a game.

Pete the Tramp was spotted working a grease joint in Columbia, SC. Tommy Pico (former Beatty show butcher) was seen in Crowley, La., working a join, and Rodney Cook and yours truly (also former Beatty show troupers) worked a balloon joint at Dallas.

The Circo Caravana, owned by the Bautista family, recently played for a week's engagement in Puebla, Mexico.

End of the tour

BY BOB STODDARD

Carson & Barnes Circus played its final date of the season at The Colony (near Lake Dallas) in Texas, on Oct. 31st.

The show was pretty much the same as it was in May when it left Texas. Jim Royal was back from England and was once again serving as ringmaster (he was scheduled to go back to England on Dec. 18th).

The show had added Robin Fulton as a vocalist and she sang the traditional "Olde Lang Zyne" after the final show and I noticed that a lot of the showfolks were crying.

A few of the starting clowns were missing but the backbone: Jack Johnson, Maude Flippen, Buckles the Clown and Mary were still there.

They were in a hurry to wind up the season and had the two shows with only twenty minutes in between. Attendance was very good for the 3 p.m. show and quite good for the 5 p.m. show.

The show was sponsored by the Colony

Jaycess. One of them told me that they made more than \$2,000 after expenses and that they were already planning to do it again next year.

Lots of people visited, like: Ralph Duke, Glen and Ethel Henry, Zoe Ann Henry, Mac McDermott, Jimmy and Tapa Hall, Bubba, Tommy Randolph, Johnny and Laura (Heriott) Walker, Johnny and Hazel Frazier and family, Jack Baty, Rosanne Baty, Mary Lee and her daughter, Jim Howell and family, Herbie Weber and Maricela, Betty Llewellyn, Harry Pearson, Jr., Terry Davolt and Elizabeth "Chick" Chickilly.

The award of Photographer of the Day would have to go to Elise Jean Knox, whose twelve large photographs in the following Friday and Sunday editions of the Colony Leader were absolutely "great."

SHARON WARD writes she has acquired Burger's Ham 'n' Egg Revue and has renamed it "Daisy's Ham & Egg Revue". The act will be featured with Bill Garden's show starting in April.

THANK YOU

FRANK and JANET BURGER

FOR YOUR PATIENCE, FAITH AND UNDERSTANDING. I'M PROUD TO HAVE PURCHASED THE HAM 'N' EGG REVUE FROM YOU.

ALSO A SPECIAL THANKS TO PONCHO MANGANA FOR THE EXPERT CONSTRUCTION OF MY NEW "HOG-MOBILE" AND FOR GIVING ME THE BENEFIT OF HIS KNOWLEDGE OF ANIMALS.

SINCERELY,

SHARON WARD

Clown Awards

BY BOB STODDARD

Jo Jo Jingles (G. Elmar Jones) the Fort Worth (Texas) clown was presented a ribbon and a trophy honoring him for more than 30 years as a Good Will Ambassador for the clowning profession, at the second annual Clown and Circus Days celebration at Traders Village on Oct. 13th.

Lou Flowers (Honey) Stoddard, of Duncanville was presented the "Clown of the Year" award for being the Alley No. 85 member whose efforts for the cause ran the most "above and beyond."

Other awards were as follows:

Make up and Costume, White Face.

Elizabeth Cauley, Garland; Bobby Reese, Garland; James Decker, Dallas; Van Chauvin, Duncanville.

Auguste -

Donald Perryman, Irving; Wayne Veale, Odessa; Kay Veale, Odessa; Nicholas Bradley, Arlington.

Tramp and Character -

Bob Thomas, Amarillo; Irving Schwartz, San Antonio; Clifford Wood, Kerrville; Bill Pinney, Duncanville.

Individual Skit Awards -

Bob Thomas, Amarillo, for his ragtime band skit; Nicholas Bradley, Arlington, for his Trash Can skit; Dan Young, Plano; Joyce Wilkes, Longview, Joy Beils and Heidi.

Group Skit Awards went to:

Ajax and Superstar with a balky mini-car "The Garage"; The Big Match skit by Alley No. 85 members; Martian Invaders by Bo Bo Brown, Giggles, Twinkles; A Tie Between A Day at the Park with Ajax, Uncle Will; Blossom and Big D Cafe by Alley No. 85 members.

Mary Jane Smith was presented with an award for the best alley scrap book of individual activities, during National Clown Week, Aug. 1st thru 7th.



MR. DWIGHT DAMON, of Merrimack, N. H., now runs one of New England's leading entertainment agencies.

His acts at the recent Deerfield, N. H. Fair included a beautiful Wallenda-style high wire crowd pleaser by the Troffers, Paul Baron's Harmonica Rascals, Ken Sherburne's juggling on unicycles and rolling globes, the Great Eric & Co., magic-illusions, Hager's incredible chimp, Cheezo's Mouse balloon clowning, Jim Whitney & Lou Rule, cowbell symphonics, "Dynamite" the clown pony and a lot of other great performing artists, musical, etc. that made me sorry to miss because of the pressure of record breaking attendance.

Obviously, during the last decade the Congress has been playing "Tilt" with the scale of our traditional symbol of American criminal justice - the blind goddess. Make no mistake about it. In many parts of our government there are certain agencies affecting the lives and livelihood of circus and professional show people.

It is unfortunate that some of these government agencies are run by self-centered, impractical tyrants. It's nearly election time. Take a few minutes and talk with candidates for high public office. Vote for those who are really interested in professional performing artists. Give support to those who want to make our lives easier. Correct those whose proven policies have

made our careers more frustrating, difficult - even impossible!

Good news - Roland and Marcelli and Janis, slack wire act is showing recovery from the trauma of his recent narrow escape from death during car repairs.

Eric and Angela Wilnow still active in the northeast with their classic Indian Americana number.

Coloring Book

The new 1983 coloring book being sold at Circus Vargas features drawings of the various acts along with their autographs.

Acts depicted in the book are: Wally Eastwood, juggler; Wally Naghtin, bears; Les Victoria, statue act; James Crawford, horse trainer; Darlene and Vanessa, dog acts; Lynn Pape, trapeze; David Polk, tigers; Semon, chimps; The Parays, aerialists; The Paulas and The Alexanders, cradle; Dale Longmire and Billy McCabe, clowns; The Star Lords, flying trapeze; Pepi, Freddy and Tony, high wire; The Charles Troupe, teeterboard act and the Rex Williams Family, elephants.

ROBERT "Locke" LORRAINE, clown, recently returned home after undergoing open heart surgery. He is making good progress.

CINDY HERRIOTT and CHRIS PRICE were married at Sarasota, Fla., on Jan. 8th.

Special Feature

(The following item is part of an article that appeared in the Sarasota Magazine, of Jan. 1983).

Other small circuses are still based in Sarasota and many organizations keep the tradition alive.

Irvin Feld now urges the return of the Ringling circus to Sarasota as well.

Noting he was not yet in control of the "Greatest Show" when the winter quarters moved to Venice 23 years ago, he contends the "citizens of Sarasota should not have let it happen."

Venice "never wanted the circus and we don't belong there," he adds.

"'Circus City, U.S.A.' is really Sarasota, Florida. It should never be anywhere else. If (the city or county government of) Sarasota provided the money, we would make the move. We are not going to make the investment though."

According to Feld, the investment of property and capital would be used to the mu-

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tual advantage of Sarasota and the Ringling circus. If the circus were headquartered in Sarasota, he says, the Felds would build a unique, year-round attraction at the site.

He will not elaborate on his unofficial proposal except to add that the attraction he constructs would be "permanent" and "something no one has ever seen before. It will bring in more tourists than Orlando."

Currently the circus is operated from Washington, from the Felds' national offices. Irvin, who lives in Washington, and Kenneth, a Maryland resident, spend a good deal of time in the Sarasota-Venice area in the fall and early winter.

Clown College, founded by Feld, Sr., when he first bought the circus, runs from Sept. to Nov. annually at the Venice arena. Irvin established the school 15 years ago when he realized only 14 members remained in the famous Clown Alley and the average age was 58. After the clown graduation, the Red Unit of the circus comes home for rehearsal, followed by the Blue Unit. By the end of January both units have premiered their new shows before local audiences and will have "hit the road" for another season.

Obviously the Felds' instincts are more than philanthropic. As Irvin told an interviewer recently, the family has "done all right." But the circus and all it represents

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(Continued on Page 25)

John Strong Show

BY JIM CONLEY

"Wonderful World of Magic" a show that Big John Strong put together for Encore Productions opened its fall tour in San Bernardino, Calif. Oct. 16th.

The show opened with MC Al Leonard singing an introductory tune as a clown paraded through on stilts. The first act was the Rolling Dars unicycle act which featured a jump over two reclining humans. The next act was a new routine put together by the Trampoline Guys involving a mini-trampoline and a large pad. The fast moving action held the audience's attention.

Mark Voza's 'Pirate Birds of the Sea' was an interestingly dressed bird act with Mark as a pirate and very attractively dressed props. Jack Davis assisted by Mary Grant and a large staff of assistants closed the first half with a production cabinet from which he produced a number of people, some dove magic, a thin model sawing-in-halves illusion and the floating lady illusion. The act

was well dressed with scenic effects, chaser lights, etc. They were somewhat hampered by the local fire department which would not let them use their flash pots and fire effects.

The Trampoline Guys opened the second half with their trampoline act which features the triple somersault on the trampoline. This is a Vegas type act which went over big.

Dixie the clown was on next with The Tide gag.

Sir David juggled on the rola bola using rings, tennis rackets, balls and daggers.

Jack Davis followed with the Temple of Benares illusion and the vanish of a girl and cage in mid-air, with the girl reappearing from the auditorium.

A clown did the tight rope bit while the stage was being reset in circus motif. Davis then did the large production of flowers from the Botania, the well-known Zig Zag illusion, a balloon penetration, using spectators from the audience, the Lion cage illusion using a Jargo Lion produced from

(Continued on Page 24)

Show Program

The program presented by the Emmett Kelly, Jr., Circus at Warren Atherton Auditorium, Delta College, Stockton, Calif., on Jan. 8th included:

Wayne Regan and his wild animals; Clown Alley with Timothy and Cheri; The Willetys, juggling/balancing; Hugo Wells with the Hollywood Seals; Emmett Kelly as "The Magician"; Wini McKay, aerialist; Clowns in "The Painter"; Mac, the trained house cat; The Rianos Duo, double wire act; Emmett Kelly, comedy; Chester Cable, foot juggling; The Ferges Troupe, trampoline and Sugar 'n' Spice, aerial cradle.

Show Notes

A recent report indicates it takes the following numbers to keep the RBBB Red Unit on the road:

400 people; Traveling 12,763 miles in 49 weeks on a 42 car train; Putting on 595 performances in 33 cities; 1,000 costumes and 73,800 ft. of rope and wires to rig the show which features 125 actual people in the performance, 21 tigers, 20 elephants, 28 horses, 2 camels, 4 chimps, and a llama.

In a year some 539 tons of hay are required along with 294 tons of straw and some 17,150 tons of meat, 2,450 lbs. of bananas and 9,800 rolls of toilet paper.

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CIRCUS IN INDIA (Continued)

Circus troupes are always on the move, after spending a few nights to a month in a particular location. They usually continue to operate even during the monsoon period of July to September.

On an average a circus troupe performs for 300 days and spends about 65 days in travel during the course of a year.

JOHN STRONG SHOW (Continued)

the cage. The production of a girl from a drum head concluded his act.

The MC introduced all acts for the fibale. Organist Neal Armstrong and Grant Guthry on drums accompanied the show.

I have not seen so many lighting effects, set pieces and portable scenery in a show of this type for a long time. It certainly helped to make this show.

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SPECIAL FEATURE (Continued)

seem to surpass the acquisition of profit. In the same interview Feld contended the "important thing" to him was "not the money but to do what we're doing.

Kenneth echoes the sentiments. "I'm a conservative," he says, referring to his personal spending habits. "I don't want to build a castle or anything like that. What I'm saying is, you can only spend so much money. My idea of success is to do your job well."

When Irvin succinctly states his philosophy and hopes for the future he binds them inextricably with the circus:

"As far as we know, we only go around one time. It is great to leave a legacy. If I could be remembered for just one thing, it would be that I saved the greatest American institution. I'd be gratified for that. I think it's where I've made my mark."

Miscellaneous

Ford Bros. Circus will open its 1983 season at Conroe, Texas, on Feb. 27th. The show will be presented under a brand new all blue canvas big top made by Leaf and measures 120 ft. x 200 ft. This will expand the show's seating capacity and will allow for the use of special lighting during the daytime hours.

Performers, animals and equipment working with the Paul V. Kaye produced Circus in Japan, is expected to arrive in Los Angeles, Calif., about Feb. 23rd. Exact arrival time at the L. A. Airport has not yet been determined.

The Paul Eagle's Circus Luncheon Club will hold its annual circus at the Rancho Los Amigos Hospital in Downey, Calif., on March 8th. Show time is 1 p.m.

FSU Circus

BY JOE WIEBUSH

The Florida State University Flying High Circus appeared in Fruitland Park, Fla. on Saturday, Nov. 20. This show which seldom ventures far from its home base in Tallahassee, was jointly sponsored by Sun Bank and ACA (American Cheerleading Academy) for the benefit of the Florida Elks Harry Anna Crippled Children's Hospital - a local institution. Two shows were presented at 1 and 5 p.m. on the secluded grounds of the ACA. The weather was perfect for the strictly open air performance and the big crowd spoke well of the aggressive advance sale of tickets at all Sun Bank offices.

The show is a strictly extra curricular activity for the students involved. The forty person company travels about six times per semester and the students double as performers and riggers and roustabouts. The circus travels in a large semi, a van and a Greyhound Charter bus. The audience was seated on steel folding chairs set up on the lovely short grass lot. Concessions

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were handled by Sun Bank personnel, except for the T-shirts which the FSU students handled.

As the name implies, it is largely an aerial circus. The rigging consisted of four poles, with the usual high wire, flying trapeze, swinging trapeze, with all nets. There were no rings as such. A solid wooden platform served for the ground acts in 'center ring'. There were no animals (and none expected) and sadly enough, the clowning was minimal. There were no clown acts and few clown costumes in evidence. A delegation of local clowns were on hand - but did not perform.

By 1 p.m. there was an overflow crowd of 2,000 people. Music over the speaker system was suitably loud. The pre-show music was strictly circus calliope to set the mood.

The excellent program lasted for an hour and a half and moved very fast. There was little lost time between acts. Some of the 16 acts were quite short. Unfortunately, there was no printed program available, which made it almost impossible to note the names of the performers, but many of them performed in several acts, in traditional circus fashion.

(Continued on Page 27)

FSU CIRCUS (Continued)

The program: National Anthem with flag salute (an appropriate touch on these grounds, with a large flag billowing in the breeze); High Wire (3 performers); Sky Pole; Swinging Trapeze (excellent); The Imperial Four, balancing by 3 men and a woman; Cloud Swing; Jugglers, 4 men with clubs, a novel act; Rola Bola; Hanging Trapeze - a talented couple; Intermission.

Comedy on the low casting rig, 3 men performing as Batman and Robin; Mexican Cloud Swing; Balancing, 3 men in unusual feats of strength; Slack Wire; Siltwalker; Aerial Ballet, 4 girls aloft, with two couples on revolving ladders; Wheeling Wonders, 5 on a bike; The Flying Seminoles - a traditional flying act.

An unusual show, with some unusual talent presented. As an amateur show, with a professional flair, it would seem in appropriate to criticize any shortcomings by comparison with a circus which is composed of professionals.

The fans got their money's worth and a worthy charity was well promoted. I considered it an afternoon well spent 'at the circus.'

Show in Japan

Acts appearing with the Paul V. Kaye, produced "Korakuen Great American Circus" in Japan were:

The Rix performing bears, The Kneisleys, aerial cradle, Rudolph Delmonte, contortionist, The Plunketts, comedy trampoline, Bobby Moore's Mongrel Revue, Christopher James, tight wire, Wade Burck with the Cuneo white tigers, Miss Najean, single trapeze, My-Immba's African Baboons, Johnson's elephants, The Los Gauchos and The Flying Miklins.

The show's staff consisted of:

Executive Producer and Director, Paul V. Kaye; Assistant to Mr. Kaye, B. Brian Rizzo; Ringmaster-Vocalist, Bob Welz; Rigging and Prop Supt., William Bannister; Special Effects Supt., Robert Moore; Lighting Director, George Spelvin; Electrician, Michael Redpath, Aerial Ballet Director, Donna Mitchell, Wardrobe Mistress, Anna Delmonte, and Promoter, Ralph T. Yempuku.

Music was pre-recorded in Los Angeles with Jack Cervone directing the band, assisted by Don Heaston. Tracey Heaston was the percussionist.

ERIC BRAUN - Clown

by BOB STODDARD

ERIC BRAUN, sixth generation of German circus performers, was born in Tampa, Fla., where his parents - who were sway pole, trapeze and aerial perch artists - were wintering. His father came over here with the Great Arturo, and his mother is somehow related to the Wallendas.

He was raised in the circus, but had to spend one semester in college before he decided, "This isn't for me."

He attended the first Ringling Clown College in 1968 and decided that this was it - at least the beginning of it.

He was a Ringling clown for five years and then decided that he needed more money and it was time to move up, so he put the dog act together.

(Somewhere in here it should be said that he married a French-Canadian woman named Francine, because later on show will become an important part in his act and in the story).

The Felds helped them career-wise and helped him get the bookings that got them started in Europe where they spent three years with several circuses including two French shows, Amar and Bouglione; Benneweis in Denmark and Circo Americano in Italy. During this time they made the circus festival at Monte Carlo and won the Scine et Piste award.

Their comedy dog act is a center ring attraction that worked all over Europe, Circus Circus and other Las Vegas spots, plus several TV shows. Then they came back home, to the Ringling show, where they feel at home and are very happy.

Eric loves to clown and is in the center ring with the garbage can act. He's proud of that. "One of the most difficult things in show business is to be a good clown," he said. "Comedy is something that people want and need. It's a good release from the tension."

The garbage can routine is a great clown act and it tells a story. A simple story about a little dog who lives in a garbage can. This is his home, and this street sweeper (clown) throws trash in on top of him. The dog jumps out, knocks the clown down and then jumps back into the can and throws the pa-

pers out. The clown doesn't know who or what knocked him down so he makes another attempt to do his job, with the same result. It's cute to the audience because the clown keeps putting it in and the dog keeps knocking the can over and taking it out. In the end, the dog wins. People can relate to that.



Eric explained it best. "It's like the little men all over the world who finally win. The government has taken his last dollar, but in the end - he wins. People like that idea."

In their other act, which is pretty much a standard dog act, they have one trick that no one else has been able to duplicate so far. He puts a poodle named Dino on a teeterboard and stomps on the other end. Dino flies through the air in a graceful 9 ft. arc and lands on Eric's hand on his two front paws.

Dino is the most intelligent dog in the act, Eric explained. "It's very hard to teach a dog to do this. When we first started, he was coming off the board in a different direction every time. It is very difficult for a dog to learn when to come off. The tempo

(Continued on Page 29)

Party Time

A Gala Potato Party was held at the Satellite Hotel in Tokyo on Jan. 20th, hosted by Corky Plunkett. Chris Rix was the head chef.

The main course consisted of potatoes, eggs, cheese, onions, bacon and ham, all cooked in a single (only one available) pot. A tossed salad topped with quail eggs was also served.

The only downfall of the evening was the desert because the temperature of the window ledge wasn't cold enough to keep the ice cream bars from melting.

Attending the party were: Albert Chris, and Susan Rix, plus Jeanette, Jeffrey, James and Debbie Plunkett, Doug Terranova and Bob Welz.

PEOPLE

THE AMAZING KRESKIN, the man who reveals other people's thoughts, was a feature guest on the San Francisco TV Show "People Are Talking" on Feb. 4th.

ERIC BRAUN (Continued)

is the important thing. It took him a year and a half to learn the trick - to get the timing down."

Dino is the trouble maker in the act. Today he decided that the act was finished and left before the others did.

Eric said, "I really don't like people to know that I have a dog that leaves before the act is over. Can't we say that he doesn't actually leave that early? We just spend more time styling than he thinks is necessary."

I told you that, later on, Francine would play an important part in the act, and in the story. The act is "Eric and Francine's Dogs," and in 1982 they added seven-year-old son Rickey to it. For 1983 they plan to make it a really big act by adding six year old daughter Neecha for a ring-ful of twelve dogs and four people.

Eric says, "Francine is a great help. She's good with costumes and great moral support."

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Winter Show

The Carla Wallenda Fan Club Newsletter reports the following acts worked a winter date in Kingston, Jamaica, with a show put together by Carla Wallenda.

Razzle Dazzle, opening with entire company; The Vashek Duo, sky-high motorcycle; Space Fantasia with Aerial Ballet, Battle of the Galaxies and Rietta Wallenda, Goddess of the Galaxies; Clowns; Johnny Luxem, Wheel of Destiny; The Flying Lar-rays; The Great Wallendas, high wire; Display with Mario & Doris, hanging perch, Jennifer and Larry, aerial cradle, Valerie & Mike, hanging perch; Clowns; Carla Wallenda, sway pole, followed by a slide-for-life.

On the final show a 650 ft. sky walk was made by Enrico Wallenda, across the stadium. The entire company appeared in the show's finale.

PEOPLE

DOUG and SALLY ASHTON are in Australia where they have joined the Sole Bros. Circus for a 12 month tour.

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Old-time circus man

By NANCY SMELTZER

JEFFERSON — Clowning around in the Akeman household used to be serious business. Clowning was Ted Akeman's career. Greasepaint, funny clothes and a yen for entertainment kept him in the ring nearly 50 years.

Although he rarely uses his greasepaints these days, the spirit of his profession remains. His hearty laugh, quick jokes and a friendly pat on the back exhibit warmth and sincerity.

According to Akeman, who is 77, being a clown is little more than being a kid. And while the years may have taken some spring out of his step and put some gray in his hair, Akeman says "The clown make-up makes you feel like a kid again."

In his Jefferson home, reminders of the circus days fill what Akeman calls his "clown room." It is where Akeman the man and Akeman the clown become one.

On the walls are big, bright portraits of Akeman and posters heralding the arrival of the Ringling Brothers Circus.

Among the keepsakes, his favorite is a music box with a clown that dances to the tune of "Here Comes the Clowns."

"One thing about it, I don't let other kids play with my toys," he said.

Show props, some a bit frayed from years of use, are stacked neatly throughout the room. He keeps his tattered straw hat and greasepaints in worn pasteboard case.

In a small red velvet coffin rests "Martin the Martian," who Akeman introduces in his best side show voice.

"Ladies and gentlemen, you are going to see one of the strangest sights you'll ever see," he says in a serious tone. "This was discovered in the desert near Phoenix by two doctors. Whether or not you believe it, you'll remember it a long time."

Martin is only paper mache, but to the thousands of people who paid 25 cents to see the creature from the outerspace, Martin was the real thing, Akeman said.

So real, in fact, "a lot of people want to buy him," Akeman said. "I didn't especially like him, but he made money."



During his career, Akeman estimates he worked for 15 circuses. Clowning, which he said is one of the lowest-paying jobs in the circus, was not his only line. He also ran a side show and worked as a

(Continued on Next Page)

CIRCUS MAN (Continued)

trapeze artist and as a contortionist.

Akeman started his career in 1922 with the Lamont Brothers Circus which wintered in Salem, Ill., not far from his home in Dixon, Ill.

There he worked as a contortionist, amazing crowds by bending his body in ways most bodies avoid. Angela Akeman, his wife, said he almost could sit on his head.

But his introduction to the circus came long before. Akeman's father, who owned a livery station, often hauled goods from the train station to the circus grounds. Payment included free tickets to the circus.

When Akeman was 16, he asked his father for a trapeze. Instead he received a desk.

Though opinions differed on Akeman's choice of careers, little was done to discourage the venture, he said.

During his career he was known as Ted LaVelda — a stage name he selected simply because "the foreign sounding names carried more weight."

Akeman has scrapbooks filled with clippings of times when the circus in town meant a parade and days of fun as circus people and wagons of exotic animals created an air of excitement.

He points proudly to the front-page coverage he received from the *Toronto Telegram* during a performance for crippled children. But for every big city there were hundreds of tiny towns, he said. The billing card for the 13th week of the Burnett Brothers Circus season in 1935 shows engagements in Ohio ranging from Ashtabula to Elyria and Lorain.

And unless a town was noted for

something really special, sightseeing was limited to the travel from one engagement to another.

Not all Akeman's performances were in circus rings. He recalled a 1935 performance at the 12th Street Reno Club in Kansas City, Mo. Performing on the same stage was a budding musician named Count Basie.

Miscellaneous

Late last year two doctors performed cataract surgery on "Ronnie" a Ringling-Barnum elephant at Venice, Fla. The UPI photo story report said the cataracts were unusual in that the lens tissue of the eye had hardened to become "almost like a rock."

The 22nd elephant born at the Washington Park Zoo in Portland, Ore., was born three weeks ahead of schedule, in December 1982.

The new arrival weighed 180 lbs. Her mother is 'Pet' who had already brought four new offspring into the world. The father is 'Packy' the first elephant born at the zoo nearly 21 years ago.

The Washington Park Zoo is by far the most successful zoo in the world in breeding elephants. Before the newest elephant was born on Dec. 26th, the latest elephant born at the zoo was 'Lu Chai', born Oct. 1.

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