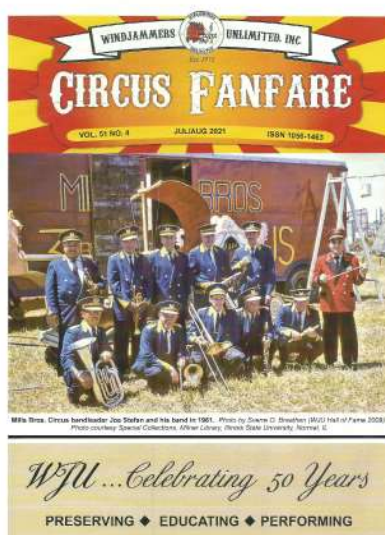


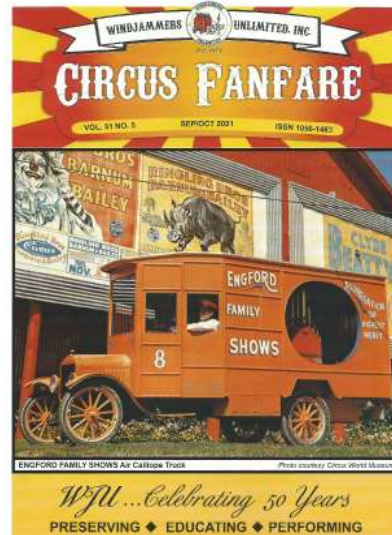
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It's All About the Music!

2021



Windjammers Unlimited
THE CIRCUS MUSIC
HISTORICAL SOCIETY





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1974	Merle Evans	1997	William Pruyn
1975	Fred Jewell	1998	Everette James
1975	Robert Hoe, Jr.	1999	Eddie Woeckner
1976	Vic Robbins	2000	Robert D. Peckham*
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1978	Russell Alexander	2003	Joseph Gorton
1979	Ramon Escorcia	2003	Lewis Bader
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1983	Charles L. Barnhouse	2006	William Sweeney
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1987	Earle M. Moss	2008	George Ganweiler
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1990	Ward Stauth*	2010	Carl "Pop" Neel
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1995	Hale A. Vandercook	2013	Charles H. Bennett, Jr.*

2013	Robert P. Hills, Jr.*
2014	Charlie Stevenson
2014	Joe Basile
2016	Richard Whitmarsh
2017	Keith Greene
2017	Paul Bierley
2018	Thomas G. Canham
2019	Charles E. Ringling
2019	Norman E. Smith
2020	James S. Robinson
2020	James P. Wolfscale

* For service to Windjammers Unlimited

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2018	Connie Thomas* (WJU #1128) Past president; host of six summer meets
2020	Ron Keller* (WJU #492) Past-president; host of three meets; long-time conductor

UNLIMITED, INC.

Table of Contents

P. 1	Cover - <i>Circus Fanfare</i> Covers 2021
P. 2 - 3	Officers & Table of Contents
P. 4	President's Message - <i>Don Covington</i>
P. 5	2022 Convention Playlist - <i>Ron Keller</i>
P. 6 - 9	The Circus Band's Music - <i>Robert C. Holt</i>
P. 10 - 12	Hall of Fame (P.G. Lowery) - <i>Betsy Kellem</i>
P. 13	British Isles Circus Bands - <i>Gavin Holman</i>
P. 14 - 15	Holiday Promos - CFA, CMB, CHS, WJU
P. 16 - 17	1962 Cristiani-Wallace Progr. - <i>Eric Beheim</i>
P. 18 - 19	WJU Fans of Railroading - <i>Rod Everhart</i>
P. 20 - 21	Tribute to Richard E. Prince - <i>Rod Everhart</i>
P. 22	Circus on the Move - <i>Rod Everhart</i>
P. 23	Obituaries - (R. Zellner, T. Shellenberger)
P. 24 - 25	Member Spotlight (Don Albright) - <i>Rod E.</i>
P. 25	WJU Contact and Membership Information
P. 26 - 27	The Henry Fillmore Problem - <i>Andy Glover</i>
P. 27	Back Cover Comments - <i>Chris Berry</i>
P. 28	Back Cover - "100 Railway Cars" Poster



B&B European Tour Poster text: The Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth. A realistic picture of the arrival of our four trains of 70 long railway cars built at Stoke on Trent from American plans to transport the mammoth show from city to city with its horses, two menageries and vast show material. The World's largest, grandest, best amusement institution.

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

ANNUAL DUES

Annual dues for 2022 are to be paid after 10/1/2021 and before 12/31/2021.

Your Board of Trustees decided at their July Board Meeting to increase the annual dues to \$50 for Individuals and \$60 for a family of two (same address). Dues for students are \$20/year.

New members joining between 10/1/2021 and 1/31/2022 are offered a 50% discount on the 2022 Dues.

Pay online or via check to WJU Secretary.

UPCOMING EVENTS

WJU Annual Convention #50 is scheduled for January 11-16, 2022 at the Marriott Courtyard, Bradenton, Florida

WJU Summer Meet will be July 12-17, 2022, Oasis Hotel & Convention Center, Springfield, MO (note the timing has been updated because of hotel availability!)

We look forward to a "live" Convention and Meet once again, but plans are subject to change if conditions warrant.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Don Covington, President, WJU #119



We sure do live in interesting times. Musicians have a reputation for being flexible, adapting as necessary so that they can continue to share their talents despite trying circumstances. There is no better example of this than old time circus musicians who managed to provide marvelous performances while enduring grueling schedules, unpredictable weather and the toll of constant travel. It was a hard life, yet many veterans returned year after year. When asked, they would admit it was not the meager salary they earned or the chance to escape from home that drew them back, but rather the satisfaction of being part of a musical ensemble that was absolutely critical to the success of the show. Their music was the heartbeat and the life blood of the circus. As a bonus, the charts were both a challenge and fun to play. Being part of the circus band made all of the hardships tolerable.

More recently, the lure of playing classic circus tunes as part of a Windjammers circus band has attracted generations of musicians to the sunny South each winter for fifty years. We have survived some highly unusual times. There is nothing better than circus music to revive the spirit and energize the mind. I can't wait to be part of a circus band again. The crowd is forming on the midway; the performers are in wardrobe for the opening. Grab your horn and head for the big top. After a long intermission, it's show time. I look forward to seeing you in Florida in January 2022.

Don



MISSED THE 2021 VIRTUAL SUMMER MEET?

Events are digital, so you can watch at your leisure. Go to mywju.org to register and pay the nominal participation fee of \$20. You will be emailed the Program Booklet which will contain the links to all eleven events.

CORRECTION

The JUL/AUG 2021 cover photo caption was in error. The Sverre Braathen photo was taken in 1960, not 1961 as shown in the Milner Library database, and the bandleader is Joe Rossi. Joe Stefan is the trumpeter second from left. Thanks to Charlie Bennett for catching this.

AMAZON SMILE

Purchasing via Amazon? Use Amazon Smile and WJU receives 0.5%. No cost to you.

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-7356228>

SIDE NOTE

The SEP/OCT 2021 Fanfare had an article on Carl Frangkiser and the Unity Band. John Wetzel notes Keith House (WJU #558) was the cornet soloist for Carl's Unity Band. Keith memorized 11 cornet solos and would rotate them with the band. After Carl died, Keith became its director.

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Go to the Apparel Tab on our website.

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or Mail to Joe Shearin, 1169 Belle Meade Island Dr., Miami, FL. 33138-5253

PLAYLIST FOR JANUARY CONVENTION

January 11-16, 2022 - Music Selected by Ron Keller, WJU #492

MARCHES

Across the Atlantic	Russell Alexander
Air Waves	Joseph Olivadoti
Barnum & Bailey's Favorite +	Karl King
Barnum & Bailey's Royal Pageant	C. E. Duble
Basses on a Rampage	G. H. Huffine
Battle Royal	Fred Jewell
Bennet's Triumphal	M. H. Ribble
The Billboard	John Klohr
Bravura	C. E. Duble
Caesar's Triumphal	G. F. Mitchell
The Cantonians	Russell Alexander
The Center Ring	Karl King
Circus Bandwagon	Merle Evans
Circus King	C. E. Duble
Circus on Parade	Richard Rogers
Circusdom	Fred Jewell
El Caballero	Joseph Olivadoti
El Campo	Fred Jewell
Entry of the Gladiators +	Julius Fucik/Laurendeau
Evan's Fashion Plate	C. E. Duble
Folie's Bergere	Paul Lincke/Royer
From Tropic to Tropic	Russell Alexander
Garland Entree	Karl King
Gloria	F. H. Losey
Greatest Show on Earth +	Victor Young
Hamlin Rifles	R. B. Hall
Harper Joy's triumphal	Charles Post
In Storm & Sunshine	J. C. Heed
Mid-West Glory	Austyn Edwards
Old Berlin	F. Von Blon/Lake
Olympia Hippodrome	Russell Alexander
Pride of the Illini	Karl King
Quality Plus	Fred Jewell
Red Wagons	Merle Evans
Ringling Bros. Grand Entry	Al Sweet
Rolling Thunder	Henry Fillmore
Royal Bridesmaids	John Casto
Royal Decree +	W. P. English
Russian Circus March	Donashevsky
Salute to Sterling	J. J. Richards
Sells Floto Triumphal	Karl King
The Southerner +	Russell Alexander
Trombones Triumphant	Don Keller
Under the Big Top	Charles Storm
War March of the Tartars	Karl King
Wizard of the West	C. E. Duble
Zacatecas	Genaro Codina
The Zouaves	Will Huff

OVERTURES

Golden Dragon	Karl King
Lustspiel	Keler-Bela
Princess of India +	Karl King

TWO STEPS

Country Shuffle	Guy Holmes
Georgia Girl	Karl King
Jungle Queen +	George Barnard
Kentucky Sunrise	Karl King
The Walking Frog	Karl King

GALOPS

The Big Cage +	Karl King
Shoot the Chutes	Russell Alexander
Walsenburg	Karl King
Whip & Spur	Thos. Allen

ONE - STEPS

Broadway One-Step	Karl King
Stop It!	Mel Kaufman

MOOD MUSIC

Passing of the Red Man	Karl King
South of Rio	Joseph Olivadoti
Wyoming Days	Karl King

WALTZES

Among the Roses +	C. L. Barnhouse
Crimson Petal	Fred Jewell
Lady of Spain +	T. Evans/Cailliet
Moonlight on the Nile +	Karl King
Nights of Gladness	C. Aucliffe
Roses of Memory	Fred Jewell
Vision of Cleopatra	Karl King

FOX TROT

Abdalla	Karl King
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SAMBA

Copa Cabana +	Harold Walters
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NOVELTIES

At the Gremlin Ball	Charles Hill
Ferdinand the Bull	Malotte/Yoder
Jolly Tromboneers	Francis A. Myers
Lazy Luke	John Francis Galuska
Military Escort in 5 Ways	Henry Fillmore
Teddy Bears Picnic +	J. Bratton/Yoder
Trombone Blues +	Fred Jewell



+ Indicates Center Ring Concert titles

THE CIRCUS BAND'S MUSIC

By Robert C. Holt, reprinted from *THE HOLTON FANFARE*, Spring 1964 (from Ron Keller collection; images added)

Robert C. Holt taught band in the Lodi (Wisconsin) Schools and received his bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee and his master's from the Madison campus. He is a native of Baraboo, the "Circus City" and former home of the Ringling Bros. Circus, where he gained a natural interest in the Circus. As a member of the Class of 1955 at Baraboo High School, his senior quote was: "I'm not a musician - I am the whole high school band."

Musician's Union 1942

THE "GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH" is here. But wait a minute, something is missing. It doesn't have the emotional impact and the thrill of other years. The performers are of the same fine caliber, but where is the band? Music is coming from a phonograph instead of from the colorful band.

This was the year 1942 when the musicians' union allocated every bit of the United States to one local or another, and union scale applied to the circus. Circus musicians who had been able to get along comfortably on fifteen to twenty dollars a week were now to be paid forty to eighty dollars a week. Mr. North would not pay this amount and the musicians were forced to go on strike.

The canned music which the circus was forced to use was not satisfactory, because music is the heartbeat of the circus. A circus without a band is like a ship without a rudder. The band, with its hundreds of cues, tempo changes, different types of music, varying volumes, rollicking from one mood to another, is the medium that transports the audience subconsciously from their seats to the circus ring to live a part of the performance. It interprets the spirit of the acts, suggests changes and contrasts, and shapes a continued pattern. It lends a subconscious emotional impact at a moment of climax with the drum roll. The band's music lends dignity, poise, and courage to the performer. It is a great inspiration of the performers, both human and animal.

The circus had the band back the following year.

Circus Street Parades

The circus band in the early days was a form of audio advertising. Ticket sellers, animal trainers, roustabouts and anyone that could play a horn was used to make up a band for the circus parade. Upon the completion of the parade, the musicians would return to their regularly assigned duties. At first the band marched in front of the procession. Then the band was put on the bandwagon. Probably somewhere in between came the Ringling Mounted Band of 1897.

The circus street parade began to disappear in the 1920's because cities became reluctant to have heavy wagons tearing up the streets. Also, the circus lot was pushed farther and farther away from the business districts, so parades became too time-consuming, and automobile traffic increased to such a point that streets could not be tied up for that long.

Music in Emergencies

Circus music has been used to keep the crowd calm. Ten Royal Bengal Tigers of the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus just finished their act and were making their way toward their cages. Suddenly the biggest cat sprang on the back of another and sunk his teeth into its neck. Bandmaster Merle Evans, cornet to his lips, shouted, "Repeat to the double bar and ready 'Knights'!" The trainer cracked his whip over the fighting tigers as the others snarled. One crouched and sprang at the trainer. He parried with a stool. A free-for-all seemed inevitable. "Knights", yelled the bandmaster, leading off with his cornet. The crowd seemed to breathe easier, as the band led off with the stirring march "*Knights of the Road*." The trainer managed to get the tigers under control and back to their cages. The band swung into "*Happy Days are Here Again*." With his compelling music and split-second thinking, Evans probably averted a panic.

Sousa's march, "*Stars and Stripes Forever*", is not played in the circus (because of its more classical march style) except when there is a catastrophe. It is a signal to the circus people for an unscheduled 'all out' and is known to them as the "**Disaster March**."



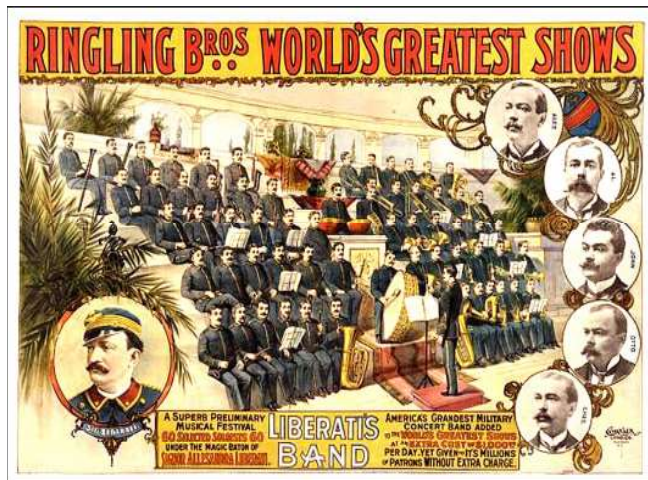
During a circus performance in Hartford, Connecticut, Evans was among the first to spot a flame running along the tent top. He pointed towards it and the band started playing the trio of "*Stars and Stripes*." Upon hearing, like a call to arms, the bull man in the back yelled "Tails" and forty elephants hooked trunks and tails together and were led out. Trainers rounded up the animals and the troupers united to direct the crowd out.

The whole top of the tent was aflame, people were jumping from the bleachers and running for the exits. Evans yelled "Repeat!" Charred canvas was falling over the bandstand and white-hot cables threatened the brass and rhythm men. "Ten more bars!" The kettledrum heads caught fire and the rope holding the main pole started burning. Evans yelled "Jump!" and the pole crashed down, just missing them. Spectators remarked afterwards that it was the band that kept them from panicking.

For accidents of a less catastrophic sort Evans uses what he calls his "chicken song." It has never been written down but the bandsmen know it well and are prepared to play it in case athletes sprawl, horses bolt, rigging fails, canvas rips in the high wind and other less important accidents. It means "Stand-by, performers ... we'll have to take a fresh start."

Center Ring Concerts

The circus performance begins with a thirty-minute band concert in the center ring while people are coming in. This was a classical concert where the band could shine as an attraction. Usually it opened with an overture, such as "*Forza del Destino*" by Verdi, "*Oberon*" by Weber, "*Ruy Blas*" by Mendelssohn, "*Overture to Barber of Seville*" by Rossini, or "*Mirella*" by Gounod. This was followed by a lighter selection like Friml's "*Rose Marie*," Gershwin's "*Rhapsody in Blue*," or Romberg's "*New Moon*." Next was either a march or a suite like Safranek's "*Don Quixote*." A modern foxtrot frequently closed the concert.



Ringling poster promoting Liberati's 60-person band, costing \$1,000 per day but "given to patrons at no extra charge."

A predecessor of the center ring concert was the **Great Liberati's Grand Military Concert Band** of sixty "superb soloists" engaged in 1895 solely for the purpose of playing an innovation in the circus -- the ring concert. It was an hour-long band concert in the center ring consisting of heavy overtures, descriptive pieces, operatic selections, solos by fine soloists, and selections from musical comedies.

When the show is about to start, the band moves to the bandstand, and gets ready to accompany the performers in their acts.

Pre-Season Preparation

Way back in March, the show was really begun. In the circus' winter quarters the bandmaster must watch the acts in rehearsal. Compiling the score demands the greatest of care. First, each number must fit the needs of the act it accompanies and from these rhythmically suited numbers, he must choose those that are expressive as good music and keep to the tradition of the circus.

The bandmaster must first get a rough sketch of the program from the general director. From the choreographer he gets an idea of how the show will be staged. Then the bandmaster must watch and study every act bit by bit, memorizing everything, the timing of each slink of a panther, and each swing by the aerial artist.

The acts are planned and rehearsed without music. From here he must dream up accompaniments to fit each act from original music, familiar music, opera, cakewalks, foxtrots, waltzes, marches, galops, rumbas, and polkas; anything that sounds "circus" and fits the action at hand. He must choose suitable themes or strains running anywhere from 16 to 64 bars,

The big production numbers like the "**Parade of the Holidays**" and "**The Marriage of Gargantua**" are worked out first. Here the music must definitely capture the meaning of the spectacle by awakening memories and associations in the audience.

The average three-hour show requires approximately 200 cues or music changes blended together into one score. The numbers must be carefully fitted together. Many modulations are used, for it would sound monotonous if the score were all in one key, and much of the effect would be lost. When a new act begins, when a great production number enters, when an emotional lift is needed, a modulation is used.

The circus performance is made up of many different acts, each requiring its own kind of music. Because certain music was needed for certain circus acts, composers of band music began to turn their talents toward the music of the circus as they (the composers) turned circus musician and circus band leaders and realized its need. Of course, many of the accompaniments for the acts still used existing familiar musical literature.

Wire Acts

Among the performers in the circus were the wire artists. The tight wire artists required eccentric dance music for their act. "*In a Persian Market*" adds gaiety and interest to these acts. The slack wire walker dressed in his Spanish finery and executing intricate Spanish steps on the metallic thread, could not be expected to perform without a lively Mexican or Spanish dance like the "*Fontella*" Cuban dance by W.H. Kiefer. An example of the high wire act's accompaniment might be one of the Wallendas': "*It's Been So Long*"; waltz;

"Sin to Tell a Lie"; "Would You?"; "Two Hearts in $\frac{3}{4}$ Time"; Galop: "They're Off" by Jewell (performers descend from high wire and the Bb concert chord ends the lengthy score).



Aerial Flyers on the Trapeze

In the graceful trapeze act, the toe tapping beat of a march would be greatly out of place. The music should be a dreamy waltz of marked and continuous rhythm but without conflicting rhythms within the strain. The swing of the waltz should make the spectator swing along with the rhythm of the trapeze. The music should be melodic but not technically showy enough to distract from the performer.

The soft, quiet music makes it possible for the artists way up in the peak of the tent to hear the cues and commands that are so important to the proficiency of their dangerous work. The performers feel a sense of relaxation and calmness from hearing the quiet, restful rhythm of the smooth legato tones of the waltz. Notable examples are the "Southern Rose Waltz" by K.L. King, "Wedding of the Winds" by John T. Hall, "Spring, Beautiful Spring," "Tales of Vienna Woods," "Skaters Waltz," "Crimson Petal Waltz," and the "Hungarian Rhapsody #2." The last two numbers were from the act of Lillian Litzel, the aerialist with the Ringling Brothers Circus who was killed in Denmark when the rigging failed. Merle Evans would not thereafter use any of her music.

The Clowns

The clowns, cavorting their nonsense around the hippodrome track, show off to an accompaniment of blaring trombones sliding around the scale, and cornets giving out with a little jazz which creates the atmosphere of joy and gay abandon that completes the setting for the clowns. It is rollicking music that is fast, then slow, to provide the variety which is the chief stock in trade of the clowns.

For their entrance, the clowns use a fast galop like "High Riding." The "Anvil Chorus" might be used as an accompaniment for walking around. Life was also pumped into the clowns with Fred Jewell's "Trombone Blues," Fillmore's "Lassus Trombone," and Harry Alford's "Clownette." They might even buckety-buck to a popular number like "Ac-cen-tchu-ate the Positive."

Popular Pachyderms - The Elephants

The elephants need ponderous music to emphasize their ponderousness. The heavy strains of Fučík-Laurendeau's "Entry of the Gladiators" (*Thunder and Blazes*) and W.P. English's "Royal Decree" fit the elephant act.

In 1941 a special act was planned for the elephants called the "Ballet of the Elephants." This was to be an extravagant ballet with ladies in exotic dress and fifty elephants in fetching ballet skirts. First the ladies danced regular ballets (condensed versions) to Weber's "Invitation to the Dance" and the "Dance of the Hours." Then the elephants were to perform to a specially written number by a serious composer, Igor Stravinsky.

John Ringling North telephoned Stravinsky and asked him to write the music for the ballet. George Balanchine worked out the choreography and sent it to Stravinsky requesting four minutes and fifteen seconds of music.

The maestro failed to take the circus people seriously until North called again to find out how it was progressing. He suddenly realized that North was serious about having him, one of the greatest composers of the present day, compose music for the circus. This was a far cry from the symphony, opera and the ballet.

The impact of the commission staggered Stravinsky because maybe he thought the circus was too foreign to his aesthetic ability to warrant his great musical mind to be used for such purpose. This was too much for him. He went home (according to the story, and it could be just a story!) and sat at a table incubating possible inspirational potential for elephantine music. Incubation completed – he wrote.

The elephant ballet was born – making circus history, because it is the first and only time that a "long hair" was ever commissioned to write music for the circus – and this metaphorical musical phantasmagoria cost the circus \$1500.



George Balanchine mollifying a temperamental ballet dancer. Merle Evans often commented he didn't like Stravinsky's "Circus Polka" score, the band didn't like playing it, and the elephants didn't want to work with the music either.

Horse Acts

Horse acts used practically every type of music. They are particularly conscious and alert to changes of musical tempos. The horses are rehearsed first in the routines, and the music is then set to this routine. The horses and animals do not keep time with the music. The band watches the animals and takes the tempo from them. A typical program for the bare-back riders would be: "*Regimental Pride*" by Heed (entrance); "*La Pere De La Victoire*" (*Father of Victory*) by Ganne; "*Siboney*" (rumba); "*South American Joe*"; "*Lady in Red*"; "*Grand Galop Militaire*" by C. Bohn.

Spirited marches in 6/8 time like Vandercook's "*Our Colonel*" and "*High Pride*" by J.C. Heed seem to make little ponies prance all the more. A program for Rudy Rudynoff's thoroughbreds was: "*Coe Band March*" (entrance); "*March of Time*"; "*Don't Give Up the Ship*"; "*Dancing Feet*" (fox trot); "*Diane*" (waltz); "*You*" (fox trot); "*Galop Topertitt*" by Dolby (finish).

The **galop** is a type of number used often in horse acts and also in many of the other acts, particularly for entrances and exits. It is used to give the effect of speed and whirlwind dare-devil action. To instill in the mind the speed of the horses and the truly daredevil feat of the rider balancing himself on his plunging, snorting, wide-eyed steed, the band plays at a furious tempo (one to a bar, but written in two) with heavy drums and screaming brass.

The galop in the form that we know it today was devised and put into use by Mr. William Sweeney [*WJU Hall of Fame 2006*], a Sheridan, Wyoming barber and small-town band leader who went with the **Buffalo Bill Wild West Show**. Sweeney saw the need for this type of music to bring to the human musical mind a picture of galloping horses, steer roping, and bucking broncos. He took the galop that is found occasionally intermixed in the scores of operas and put it into practical use in the band. It has had wide-spread use in the circus. Some examples of the galop are: "*The Steeplechase Galop*" – R. Alexander; "*They're Off*" – F. Jewell; "*The Bastinado Galop*" – R. Alexander; "*Galop Prince of Decorah*" – P.G.

Lowery; "*Winter Sports Galop*" – G. Holmes; "*Sunshine Galop*" – K.L. King; "*Galop Go*" – Fred Jewell; "*Big Cage Galop*" – K.L. King.

Wild Animal Acts

The wild animal acts often use music from the Far East, and especially from India. "*Purple Carnival*" is a favorite for the cat acts and numbers of this sort.

Acrobats

To march in their places in the ring, a selection like the "*Parade of the Wooden Soldiers*" is played for the acrobats. They might continue their act to some Spanish manuscripts such as "*Contrabandista*" and "*Chavalayo, Ado De Espano*" and concluding with Ivan Bchokoff's "*The Cossack Patrol*."

Finale - The SPEC

For a finale the circus includes a "spec" or spectacle in which all the circus performers take part in a parade around the tent. Slower marches are used. It takes place near the end of the program rather than at the beginning because people might still be coming in at the beginning. It might be compared to the "curtain call" of the theatrical world.

Superstitions

As in much of the show world, the circus music one has its own jinx or superstitions. Merle Evans to this day will not play the "*Light Cavalry Overture*" by Von Suppé. He played the overture while with the Buffalo Bill Show and his first chair clarinetist died almost immediately. His band played it again after a few years when he was with a carnival and the horses ran away with the bandwagon, killing several of the bandsmen. He played it with his Ringling Band and the circus was involved in a train wreck that night. This is evidence enough to make anyone superstitious.

Conclusion

The music is certainly an integral part of the circus. The original circus band music that is written by circus people remains a tremendous monument to the music of America.

Merle Evans during his off season with the circus travels throughout the Midwest, guest conducting and giving the music students much of his vast circus band knowledge. Mr. Fred Parfrey, high school band director at Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, presents high school circus band concerts with Merle Evans as the featured star. Mr. Evans conducts the band, plays his little cornet with the band and gives a short talk about the circus. Mr. Parfrey's concerts are programmed almost entirely of circus music.



Merle's early 1960s circus band. Though smaller than the grandiose bands of yesteryear, these explosive bands still rocked the rafters and went like the wind.

Circus Band Music is a definite educational medium that has given teaching material and much inspiration to the music students of America.



WINDJAMMERS HALL OF FAME

P. G. LOWERY (1869-1942), Inductee 1996

By Betsy Golden Kellem - attorney, historian and author. Her blog is *Drinks With Dead People*

If I say the words “circus music,” you probably have a certain type of music in your mind straight away – something loud, fast and slightly drunk – like a 1902 band recording of a typical “galop.” And that’s certainly on point, but it doesn’t clue you in to the fact that during the early 20th century, while largely white bands played under the big top, some of the most exciting circus music was happening over in the sideshow, where bands made up of black musicians not only played fast marches and brassy trombone “smears,” but innovated in ragtime, jazz and blues years before they would come into full public popularity.

Perhaps the most impressive figure in these groups was the bandleader P.G. Lowery, a classically-trained cornet player who boiled down his many successes into a simple motto: “Good things cometh to he who waiteth as long as he hustleth while he waiteth.”

Perry George Lowery was born in Topeka on October 11, 1869, to formerly enslaved parents who settled in Kansas after the Civil War. The Lowerys were a musical family and formed a community brass band while working to establish and enlarge their land claim.

A talented musician from childhood, P.G. claimed to have been largely self-taught – having left school to work on the farm, he found an old cornet in the attic and practiced in the barn whenever he could. He worked his way into local bands and competitions, and in 1895 enrolled in the Boston Conservatory of Music, where he was its first African-American graduate.

For the first quarter of the 20th century, the circus was a reliable source of work for black musicians, who made up the majority of “sideshow bands,” and Lowery settled on the circus as a primary source of work.

Despite criticism of the circus as a low-class industry, Lowery emphasized its opportunity for African-American musicians: “It is generally understood by the public at large,” he said, “that circus people have a tough time. I deny the assertion and will say for good treatment, equal justice and sure salary, give me the circus.”

A gifted businessman as well as a musician, Lowery advocated for other black performers and employees: training leaders and musicians, creating opportunities for



P.G. Lowery's Band & Minstrels, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, ca. 1919. Photo courtesy New York Public Library

talented black performers, and improving overall labor conditions at the circus, going so far as to lead a 1915 strike on the Hagenbeck-Wallace show in protest of wage and benefit cuts for black staff members. Historian Sakina Hughes notes that he “*protested the demeaning messages of the minstrel show with his own touring show called, ‘This is Not a Minstrel Show,’ and formed a labor union for black showmen to help ensure that wages, living conditions and benefits were up to standard.*”

Lowery was renowned for the quality of his band and the ability to teach others in a certain style and quality of performance, making others recognizable as being from the “Lowery school.” A report in the Indianapolis Freeman in 1913 noted that each member of the band was always “*striving hard to be able to add credit to the world-wide reputation of Mr. Lowery as a bandmaster, and to be able to play with credit in any band in the United States, as P.G. always freely shares his schooling, which he paid very dearly for in Boston.*”

That said, it was not a free and easy path. Lowery succeeded in obtaining a dedicated train car for his musicians on the road, but that was less a prestige move than a necessity, traveling amongst segregation and prejudice.

Sideshow bands were still secondary to the white main-tent ensembles. And there was a lot of dog-whistle journalism around Lowery’s ability and race, despite the fact that all evidence points to the fact that the “best under canvas” label was not an exaggeration. One concert review notes that Lowery captivated the crowd by holding a note for sixty seconds. A Kansas newspaper, the Eureka Herald, claimed: “*...if it was not for his color [Lowery] would probably be looked upon as the peer of any living cornetist.*” The Herald also quoted the Bedford (Iowa) News as saying, “*Kansas has one of the greatest colored protégés in the person of Mr. P.G. Lowery, the cornet soloist who thrilled the city with enthusiasm. Just think! He never took a lesson on the instrument he is the master of. He has the greatest compass, the fastest execution, the sweetest tones of any cornetist that has ever visited our city, and he is a gentleman.*”

For his part, Lowery maintained forward momentum as a matter of principle, saying:

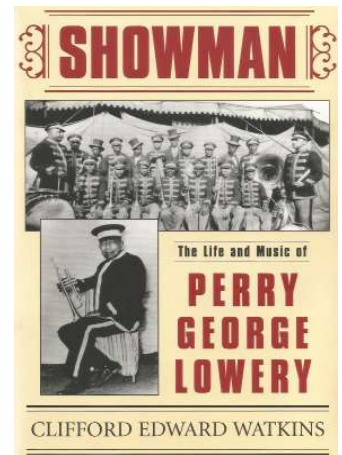
“I attribute the success of my band to private training. All band masters [should] know the possibilities of each member of his band and select music within the limit of their ability. In conclusion as we are about to take one more step from the old year to the new let us start with renewed vigor; let us march hand in hand and throw off all appearance of malice and back-biting and as we reach the top we must work hard to hold our place. We must constantly produce something new to attract the attention of those below us.”

Hard work paid off: having toured and played with his own ensembles and many of the major circuses, in 1920 P.G.

Lowery brought his band to Madison Square Garden for the opening of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey show’s New York run, where they were the first black band to play for the main show.

Fun Facts:

Biographer Clifford Watkins suggests that Lowery’s path to the Boston Conservatory was paved by competition winnings – he believes that the prize in an 1894 competition at the **Hutchinson** (Kansas) **Musical Jubilee** for the “finest rendered cornet solo” may have been scholarship funds to the Conservatory.



Ragtime was growing in popularity during the late 19th and early 20th century period during which Lowery’s bands were entertaining circus audiences, and Scott Joplin was among those who sang Lowery’s praises. The composer dedicated his 1902 piece “*A Breeze From Alabama*” to Lowery.

Lowery’s only known composition is “*The Prince of Decorah*” Galop (1905), dedicated to his friend, Benjamin O. Marsh, and published by B.O. Marsh of Decorah, Iowa.

Circus bands were versatile and hardworking, with those in the biz referring to musicians as “windjammers” for the amount of air they pushed through horns for hours and hours on end. In any circus, musicians were an indispensable part of the show. Bands entertained passing customers and accompanied barkers shouting their pitch – or “bally” – out on the sideshow and the midway; played in parades and concerts; and in a tent, musicians would set tempo, punctuate action (not unlike a movie score), provide sound

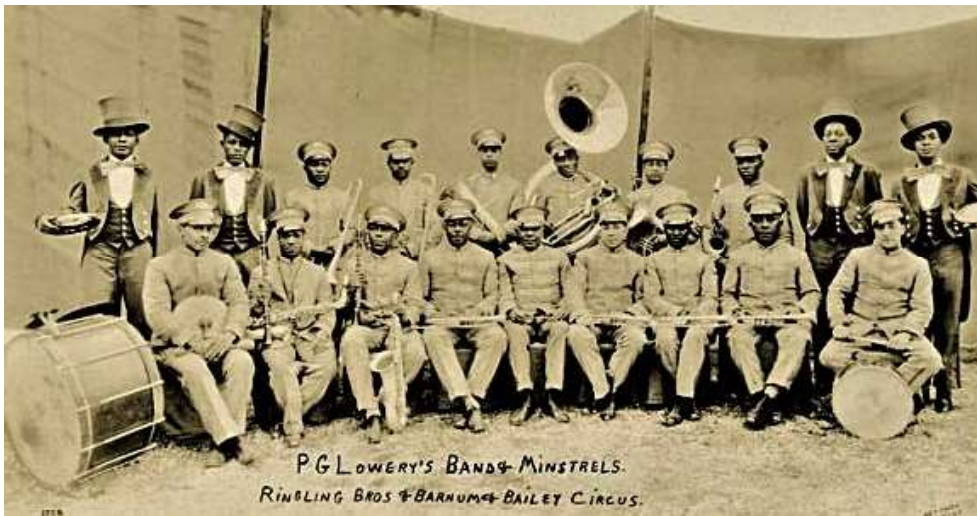
effects, whip up emotion or patriotism, and even signal staff if something wasn’t right. Circus musicians had to be skilled, nimble, resilient and – yes – able to jump on the bandwagon.



Following other circus gigs noted on the next page, Lowery was with Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus 1919 to 1931. Afterwards, he was with other shows until his death at age 73 in Cleveland, Ohio on December 15, 1942.



P.G. Lowery's Band with Ringling-Barnum, 1930s. Photo courtesy of Ringling Museum



P.G. Lowery's Band & Minstrels, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, ca. 1924.



Lowery with his cornet, 1902

Prior to his April 16, 1919 to September 12, 1931 stint with the Ringling-Barnum show, P.G. Lowery worked with the Sells Bros. & Forepaugh Circus, Hagenbeck-Wallace, Ringling Bros. Circus, Cole Brothers, and Barnum & Bailey. After Ringling-Barnum, he was with Gorman Bros. Circus, Cole Bros.-Clyde Beatty Circus, Robbins Bros. Circus, Downie Bros. Circus, and lastly, the Cole Bros. Circus.



P.G. Lowery's Band, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, 1920s.

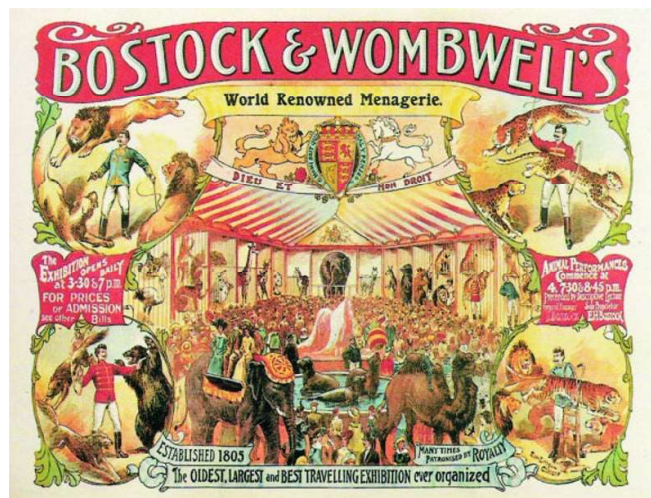
BRITISH ISLES 19th CENTURY CIRCUS BANDS

News Extracts Collected by Gavin Holman, WJU #3943 - www.ibew.co.uk

PART 3 - 1884 to 1887

The life and times of circus and menagerie bands in the British Isles in the 19th century – extracts from contemporary reports:

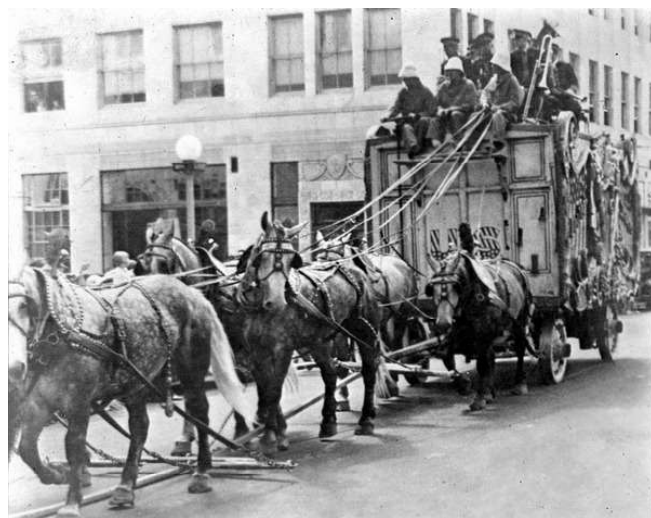
- **Harmston's Circus Band** had the sad duty, during the circus' visit to York in September 1884, of playing at the funeral of the clown "Little Bell" (real name James Bell) who died suddenly on his way home after a performance.
- **Sanger's Circus** performed at Sandringham in January 1885, and the Circus Band, led by Vincent C. White, entertained the crowds as they awaited the Royal party.
- **Hengler's Circus** appeared at Nottingham in February 1885, and it was noted that **Hengler's Circus Band**, led by Charles Elcock, was a pleasing exception to the rule that circus bands were generally of an inferior character and sometimes even agonizing to listen to. It was regarded as being the best in the country, with a good and varied repertoire, with each performer a master of his instrument. In September 1885, the Circus Band's conductor was George Clements.
- **Bostock & Wombwell's Menagerie** visited Helensburgh in April 1885, and the Menagerie Band, set up outside the show, was a significant attraction.



- In June 1885, **Bostock & Wombwell's Menagerie** were at the far end of the country, at St Ives. They then processed from there to Penzance led by the Menagerie Band, with the "musicians in a gay uniform in an imposing band carriage, drawn by a very fine elephant."
- The **Bostock & Wombwell's Menagerie** arrived in Torquay, based at Ellacombe, in July 1885. During their stay, the local Salvation Army, with its band, passed down the side of the exhibition, musicians blowing. The Menagerie Band took this as a challenge, commencing with the air "The Campbells are Coming." Each band blew its strongest,

and "a fearful din was the result, but the menagerie band prevailed, and the crowd cheered its victory."

- **Bostock & Wombwell's Menagerie Band** contributed to the celebrations in Edinburgh, seeing in the New Year of 1886, performing and entertaining the throngs of people in the High Street.
- **Hengler's Circus** appeared in Huddersfield, settling in St Paul's Street, in September 1886. The Circus Band, of twelve performers, played a wide selection of music, including "The Standard Bearer" (Meyer), and the overture to "The Bohemian Girl" (Balfe).
- **Cook's Royal Circus** was appearing in Glasgow in March 1886, when the Circus Band resigned after an argument with the manager, Charles Reed, over them being required to do window billing and pass out tickets in addition to their musical duties. The band members were Mr Beckett (leader), H.M. Holding, G. Taylor, T. Oakes, W. Yetman, W. Mason, J. Nolan, H. Gresty, and Tom Burt.
- The celebrations in Falmouth for Victoria's Jubilee in June 1887 were enhanced by the use of the visiting **Wombwell's Menagerie Band**, band carriage, camels, elephants, and horses for the grand procession. This echoed the similar event for the coronation of Queen Victoria in 1838 when, coincidentally, Wombwell's Menagerie had also been in Falmouth, and played for the celebrations.



Wombwell's Menagerie Band

George Wombwell (1777-1850) was the most famous of Victorian menagerie exhibitors and showmen. It began with buying two boas from South America and exhibiting them in taverns. He rapidly added exotic animals from Africa, Australia and South America, forming his traveling menagerie in 1810. By 1839 he had fifteen wagons and a brass band.

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The 1962 Cristiani-Wallace Bros. Circus Musical Program

An Overview by By Eric Beheim, WJU #66

Eric Beheim continues his series of documenting the Musical Programs of various circuses. This is the 18th consecutive Circus Fanfare with one or more of his articles. We greatly appreciate Eric's support of the Windjammers Unlimited Preservation and Education Mission as it relates to the music of the American circus.

In 1934, the Cristiani Family suspended their circus operations in Italy and came to America to perform their world acclaimed bareback riding act for the **Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus**.

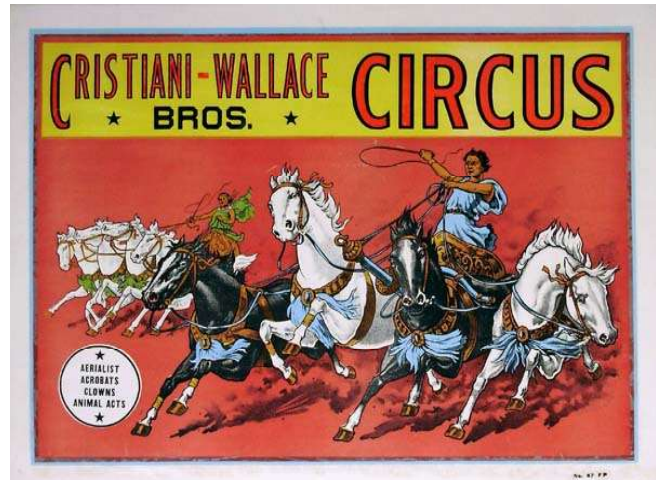
After touring with Ringling and other circuses for a number of years, in 1948 Papa and Mama Cristiani, along with their children and grandchildren, became partners in the King Bros. Circus. In 1952 and 1953, the show was known as the **King Bros. & Cristiani Circus**.

In 1954, the Cristianis started their own circus under the title **Bailey Bros. & Cristiani Circus**. Moving on trucks and appearing in ballparks rather than in a tent, Bailey Bros. & Cristiani made history by becoming the first circus to appear in Alaska after having traveled there via the Alcan Highway.

In 1956, the show was reorganized as an under-canvas operation and was renamed **Cristiani Bros. Circus**. By the late 1950s, it was traveling on a fleet of fifty-two trucks and was considered by many to be second only to the Ringling show in terms of size and the quality of its performance.

Adding to the success of the Cristiani Bros. Circus was a band made up of first-class players performing musical programs that favored the works of Karl L. King, J. J. Richards, Fred Jewell, Walter P. English, and other traditional circus music composers.

The Cristiani Bros. Circus' 1959 musical program was the subject of an article that appeared in the previous issue of *Circus Fanfare*, Vol. 51, No. 3, MAY/JUNE 2021.



By the early 1960's, economics had reduced the Cristiani circus, now renamed **Cristiani - Wallace Bros.**, to a medium- sized truck show touring mostly east of the Mississippi River. Unlike many of the other smaller circuses whose "bands" consisted of only two or three players, Cristiani-Wallace continued to use a band of at least 8 players.

In 1962, the Cristiani-Wallace bandleader was Howard Stratton. Compared to the other circus bandleaders who toured in the early 1960s, not too much is known about Stratton other than he returned to conduct the Cristiani-Wallace band again in 1963. It is probably safe to assume, however, that he was an experienced circus musician and a fine bandleader.

In October 1962, some far-sighted circus music fan arranged to record a Cristiani - Wallace Bros. Circus performance while the show was playing in Eau Gallie, Florida. Abridged to 76 minutes, this recording has been circulating on the collectors' market for many years now.

Recently, Don Covington (WJU #119), Andy Glover (WJU #423) and I listened to this recording with the idea of listing the music titles it contains. In summary, we all agreed the band "hung tough" throughout the performance, especially on the galops.

Since most of the announcements were edited out, we could only guess at the acts this music was accompanying. In some cases, the musical selections themselves helped to identify the type of act being presented. The acts listed in the following year's 1963 Cristiani-Wallace souvenir program suggested some additional possibilities.

Here are the titles we were able to come up with from the 1962 Cristiani-Wallace musical program:

Opening Fanfare: *Light Cavalry Overture Fanfare* (Suppé)

Act 1 - Mixed Wild Animal Act

William Tell Storm Music (Rossini), *Salute to the Sultan* (King), chord, (unidentified), *Abdallah* (King), *Around the World* (Young), chord, *Col. Bogey* (Alford), chord, *El Cumbanchero* (Hernandez), *Begin the Beguine* (Porter), chord, *The Big Cage Galop* (King), *Teddy Bears' Picnic* (Bratton), *The Big Cage Galop* (reprise), *Bows Fanfare*

Act 2 - (dog act?)

This Could Be the Start of Something Big (Allen), *The Most Beautiful Girl in the World* (Rodgers), *Anna in Cuba*, (unidentified waltz), *The Lady in Red* (Wrubel), *Poor Butterfly* (Hubbell), *This Could be the Start of Something Big* (reprise), (unidentified pseudo-American Indian number)

Act 3

Quality Plus (Jewell), (unidentified waltz), (unidentified), chord, (unidentified), chord

Act 4 - Clowns

Stop It! (Kaufman)

Act 5 - (Oscar Cristiani's Performing Baby Elephant?)

Arabian Nights (King), *Hearse Song*, (unidentified march), *Beautiful Ohio* (Earl), *The Merry-Go-Round Broke Down* (Friend), *Turkey in the Straw*, *Streets of Cairo** (Bloom), (unidentified march), (unidentified march), (unidentified march), *March of the Toys* (Herbert), *Kiefer's Special* (Kiefer), *Charmaine* (Rapee), *Kiefer's Special* (reprise), drum roll, *Kiefer's Special* (reprise)

Act 6

Ringling Bros. Grand Entry (Sweet), (unidentified), *Tequila* (Flores), *Eclipse Galop* (King), chord, *Eclipse Galop* (reprise)

Act 7

On the Warpath (King), *Tenderly* (Gross), (unidentified galop), *On the Warpath* (reprise)

Act 8 - Oscar Cristiani Elephants

Thunder and Blazes (Fucik), *Alice Blue Gown* (McCarthy), *My Hero* (Straus), (unidentified twist number), *Turkey in the Straw*, *Streets of Cairo** (Bloom), *Royal Decree* (English), *London Bridge*, *Royal Decree* trio, chord, *Garland Entree* (King), chord, (unidentified)

Act 9 -

(Leaping over Elephants?)

Big Cage Galop (King), *Circus Echoes* (Hughes), *Big Cage Galop* (reprise), drum roll, *Big Cage Galop* (reprise)

Act 10 -

(Liberty Horses?)

The Huntress (King), (unidentified waltz), *Deep Purple* (DeRose), (unidentified march), *At a Georgia Camp Meeting* (Mills), (unidentified march reprise), *Dixie* (Emmett), chord, (unidentified march reprise)

Act 11 - Clowns

Kentucky Sunrise (King)

Act 12

There's No Business Like Show Business (Berlin), *Manhattan* (Rodgers), chord, *There's No Business Like Show Business* (reprise)

Act 13 -

(Hippo walkaround?)

Jungle Queen (Barnard)

Act 14 - High Jumping Horses

Geneva Galop (Richards), *Excelsior Galop* (King), *Homestretch Galop* (King), *Homestretch Galop* (reprise three times)

Act 15 - Clowns

In My Merry Oldsmobile (Edwards)

Act 16 - Cannon

Beyond the Blue Horizon (Whiting), cannon shot, *Beyond the Blue Horizon* (reprise)

Playout Music

Stars and Stripes Forever trio (Sousa)



** *Streets of Cairo* (Bloom) is alternatively known as *Dance of the Midway*. This is the "Hoochie-Koochie" tune (i.e. "On the other side of France, where the people wear no pants.") It is attributed to Sol Bloom, who managed the **Streets of Cairo** midway attraction at the **1893 Chicago World's Fair**. The tune was never copyrighted and has been used continuously ever since. This is a traditional elephant act number for Cristiani.

THE WJU & RAILROADING CONNECTION

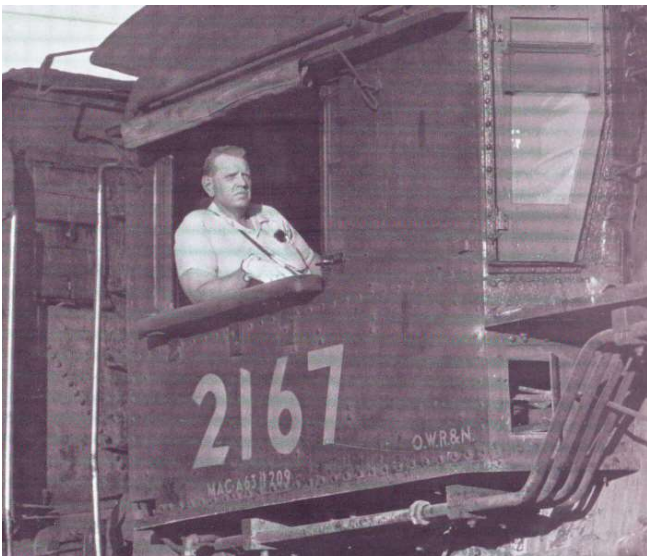
By Rod Everhart, WJU #1351



The Team that got Windjammers Unlimited rolling (left to right): Art Stensvad (Co-Founder, WJU #2), Bob Hills (1st President, WJU #71), Ward Stauth (Secretary/Treasurer, WJU #82) and Charles Bennett, Jr. (Co-Founder, WJU #1)

To many current Windjammers Unlimited members, it may come as a surprise that some number of our earliest members carried a "Railroad Buffs" label in addition to loving circus music. The four fellows who got WJU off the ground were all big railroad fans, and because of that many of those they encouraged to join WJU also had a railroad connection.

Charlie H. Bennett, Jr. (WJU #1) and **Arthur E. Stensvad** (WJU #2) launched Windjammers Unlimited on January 1, 1971. Art was a long-time employee of the Union Pacific Railroad, having spent many years as a locomotive engineer.



Art Stensvad in 1955 on duty with Union Pacific

One of America's most famous steam engines was Union Pacific #844. Art was in the cab for #844's last regular freight service run. That engine was also known as the "Living Legend", built in December 1944 as a class "FEF-3" 4-8-4 "Northern" type steam locomotive capable of between 4,000 and 5,000 drawbar horsepower and running at up to 120 mph. Most of its career was pulling passenger trains, but from 1957 to 1959, when diesel-electric locomotives took over passenger service, #844 was reassigned to fast freight

service in Nebraska. Union Pacific #844 still exists as one of only two operational steam locomotives left on the Union Pacific roster, but it is only used for "celebrity runs" such as the "Cheyenne Frontiers Day" excursion.

In 1991, Art Stensvad authored a book about the steam-to-diesel transition of the Union Pacific Railroad in North Platte, Nebraska. The book is titled "**High Iron to North Platte: The Union Pacific Railroad in Transition, 1940-1959**".

Art died July 18, 1998 and a dozen years later, his son, R.D. "Bob" Stensvad, issued a third edition of the book.



Charlie Bennett's connection with the railroads started with his father, **Charles H. Bennett, Sr.** (WJU #148), who had a railroad career spanning more than 40 years. He introduced Charlie to Art Stensvad, knowing that Art also loved circus music. While Charlie grew up in a "railroad" household, his direct tie to railroads was his career with the Railroad Retirement Board. Not surprisingly, Charlie has an extensive collection of model trains taking up space in his basement.

During a rare in-person visit with Art, Charlie was able to sit in the locomotive cab of a Union Pacific engine in North Platte, NE. Charlie acknowledges that he did not run the train, but Art did let him pull the whistle cord a few times.



Charlie Bennett, Jr. testing out the engineer's seat

First WJU President **Robert P. Hills, Jr.** (WJU #71) was also "a big train nut." He belonged to at least one railroad museum and loved to go trackside, shooting railroad and circus photos.

Initial WJU Secretary/Treasurer **Ward Stauth** (WJU #82) was another enthusiast riding the rails, photographing trains, and playing circus music on his tuba. In particular, Ward knew a lot about the Louisville, New Albany, and Corydon

line. On his first visit to Stauth's farm in Corydon, IN, Charlie Bennett, Jr. was given a first-class tour of the short line railroad's facilities.

Windjammer **Lloyd E. Stagner** (1923-2008) was a prolific author of books regarding railroads. He is credited with 31 books on railroading, with titles such as: *Chicago Great Western, Illinois Central Steam Finale, Santa Fe 1940-1971, Rock Island, North American Hudsons (The 4 6 4 Steam Locomotive), Frisco Steam Finale 1946-1952, Missouri Pacific Steam Finale*, and *Burlington Route Steam Finale*.

Another early WJU member who favored trains was **Fred W. Schmidt** (1936-2009), who became a WJU Trustee in 1981. Fred was a tuba player who often was playing in the percussion section. He lived in a rural area north of Abilene, KS and had an old railroad private car parked in his front yard. Fred had worked a few summers out of Durango, CO on the Rio Grande Narrow Gauge Railroad's steam locomotive as a fireman.

Clarinet player **Bob Harrison**, WJU #8, was a circus gig buddy of Charlie Bennett and he also loved to ride on trains. On three occasions the two of them attended the WJU Convention by traveling via Amtrak. Meeting them at the train depot for the very first Convention in Key Biscayne, FL in January 1973 was another train buff, **Jack "Tiny" Stagg** (WJU #140).

Ed Ballenger (WJU #597) was another huge train fan. Ed played baritone at WJU events and did his best to capture video and audio snippets of our recording sessions. Members who knew him well probably still have a box of his VHS tapes in a closet somewhere. But Ed also loved "chasing" trains, riding steam trains at every opportunity.



Rich "All Aboard Amtrak" Copeland (WJU #1849) retired from Amtrak in 2014 and loved Club Cars as well as *Barnum & Bailey's Favorite*. Rich, at his office at Philadelphia's 30th Street Station, collected tickets and revenue from the Keystone Service conductors, and maintained the inventory



Rich Copeland as an Amtrak employee prior to retiring in 2014

of ticket punch devices. Rich once reported "*We have over 1,400 cut shapes. Only rarely do you ever see any two exactly alike.*"

Without question, many of our other Windjammers members have significant railroading experiences, and/or have model railroads sequestered in their basements. Past WJU presidents Ron Keller and Don Albright are certainly examples of that. Frequent *Circus Fanfare* author **Eric Beheim** (WJU #66) routinely rides the rails, documenting in detail his journeys and sharing them via the **Amtrak Unlimited** on-line forum. Further, Eric loves photographing O-gauge toy trains in realistic diorama scenes. **Classic Toy Trains** magazine frequently publishes his photos relative to his rail photo recreations in miniature. Here is a sample:



Another Windjammer member who had a significant connection with railroading was **Richard E. Prince** (WJU #902). Like Art Stensvad, he had a career with Union Pacific. He published ten books relating to certain railroads and their history. More importantly, while with WJU, he posted an incredible 61 articles to the *Circus Fanfare*. His legacy is worth further comment, so please read more about Richard in the following "**Tribute to Richard E. Prince**" article.

Since railroads were so instrumental to the expansion of circuses, it is not surprising that the windjammers traveling with those circuses became wedded to the railroads. As a rule, they had no other home. No car. And their limited possessions were those that could fit in their compartment on the train. At a young age, tubist **Harvey Phillips** (WJU #197, 2010 WJU Hall of Fame) joined the King Bros. Circus for a summer gig. That was short-lived as Merle Evans reached out to him and hired him onto the Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey Circus Band. The circus traveled and lived on four trains while on tour. Harvey commented: "*There was a definite kind of caste system and we musicians were in the hierarchy. We traveled in the fourth section and were on the last train to leave a city and the last to arrive in the next. We had double-length cars and the band all stayed together. We had a porter who made our beds and took care of a kitchen where we could get snacks late at night. We also had our laundry and dry cleaning taken care of. You could leave something out in the morning for the porter and it would be back, cleaned and pressed by evening.*"

Just like traditional circus music, however, memories of historic trains are kept alive by those who remember!

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD E. PRINCE, WJU #902

By Rod Everhart, WJU #1351



Former Windjammers member **Richard E. Prince** was no doubt an Editor's dream come true. Richard posted 61 articles to the *Circus Fanfare* over the seven-year span 1986-1993, if you count, for example, a two-part topic spread over two issues as two articles. As a result, his legacy remains with us via Fanfares posted on our website.

Prince joined Windjammers Unlimited in 1986 as our member #902. He played trombone in various groups yet I have not been able to confirm he was ever able to attend one of our Annual Conventions or Summer Meets.

With the launch of the new and improved Windjammers Website in May 2020, our historic *Circus Fanfares* are now posted there in scanned PDF format. Therefore, all of Richard Prince's articles are accessible to our membership. I urge you to sign on and explore those and the array of other information and audio recordings posted there. The list of Prince's articles is on the accompanying page.

Richard Edward Prince was born January 5, 1920, to Richard Edward Prince, Sr. and Marion (Anderson) Prince, and was raised in Norfolk, VA. He attended the Georgia School of Technology in Atlanta, GA, graduating in 1942 with a B.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering. After serving as a special apprentice at the L&N Railroad Shop in South Louisville, KY for a year, he joined the Merchant Marine.

During his WWII service, Prince obtained his 3rd Assistant Engineer License and was on steam-powered Liberty ships. When the war ended, Prince returned to the L&N Railroad, completed his apprenticeship, and became Assistant to the General Foreman in the steam back shop and roundhouse.

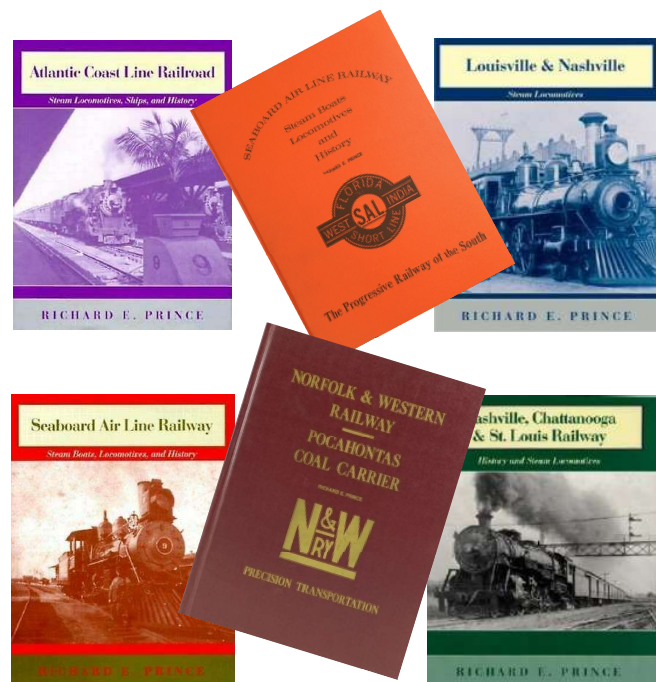
He later transferred to the Mechanical Engineering Department at the South Louisville location.

In 1952, Prince joined the Mechanical Engineering Department of the Union Pacific Railroad and was sent to Green River, WY, where he was part of the Gas Turbine Locomotive Staff for fifteen years. In 1969 he transferred to the Omaha Mechanical Engineering Department of the Union Pacific Railroad. He was still at the Omaha location when he retired from Union Pacific in 1983. Richard died December 19, 2002.

Prince's association with the railroads went well beyond his work as it also became a significant hobby. With excellent writing and researching skills, Prince embarked on writing books about certain railroads and their history. He published ten such books and those sold in excess of 20,000 copies. You can still find some of those via Amazon Books and E-Bay with prices ranging from \$25 (softcover) to \$500 (Central of Georgia - 1st edition hardback.)

Here are his titles: *Atlantic Coast Line Railroad; Central of Georgia Railway; Georgia Railroad & West Point Route; Louisville & Nashville Steam Locomotives; Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway; Norfolk & Western; Norfolk Southern; Seaboard Air Line Railway; Southern Railway System; Richmond-Washington Line.*

As a result of applying his writing skills to circus topics, we have the on-going benefit of Prince's well-researched articles on a number of notable circus music celebrities. It is a legacy we are quite pleased to have.



CIRCUS FANFARE ARTICLES PROVIDED BY RICHARD E. PRINCE

- 1986 Vol 16 – 3: Karl L. King and His Music
- 1986 Vol 16 – 5: Henry Fillmore, Master of American Band Music
- 1987 Vol 17 – 1: Great American Circus Empire
- 1987 Vol 17 – 2: Military Band Time in London; Pt. 1 of 2
- 1987 Vol 17 – 3: Military Band Time in London; Pt. 2 of 2
- 1987 Vol 17 – 4: Great Old Time Salvation Army Marches & Composers; Pt. 1 of 2
- 1987 Vol 17 – 5: Great Old Time Salvation Army Marches & Composers; Pt. 2 of 2
- 1987 Vol 17 – 6: Buffalo Bill's Wild West & Congress of Rough Riders of the World; Pt. 1 of 2
- 1988 Vol 18 – 2: Buffalo Bill's Wild West & Congress of Rough Riders of the World; Pt. 2 of 2
- 1988 Vol 18 – 3: Sousa's Band Plays the Old Corn Palace
- 1988 Vol 18 – 4: Karl King Band at the Corn Palace – List of Appearances over the Years
- 1988 Vol 18 – 4: J.J. Richards – All-American Bandmaster & Composer
- 1988 Vol 18 – 4: R.B. Hall March Featured in Royal British St. Parade – Imperial Life Guards
- 1988 Vol 18 – 4: A. Lee Hinckley – Circus Bandmaster – Modern Medium-Size Tent Shows.
- 1988 Vol 18 – 5: 1938 Big Top Band – Cole Bros. Bandleader, Eddie Woeckner (O.O. Parks; submitted by Prince)
- 1988 Vol 18 – 5: Victor H. Robbins – American Bandmaster
- 1988 Vol 18 – 5: C.L. Barnhouse, American Band Music Pioneer; Pt. 1 of 3
- 1988 Vol 18 – 6: C.L. Barnhouse, American Band Music Pioneer; Pt. 2 of 3
- 1989 Vol 19 – 1: C.L. Barnhouse, American Band Music Pioneer; Pt. 3 of 3
- 1989 Vol 19 – 1: March Music Notes and Bio for Dr. Ralph H. Woods
- 1989 Vol 19 – 1: How Jeremiah Mugivan and Bert Bowers Made It
- 1989 Vol 19 – 2: Robert G. Willaman, Master Clarinetist
- 1989 Vol 19 – 2: Harvey G. Phillips – Circus Music Golden Age Style: Instructor Homer F Lee, Circus Bandleader
- 1989 Vol 19 – 2: John Robinson Circus at The Battle of Jacksonville (submitted by Prince)
- 1989 Vol 19 – 3: Russell Alexander – Composer of the Vandercook Style of Circus Music
- 1989 Vol 19 – 4: W.P. English
- 1989 Vol 19 – 4: Earle M. Moss – Last of the Golden Age Circus Bandmasters; Pt. 1 of 3
- 1989 Vol 19 – 5: Earle M. Moss – Last of the Golden Age Circus Bandmasters; Pt. 2 of 3
- 1989 Vol 19 – 5: Robinson Famous Shows – Karl King's First Circus
- 1989 Vol 19 – 5: Albert C. Sweet
- 1989 Vol 19 – 5: George Ganweiler, Outstanding Circus Bandmaster
- 1989 Vol 19 – 5: Don Keller, Champion of the Trombone Section
- 1989 Vol 19 – 6: Earle M. Moss – Last of the Golden Age Circus Bandmasters; Pt. 3 of 3
- 1989 Vol 19 – 6: W.N. Merrick
- 1990 Vol 20 – 1: H.A. Vandercook, Originator, New Style of Circus March; Pt. 1 of 2
- 1990 Vol 20 – 2: H.A. Vandercook, Originator, New Style of Circus March; Pt. 2 of 2
- 1990 Vol 20 – 2: Patricia Backhaus, WJU Cum Laude
- 1990 Vol 20 – 4: Charles E. Duble, Circus Musician & Composer; Pt. 1 of 2
- 1990 Vol 20 – 5: Charles E. Duble, Circus Musician & Composer; Pt. 2 of 2
- 1990 Vol 20 – 6: Karl L. King and Barnum & Bailey's Favorite March
- 1991 Vol 21 – 1: Program Karl King Band, 100th Anniversary Concert
- 1991 Vol 21 – 3: O.A. Gilson & A.W. Hughes, Mysterious Team of Composers
- 1991 Vol 21 – 5: Harry Crigler's American Band
- 1991 Vol 21 – 5: John Robinson's 10 Big Shows
- 1991 Vol 21 – 5: C.L. Brown – Circus Bandmaster
- 1992 Vol 22 – 1: Carl M. Frangkiser, School Band Composer of Many Names; Pt. 1 of 3
- 1992 Vol 22 – 2: Al G. Barnes – Master Animal Trainer & Showman
- 1992 Vol 22 – 2: Harry J. Lincoln – March King of the Ghost Writers; Pt. 1 of 2
- 1992 Vol 22 – 2: Windjammers to ACB Convention
- 1992 Vol 22 – 2: George M. Rosenberg a.k.a. George Rosey
- 1992 Vol 22 – 2: Carl M. Frangkiser, School Band Composer of Many Names; Pt. 2 of 3
- 1992 Vol 22 – 3: Carl M. Frangkiser, School Band Composer of Many Names; Pt. 3 of 3
- 1992 Vol 22 – 3: Harry J. Lincoln – March King of the Ghost Writers; Pt. 2 of 2
- 1992 Vol 22 – 4: Fred Jewell – One of the Best
- 1992 Vol 22 – 4: Cincinnati's Park Band Concerts & Bandmaster Walter Esberger
- 1992 Vol 22 – 5: U.S. Navy Band of Washington, DC
- 1992 Vol 22 – 6: Invictus March - dedicated to Merle Evans; based on poem by William Ernest Henley
- 1992 Vol 22 – 6: Charles Duble, Circus Season 1947
- 1992 Vol 22 – 6: U.S. Air Force Band
- 1992 Vol 22 – 6: Campbell Brothers Great Consolidated Shows
- 1993 Vol 23 – 3: 1924 U.S. Army Band – Pershing's Own; Pt. 1 of 2
- 1993 Vol 23 – 4: 1924 U.S. Army Band – Pershing's Own; Pt. 2 of 2

CIRCUS ON THE MOVE

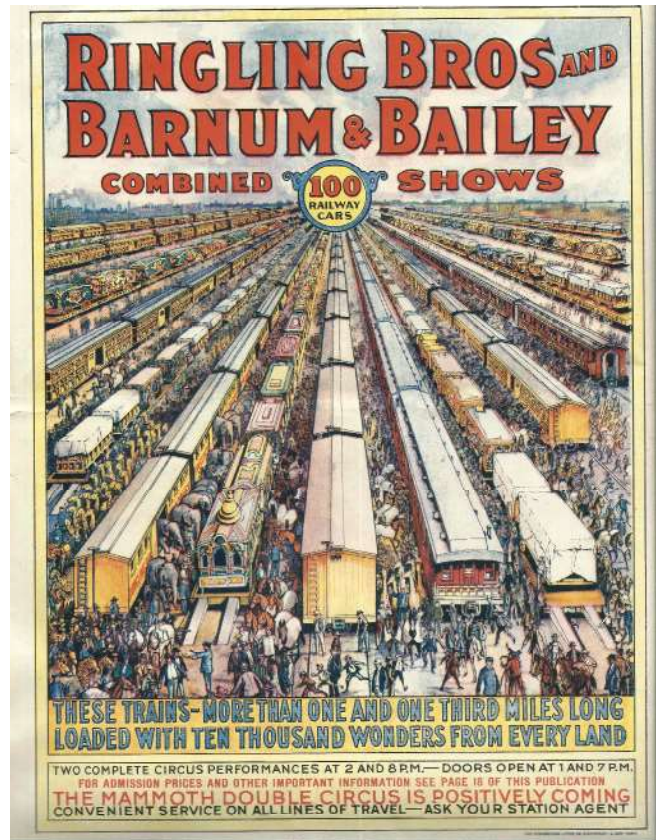
By Rod Everhart, WJU #1351

The traditional American circus traveled most of the time, moving from town to town on a near-daily basis. Because of the magnitude of equipment and personnel that had to be handled, this was no small task. A circus was a virtual city unto itself. It had to carry its own blacksmith shop, barbers and beauticians, doctors and first aid unit, and even its own post office, of which the bandmaster was often the postmaster. A staff of cooks and waiters might serve over a million meals to the circus performers and staff during a typical seven-month season.

In the early 1900s, most of the larger circuses traveled by rail, benefiting from the comforts and speed of train travel. These characteristics, as well as the larger bands and more distinguished bandmasters of the big circus units, were also quite appealing to circus musicians as their alternative was to join a wagon show – also known as overlands, “mud shows,” or caravans – that were pulled from town to town by horses. As technology advanced, the wagon shows were converted to truck shows. Just before the Depression, the largest truck show was Downie Brothers Circus, and next in line was the Mighty Haag Show.

Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey's Combined Shows, Sells-Floto Circus, Paw-Sells Brothers, Cole Brothers, Clyde Beatty, and the Al G. Barnes Shows were all notable early examples of circuses traveling via rail. Sells-Floto had 40 cars, Robbins Brothers had 25, and Sparks Circus had 20. At its peak, the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey's Circus required over 100 rail cars. Flat cars seventy-two feet long were used to carry the circus wagons and other large equipment. Secure stock cars were used for carrying the animals, and sleeping cars housed the circus performers, roustabouts, and musicians. Musicians generally had the space advantage!

In modern times, Ringling operated two circus trains, one for the Blue Unit and one for the Red Unit. These were more than one mile (1.6 km) in length with 36 passenger cars, 4 stock cars, and 20 freight cars. The bands were smaller then, comprised of nine musicians. They had a designated rail car as their quarters ... it was RBBX 41406 for the Red

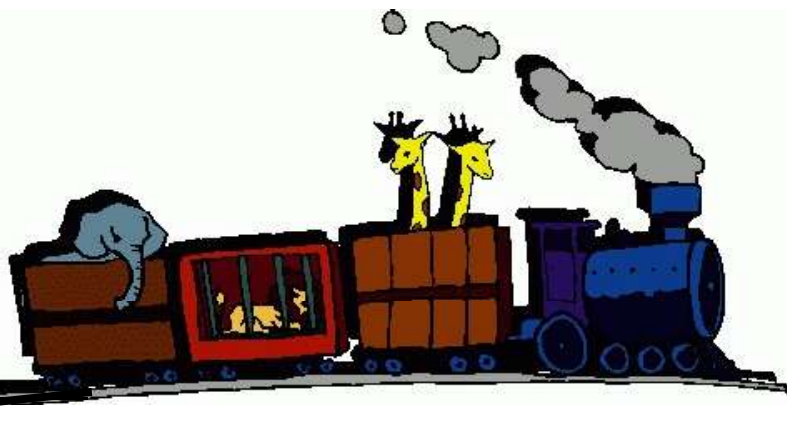


1923 RBBB Courier back page - 100 Rail Cars

From the Chris Berry Collection

Unit ... and it was divided into seven rooms. More senior members could go to larger spaces on another car. Per the contract between Feld Entertainment and the American Federation of Musicians, the rooms for circus band members had to be at least 7' by 7' in floor space, not counting bed and counters. This provided musicians with extra space for their instruments. *[Read trombonist Megan O'Malley's article on the Ringling Red Band Railcar in the July/August 2018 Circus Fanfare. Available at mywju.org]*

For the adventurous, the circus life was a good life, made exciting by the daily applause and occasional mishaps, accented nightly by the clickity-clack of the train rolling across the nation, and comforted by the close companionship of others who also essentially knew no other life but the circus.



OBITUARIES

Robert F. Zellner, WJU #2969

Robert F. Zellner, 88, of Palmyra, formerly of Gettysburg, East Stroudsburg, and Nazareth, PA, died Saturday, August 21, 2021, at Londonderry Village in Palmyra, PA, ending his battle with Parkinson's disease. Robert was a Windjammers Unlimited member 2003-2007, playing saxophone. He spent 12 years as the Director of Bands for the East Stroudsburg (PA) Area School District. He then joined the music faculty at Gettysburg College, where he served as Director of Bands and Music Department Chair. He retired in 1998, after 30 years of service at the college. Zellner also brought music into the community by organizing many community bands in Gettysburg and by conducting the Harrisburg Concert Band for 12 years. In addition to conducting, Zellner also enjoyed performing in various instrumental ensembles, especially Big Bands. He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Arlene Heckman Zellner, and two children: Kathy Saxton (John) and Gary (Carol). He had three grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Thomas H. Shellenberger, WJU #2056

Thomas H. Shellenberger, 73 of Williamsport, PA, passed away at his home on September 2 surrounded by his wife of 52 years, Judy (WJU #1710), and his daughters. He was born in Lewistown, PA on September 14, 1947, the son of David A. and Beatrice Shellenberger.

Tom was a graduate of Juniata Joint High School in Mifflintown in Pennsylvania's beautiful Juniata County. After graduating from Mansfield State College, he pursued graduate studies at Temple University, Villanova, the University of Louisville and SUNY Potsdam. He participated in several jazz workshops at the University of North Texas.

Tom served as church choir director starting in 1970 through 2018 at High Street Methodist Church (now Sojourner Truth), Covenant Central Presbyterian Church, Pine Street United Methodist Church and First United Methodist Church. In the course of his musical career, he taught in the Williamsport Area School District from 1970 to 1974 and Loyalsock Township Middle and High Schools from 1974 to 2004. His credits include musical direction of more than sixty high school and community theater productions. His favorite roles to perform were Charlie in the musical "Shenandoah" and Harold Hill in the musical "The Music Man". He also loved being The Model of a Modern Major General in the "Pirates of Penzance" as well as Judge Turpin in "Sweeney Todd". One of his proudest moments as musical director was the production of "1776" at the Community Theater League.

Tom directed the choruses of Gesang Verein Harmonia (German Club) from 1975 -1986 and brought home many first place trophies from competitive singing at the annual Sngerfests throughout the state. His high school vocal jazz ensemble, "Knight Music", helped pioneer vocal jazz in north-central Pennsylvania and received statewide recognition for its greatness. Additionally, Tom presented numerous jazz clinics in New York and Pennsylvania and served as the Choral Reviewer for the PMEA News. In 1998 he received the PMEA "Citation of Excellence" award. He was the former ACDA Jazz Chairman for Pennsylvania. In 1994 he founded "VJQ" the Vocal Jazz Quartet, an SATB group for which he arranged most of the music. VJQ has been recognized for their vocal excellence, their unique sound and extensive jazz repertoire.

In 1998 Tom founded the Gatehouse Singers, a choral group that ministers to hospice patients and their families. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge, Scottish Rite, Valley of Williamsport, the American Choral Directors Association, The Association of Concert Bands and Windjammers Unlimited.

Tom was predeceased by his parents and brother, James E. Shellenberger. He is survived by his wife, Judith B. Shellenberger, and daughters Anna L. Radspinner (Matthew) and Carol E. Schwanger (Daniel). Also surviving are seven adorable granddaughters (Megan, Libby and Nina Radspinner and Madelyn, Eleanor, Miriam and Beatrice Schwanger) and his brother, David N. Shellenberger. A "Celebration of Life" service was held at Covenant Central Presbyterian Church in Williamsport on September 11th with the Rev. Richard D. Waters officiating. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Tom's name to the Williamsport Symphony Youth Orchestra, 220 West Fourth St., Williamsport, PA 17701.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

DONALD R. ALBRIGHT, WJU #504



Don Albright has a number of passions, and music, trains, and travel are at the top of the list.

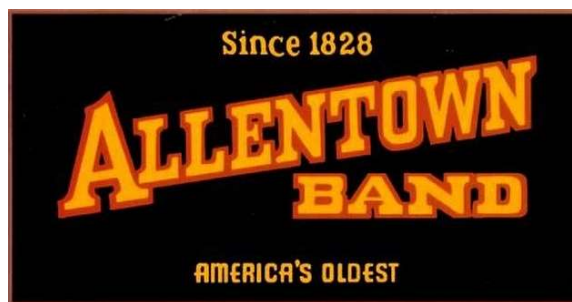
Don's dad was a carpenter in Allentown, PA, and his parents were not musicians. However, when Don had the opportunity as a nine-year-old to take up an instrument, he instantly picked cornet and found a native talent for music. He benefited from having lessons from Bert Meyers (Albertus L. Meyers 1890-1979), a music conductor and cornet player who gained fame as the bandmaster of the Allentown Band for fifty years (1926-1976). West Park, where the Allentown Band provided public concerts, was within walking distance of the Albright home.

Progressing rapidly in his musical studies, he participated in each musical opportunity possible. In the Allentown High School that meant orchestra (playing string bass), concert band, marching band, pep band, and dance band. He knew early on a musical teaching career was in his future.

Given his career aspirations, what is now known as West Chester University of Pennsylvania (WCU) was a logical college choice. The school, located about 70 miles from Allentown, was known as West Chester State Teachers College until 1960 when it was renamed West Chester State College and its curriculum offerings broadened to move the one-time academy into a comprehensive college. WCU is now the largest of the 14 state universities of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education and the sixth largest university in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. While there, Don was in the school's orchestra. He earned a Bachelor of Music degree, and later on, a Master of Music Education.

Upon graduation, Don was back in Allentown as the band director at Francis D. Raub Middle School, one of four

middle schools in the city. Later, he was at Trexler Middle School. While the trumpet is Don's primary instrument, because of his teaching role he is able to play all band instruments. Over the years, hundreds of "beginning" band students benefitted from Don's musical tutelage. It was a challenge he thoroughly enjoyed.



In 1966, Don formally became a member of the famous **Allentown Band**, a band claiming to be America's oldest, having been established in 1828. Thus, for the next ten years Don played under the baton of the man who began teaching the 9-year-old boy how to play cornet. With the Allentown band, Don became assistant conductor, librarian, and solo cornetist. During this time he got to know Leonard B. Smith (WJU #230; WJU Hall of Fame 1985), who would be an occasional guest conductor.

Don became known as a respected professional musician, performing with the Allentown Symphony (for 10 years, playing percussion), the Allentown Shrine Circus Band and numerous other concert, dance, German, and Italian bands. And perhaps even an occasional polka band.

When the Shrine Circus would come to town, Don would be invited as one of the locally hired musicians to be in the band. So, he gained some real "windjammers" experience. He even made friends with one of the elephants and believes that on subsequent circus trips to Allentown, that elephant remembered him!

Don was married and, in 1980, divorced. Their daughter, Wendy Mae, is now a research nurse at the University of Kentucky in Lexington. His step-daughter, Kristina, lives in Schnecksville, PA.

Along the way, Don learned about Windjammers Unlimited and was intrigued. He also appreciated that the Annual Conventions were in Florida, a favorite location of his. So, in 1980, he joined as WJU Member #504 and attended his first Convention. As a result, he also got to know Paul Yoder (WJU #270; WJU Hall of Fame 1986) along with other participating notables of that era. Don was an outstanding

addition to the solo cornet section and was soon one of our regular conductors, usually getting assigned the overture for the center ring concerts.

Ringling bandmasters and Windjammer members Merle Evans (WJU #22; WJU Hall of Fame 1974) and Bill Pruyn (WJU #914; WJU Hall of Fame 1997), and Clyde Beatty - Cole Bros. bandmaster Charles Schlarbaum (WJU #61, WJU Hall of Fame 2007) were significant influencers. Don also got to know Robert Hoe, Jr. (WJU #129; WJU Hall of Fame 1975) and participated in recording a *Heritage of the March* LP.

Don became a Windjammers Unlimited trustee in 1987, and in 1995 was the host of our summer meet in Allentown. For a number of years, he was also active behind the scenes as the one running the copying machine to produce the music we played. For the four years 2004-2007, he was our tenth WJU president. Don counts Mike Montgomery (WJU #962 ; WJU Hall of Fame 2012) as another that had a big influence on him.

Like many of our founding Windjammers members, Don had a special fascination with trains. In Don's case, he accumulated a "ton" of scale model trains... literally (almost). While many have model trains in their basement, Don's passion was for the much larger G-scale models. The track for his was in his backyard and the engines and cars were of the two-foot variety. A serious collector with more than 200 units, Don would put them on display at train events/shows.

Riding trains is fun, too, but for Don, getting behind the wheel of his Mustang or one of his other vehicles (for example, a turquoise van back in the day!) is a love as well. Don has driven to all the States except Alaska and Hawaii (and he has flown to Hawaii on vacation.)

Traveling with the Allentown Band over the years also took him to Switzerland, Germany, France, and China. When he took a sabbatical from teaching, he traveled to the French Polynesian island of Bora Bora, loving the location, views, people, and culture.

In his forty-one years with Windjammers Unlimited, Don has been a significant contributor, and a player of more notes than we can imagine. For many years he sat in solo cornet chair #1 of the rehearsal, concert and Sailor Circus band sessions.

It's been a blessing to have Donald Albright as part of our organization, and as we wrap up celebrating our 50th year, we salute him!



Donald R. Albright

WINDJAMMERS CONTACT INFORMATION

Windjammers Unlimited, Inc. is a 501(c)3 circus music historical society in the education category. It was founded in 1971 with the goal of preserving traditional American circus music. The organization generally holds its annual convention in January in Sarasota/Bradenton, FL and a summer meet in July at varying locations. Windjammers Unlimited, the WJU Logo, WJU, and Windjammers Circus Band, among others, are trademarks or service marks of Windjammers Unlimited, Inc. Other product, service, organization and company names mentioned herein may be the trademarks or service marks of their respective owners and no rights therein are granted by WJU.

Windjammers membership is open to all of those interested in the preservation, education and/or performance of traditional American circus music. We welcome playing and non-playing members alike. Membership Dues are for the period January 1 through December 31 and are pro-rated quarterly for new members joining after March 31st. Current annual dues are \$20 for Student members, \$50 for Individuals, and \$60 for a Family membership of two members residing at the same mailing address. Optional Tax-Deductible Donations are welcomed. Our Membership Application and additional information can be found on our website at mywju.org. Student and International Members must opt for *Circus Fanfares* as PDFs. The *Circus Fanfare* is published bi-monthly. Please email circusfanfare@mywju.org with comments/suggestions.

Our address is: 1169 Belle Meade Island Dr., Miami, FL 33138-5253

Our website is: mywju.org. Officer and Trustee contact information is shown on Page 2.

**PLEASE CONTINUE YOUR WINDJAMMERS UNLIMITED MEMBERSHIP BY
RENEWING TODAY FOR 2022**

THE HENRY FILLMORE PROBLEM

By Andy Glover, WJU #423

Note: The views presented in this article are those of the author. They do not represent those of Windjammers Unlimited, the author's employer, or any other individual or entity.

In the September/October 2021 *Circus Fanfare*, Paul D'Angelo offered an opinion on the legacy of composer Henry Fillmore, and issues related to some of Fillmore's musical works. I hope to present considerations which hopefully might offer different and thoughtful perspectives.

Throughout civilized history, society has changed in ways which show a clear desire to be progressive and engender social reform. The document which declared Americans independent stated that "all men are created equal," but while noble in principle, this statement was not fully truthful, as many citizens were denied the rights held by others.

In a 1974 address, Rep. Barbara Jordan challenged the opening words of the U. S. Constitution – "We, the people" – as not having included her, a black woman. It seems unthinkable to many Americans that segregated hotels, water fountains, lunch counters, schools, and many other elements of daily life existed a few short decades ago.

The evolution in our collective conscience with regard to equity – extended also to include, in addition to race, gender, sexual preference and identity, class/income level, education, and other factors – has continued to better recognize and work toward repairing wrongs of the past. But there is so much more to do: racial discrimination persists, although it is not as ubiquitous as it once was (although it can be terribly pervasive.) The same can be said for challenges faced by women in the workforce; yes, women have more opportunities than a generation or two ago, but in aggregate they are still paid less than men. It is good that positive change is happening, even if it is a frustratingly slow process.

Of course, not everyone agrees. In recent months, issues of social concern have been brought to the forefront – the murder of George Floyd, a particularly contentious and divisive national political situation, the ongoing discourse over reproductive rights, and others. Many are passionate about engendering reforms which stop the disproportionate killing of black Americans, about trying to heal a divided nation, about allowing women safe choices for themselves – and as passionate as those individuals are, there are others who have opposing views.

In the world of music, social concerns have come to the forefront in recent years. We wonder, "Where are the women composers? Where are the black conductors?" There are many factors which explain "why", but the move to include more women and black and other previously underrepresented groups in these and other areas of endeavor, like other social changes, is a slow and frustrating process.

At Barnhouse, we have been criticized for a lack of diversity among our composers; and I agree with those criticisms. A growing number of customers want to diversify their programs by playing music from non-white/non-male composers, and by composers from other under-represented groups. I know there are many such composers out there, but I am flummoxed at how to get them to come to us and submit music. Part of that problem may well be due to a black or woman composer looking at our catalog, seeing a company run by white males, whose catalog is at least 80% music from white males, and feeling that they might not be welcome. This is a strong symptom of systemic racism. We have launched initiatives to examine how we attract composers, and what can be done to better diversify our catalog. We are seeking more ways to bring about diversity and equity.

Some might – and do – look at our catalog and question the appropriateness of some of our content. After reviewing our catalog, and after urging from many individuals who contacted us to express their feeling that certain works were not appropriate for performance or classroom use, we have taken a number of items out of print. That is not because these works have become inappropriate over today's sharper sensibilities on equity and appropriateness; those works always were inappropriate, and the sensibilities always were there – they just were not articulated and discussed and voiced as they are now.

Now, to Henry Fillmore. The most contentious issue is the fifteen works as part of the "Trombone Family" that Fillmore wrote. Some of the titles, most of the subtitles, and the nature of these works clearly reflected the ugly and unfortunate stereotypes of black Americans in the early 20th century. The advertising put out by the Fillmore Bros. Co. is particularly terrible and horrifying. Some people don't see what the problem is; some think these works should no longer be performed; some think Henry Fillmore's music should be banned - and there are opinions of varying degrees in-between.

It is past time we acknowledge these works represent unabashed racism, and should therefore be removed from use; but not from history. The provenance of these works strikes at the absolute core of the very worst of racism and social injustice in American history, and they tarnish the reputation and legacy of Henry Fillmore.

In trying to do the right thing in this (and similar) matters, the greatest flaw in logic and reasoning seems to be that many who “don’t see what the problem is” are not from the group that was stereotyped, marginalized, oppressed, degraded, or defamed by the musical works in question. That is, white people can’t have the same take on these works that a black person would. We are all products of our backgrounds, upbringing, and circumstances; and we all have different and varied backgrounds, upbringings, and circumstances. We must look at issues like these not only from our own perspective, but try to be empathic with how others would view them. We must think progressively, and try to understand the feelings of others.

The recent *Circus Fanfare* article pointed out that Fillmore left the bulk of his estate to the University of Miami music department. It was a sizeable estate, and a generous gift. As awareness of the problems surrounding the Trombone Family has increased, the University is seeking to remove Fillmore’s name from their rehearsal hall. This notion was first presented by university students who felt it was wrong to have a facility named for the man responsible for the Trombone Family works.

In D’Angelo’s article, he points out, but does not cite references, that Fillmore “honored black musicians,” and was a “fan of Scott Joplin.” He opines that Fillmore was not racist. He asks Windjammer members to object to the University’s decision to rename the rehearsal facility, and to leave Henry Fillmore’s name on it.

Because this is a complex and passionate issue, this matter can be addressed by a very extreme range of opinions. Calling someone a “racist” brings to mind, for most of us, somebody who routinely spews racial epithets and displays outward hate, and even violence, toward those of a certain race or races. By all accounts I have seen, that was not

Henry Fillmore. But I am convinced that the Trombone Family illustrates that Fillmore was indeed racist – as were the vast majority of white Americans of his time. And continuing to play the Trombone Family is an example of perpetuating racial stereotypes in music.

We should remove the Trombone Family from our cycle of music to perform, but I don’t believe we should ban all Fillmore music. His contributions to band music are indeed substantial. So let’s play “Americans We” and “His Honor” and “The Footlifter” – but let’s leave out “Pahson Trombone” and “Little Rastus.”

Does Fillmore’s name need to come down from the rehearsal hall in Miami? That’s entirely for the University to decide – a university which is keenly aware of social responsibility and equity. They have enjoyed the bounty of his generosity, a bounty which was generated in part by royalties from “Lassus Trombone” and “Shoutin’ Liza Trombone” and others – but from a man whose name now is poison to some.

Yes, Fillmore’s bequest to the university was a generous one. But perhaps the present and future harm in lauding him, while several of his signature and most popular works are undeniably joined at the hip with the ugliest of racism, is not appropriate. I’m sure one question the leadership of the University must ask is, “When you see Henry Fillmore’s name on the room, what do you think of?” This question should be asked not just by administrators at the school, but students, alums, and faculty of all backgrounds.

Finally, I want to reiterate that it is my earnest wish that all Windjammers consider this and similar matters thoughtfully and deeply. We are not a very diverse organization, and there must be reasons for that. Try to have empathy for those who are not like you, while recognizing that you can have empathy while never being able to fully understand how those of other races, genders, etc. feel about this or other matters.

There’s a lot of wonderful music out there that doesn’t include the potential of offense or inappropriateness – let’s focus on that music, and in being more understanding of others.

“100 Railway Cars” - Back Cover Comments

By Chris Berry, WJU #3959

This iconic “100 Railway Cars” (Strobridge Litho Co.) lithograph was used in 1925 to promote not only the magnitude of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows, but also the fact that on the morning of circus day there would be a “free show” as the trains unloaded in the local railyards. This city on wheels usually traveled in four sections, with the first train, “The Flying Squadron” often leaving before the final performance was complete and arriving before dawn. Although the train in the 1920s often included nearly 100 railway cars, by 1947 the Ringling circus required 107 flats, stock cars and coaches to carry the show’s equipment, musicians, performers, crew, and animals. Several posters showing the trains unloading were produced over the years, but this is my personal favorite. The artist’s perspective with the mountains and rail cars in the distance is outstanding. In addition, the activity seen in the railyards is nearly as exciting as what will be seen during the performance.



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“100 Railway Cars” lithograph poster (1925) from the Chris Berry Collection