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# CIRCUS FANFARE

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*It's All About the Music!*



**REMEMBERING THE PAST:** Windjammers musicians in concert at the Ringling Museum in Sarasota, FL, January 28, 2006.



**WINDJAMMERS UNLIMITED, INC.**  
**THE CIRCUS MUSIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY™**  
 Preservation • Education • Performance



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## WINDJAMMERS UNLIMITED HALL OF FAME

For bios on the Hall of Fame Laureates, go to [mywju.org](http://mywju.org) and Hall of Fame tab

1974	<b>Karl L. King</b>	1996	<b>Perry G. Lowery</b>	2013	<b>Robert P. Hills, Jr.*</b>
1974	<b>Merle Evans</b>	1997	<b>William Pruyn</b>	2014	<b>Charlie Stevenson</b>
1975	<b>Fred Jewell</b>	1998	<b>Everette James</b>	2014	<b>Joe Basile</b>
1975	<b>Robert Hoe, Jr.</b>	1999	<b>Eddie Woekner</b>	2016	<b>Richard Whitmarsh</b>
1976	<b>Vic Robbins</b>	2000	<b>Robert D. Peckham*</b>	2017	<b>Keith Greene</b>
1976	<b>Henry Kyes</b>	2001	<b>Jack Bell</b>	2017	<b>Paul Bierley</b>
1977	<b>A. Lee Hinckley</b>	2002	<b>Joe Browning</b>	2018	<b>Thomas G. Canham</b>
1978	<b>Russell Alexander</b>	2003	<b>Joseph Gorton</b>	2019	<b>Charles E. Ringling</b>
1979	<b>Ramon Escorcia</b>	2003	<b>Lewis Bader</b>	2019	<b>Norman E. Smith</b>
1980	<b>Charles E. Duble</b>	2004	<b>Carl Clair</b>	2020	<b>James S. Robinson</b>
1981	<b>J.J. Richards</b>	2005	<b>Joseph A. Emidy</b>	2020	<b>James P. Wolfscale</b>
1982	<b>Albert C. Sweet</b>	2005	<b>William Merrick</b>		
1983	<b>Charles L. Barnhouse</b>	2006	<b>William Sweeney</b>		
1984	<b>Walter P. English</b>	2006	<b>Ned Kendall</b>		
1985	<b>Leonard B. Smith</b>	2007	<b>Charles Schlarbaum</b>		
1986	<b>Paul Yoder</b>	2007	<b>Joe Stefan</b>		
1987	<b>Earle M. Moss</b>	2008	<b>George Ganweiler</b>		
1988	<b>Henry Fillmore</b>	2009	<b>Sverre O. Braathen</b>		
1989	<b>Douglas D. MacLeod*</b>	2009	<b>Harry Crigler</b>		
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1991	<b>Clinton "Johnnie" Evans</b>	2010	<b>Harvey Phillips</b>		
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1995	<b>Hale A. Vandercook</b>	2013	<b>Charles H. Bennett, Jr.*</b>		

\* For service to Windjammers Unlimited

### MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

2018	Arthur E. Stensvad* (WJU #2) <i>WJU Co-Founder</i>
2018	Connie Thomas* (WJU #1128) <i>Past president; host of six summer meets</i>
2020	Ron Keller* (WJU #492) <i>Past-president; host of three meets; long-time conductor</i>

# UNLIMITED, INC.

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Paul Yoder at January 1988 WJU  
Annual Convention  
See Pages 4 - 6 for Hall of Fame  
Feature

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Nada Montgomery, WJU #1958



November – the month of Thanksgiving! As we continue to grapple with the pandemic, we all can find something to be thankful for each day.

As Windjammers, I would like us all to be thankful for the many years that Mike Montgomery (WJU #962) devoted to our organization as Secretary/Treasurer, then Secretary, and Convention host. Mike will be stepping down, and the job of Secretary will be assumed by Joe Shearin (WJU #3773). See you on down the road, Mike, and good luck to Joe!

Plans are well underway for a virtual Convention in January, so stay tuned as the plans take shape. We want as much participation as possible!

**Happy Thanksgiving to all and best wishes for a happy, healthy holiday season ahead!**

Nada Montgomery  
President

**PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ... ONLINE or VIA CHECK**

**MYWJU.ORG** or Mail to WJU Secretary, Mike Montgomery,  
P.O. Box 31145, Independence, OH 44131-0145

# WINDJAMMERS HALL OF FAME

## Paul Yoder (1908-1990), 1986 Inductee (WJU #270)

By Rod Everhart, WJU #1351



For many of our Windjammers Unlimited members, the name **Paul Yoder** is familiar, not because of any relationship to the circus or circus music, but rather as the person whose name appeared as the arranger on so many of the pieces we played in Junior and Senior High School. In fact, it would be unlikely any band student in the United States between the 1930s and the 1970s could have not experienced playing one of Yoder's arrangements or compositions. Windjammers members from the 1980s will also remember Paul as an active member of our organization, playing in the percussion section, conducting, and always providing anecdotes and humor.

Paul Van Buskirk Yoder was born October 8, 1908 in Tacoma, Washington, to Albert Henry Yoder (1866-1940) and Susan Norton (Griggs) Yoder (1869-1953), both graduates of the University of Indiana. Paul was the youngest of six children and Paul always referred to himself as the baby of the family. Early on, the family moved from Tacoma to Grand Forks, North Dakota, where his father was a member of the university faculty. As a 6th grader, Paul began his musical career taking lessons on a drum pad. He excelled as part

of the Junior and Senior High School bands and orchestra. In 1924, he was elected president of the high school's Class of 1926.

One of Paul's early income-producing enterprises was playing drums in the local theater orchestra ... for silent films! He thought he had a cool career on the horizon, until "talkies" were introduced with the release of "The Jazz Singer" in October 1927.



Paul enrolled in the University of North Dakota and was honored there by being named a Phi Beta Kappa scholar and Valedictorian of his graduating class. He received his BA degree from the University of North Dakota in 1930. While he was heavily involved in music and was the student conductor of the University's band, his degree was in Journalism. Years later, in 1958 the University conferred upon him an honorary Doctor of Music degree. He also studied at VanderCook College of Music and in 1941 he received a Master of Music degree from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois.

Yoder's first job out of college was playing percussion in the Rochester (Minnesota) Park Band during the summer of 1930, under Dr. Harold Cooke. The pay was \$1 per concert. Cooke took young Yoder under his wing and gave him harmony lessons following the band rehearsals. Paul then taught instrumental music in the schools of West Aurora, Illinois and Evansville, Indiana until 1936. He then realized more-playable school band arrangements and original works were needed, so he moved to Chicago to become a full-time composer and arranger to fill that void.

Paul Yoder's first published piece for band happened in 1933. It was a novelty number titled "Our Family Band," published by Rubank. Over the course of his career, he wrote over 1,500 original compositions and arrangements and became known as the "Dean of American band composers." He was also called the "father of bands" in Japan, and "America's musical ambassador" for his work internationally. He composed and arranged with young bands as his primary focus. Likewise, he also developed several instrumental methods. Over time, he utilized nearly

100 different publishers. His *College Songs for School Bands* set sales records for many years.

During World War II, Yoder was a member of the U.S. Army Bands at Fort Slocum (New Rochelle) and Fort Hamilton (Brooklyn) in New York.

In the January 1952 issue of *The Instrumentalist*, Paul was featured in their "Who's Who in Music" feature. Included was this comment: "Members of the ABA were needling him about his rearrangement of the famous Sousa marches. One of the members leaned over and whispered: 'Why do you stick around and take all this criticism?' To which Paul replied: 'I enjoy this meeting because here I am insulted by some of the very best men in the business.'"

Paul had a great interest in preserving the heritage of band music, including traditional circus music. He freely shared his talents, supporting a wide variety of band causes. In 1963-1964, he was president of the American Bandmasters Association and was highly supportive of the ABA Research Center at the University of Maryland. That led to establishing the famed *ABA Journal of Band Research*. The Journal, published twice a year, is the world's premiere scholarly publication devoted to band music, band history, and band methodology. From 1974 to 1982, Yoder was the visiting professor of music at Troy State University.

Windjammers Hall of Fame 1992 laureate, James A. Perkins, had this to say about Paul: "Paul will always be remembered for all his activities (such as at the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago), from guest conducting, introducing bands, directing the reading band, clowning around on the drums, exchanging his great stories, hugging his friends, befriending new people -- especially young students -- to giving everyone he came in contact with encouragement and always a smile on his face and never a cross or mean word, but always a sharp barb or two for his closest friends."



One of Paul's favorite stories was being in a hotel lobby working on his notes prior to an ABA meeting, when Karl King came over asking "What are you doing, Paul? Working on your ad libs?"

Paul always had a love for circus music. One of his closest friends was Merle Evans. In a 1987 article about Merle in *The Instrumentalist*, Paul commented: "I became acquainted with Merle Evans during the summer of 1962 at a music camp in Colorado. I remember telling him that if he would hire me just one time to play in a circus band, I would die a happy man."

Merle's response was: "I've got a job for you. I'm going to direct the Shrine Circus in Kansas City this Fall, and you can be the drummer."

Excited, Paul continued: "Suddenly I was flying high. I put all my drums together and met Merle in Kansas City to do the job. The day before the show we rehearsed the cues and Merle told me where he wanted rolls and cymbal crashes and filled me in on what to watch for and what to do. 'The dancing horses don't follow the music', he told me. 'You have to watch the lead horse and keep the bass drum beat in time with the animal's rear end.' That was the first time I realized that dancing horses don't follow the music. When we did the show, I flubbed up a little the first time the dancing horses appeared, but I had the time of my life."

Years later, in 1986 when he was awarded the Windjammers Hall of Fame honor, Paul placed his worker's pass from the 1962 Shriner's gig in the corner of the Award, saying "Playing for that circus was the biggest thrill of my life." In January 1983, after one of his many rehearsals as a percussionist in the annual Windjammers Convention Bands, Yoder casually mentioned to a new snare drummer that he "played pretty well" for a First of May and expressed the thought he "had good possibilities." During the next break, Yoder learned the new drummer was Buster Bailey who had just completed 40 years with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra.

On occasion, Paul used the pseudonyms Max Thomas or James A. Scott. But as Paul Yoder, over the years he was honored more times than can be counted.

The American School Band Directors Association awarded Yoder the Edwin Franko Goldman Medal. He received the Medal of Honor from the Midwest Clinic International

**At left, during the 11th Annual Windjammers Unlimited Convention in 1983, Paul Yoder is captured in this photo observing percussionists Buster Bailey (playing Red Floyd's "Ringling" drum) and Ollie Zinsmeister. On Euphonium is Mike Montgomery, our WJU Secretary 1993-2020.**

*Photo courtesy of Barbara Bailey*

Band and Orchestra organization, the Distinguished Service Music Award from Kappa Kappa Psi, and the Academy of Wind and Percussive Arts (AWAPA) Award from the National Band Association, a group created by the editor and founder of *The Instrumentalist* magazine. Paul was also inducted into the National Band Association's Hall of Fame of Distinguished Band Conductors. In 1985, the John Philip Sousa Foundation awarded Paul the Sudler Order of Merit.

When Paul was invited to guest-direct ten of his favorite compositions with the Chatfield Brass Band on October 12, 1983 to celebrate his 75th birthday and the 50th anniversary of his first publication, the Governor of Minnesota declared a statewide PAUL YODER DAY. Paul treasured the official proclamation certificate presented by Governor Rudy Perpich. The Chatfield Lending Library currently includes 639 tunes composed or arranged by Paul.

Paul was married twice. On August 6, 1934, he married Maxine Fanny Thompson (1909-2011). They divorced and

she remarried in 1947. On August 2, 1948, Paul married Roselyn A. (Niestraht) Pence (1911-1977). She had two children, Dwight and Lynette. After Roselyn died in 1977, Paul made his home with Lynette in Hendersonville, NC.

It takes a lot of descriptors to summarize Paul, but leading ones are "gentle man" and "gentleman." Others include composer, arranger, clinician, historian, scholar, organizer, joker, emcee, teacher, drummer, musician, adjudicator, friend, humble, loveable, storyteller, and Windjammer.

As his health began to deteriorate, Paul had two final requests. He asked that a Dixieland band play at his funeral. Second, he asked that in lieu of flowers, his friends would donate to the musical organization of their choice that he had either directed or belonged to – especially ABA, Kappa Kappa Psi, Windjammers Unlimited, ACB, or Chatfield Lending Library. Paul Van Buskirk Yoder died April 4, 1990 in Hendersonville, NC and is buried next to Roselyn.

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## WHAT IS THE GREATEST EXPERIENCE IN YOUR MUSIC CAREER?

By Ron Keller, WJU #492

I have been asked this question many times and have thought about it for several years. With all this time off because of COVID-19, I have had a lot of time to ponder this question.

Growing up on tuba and being first chair three years in high school, four years in college and four years in grad school was my goal. My tuba teacher wanted me to audition for the U.S. Navy Band, but I told him that I never considered myself a professional musician. I wanted to teach!

My first band concert as a teacher was a thrill. Then that was topped by my high school bands receiving superior ratings at contest. However, being hired in Naperville (my home town) and becoming the director of the Naperville Municipal Band was even more thrilling because I had always dreamed of that.

It was the Friday after Thanksgiving in November of 1968; I was sitting at the kitchen table having my morning coffee when the phone rang. I answered and the voice on the line said, "Ron?" Yes. "This is Paul Yoder." I questioned, "Who really is this?"

"Paul Yoder", he said again. I then asked "How did you get my phone number?" "I got it from H. E. Nutt", (head of VanderCook Music in Chicago.) Well, I thought that is possible, so I continued with "What can I do for you, Mr. Yoder?" Yoder answered, "Call me Paul!"

"OK, Paul, what can I do for you?" He answered that they were putting together an all-star band in Chicago at the Mid-West Band Clinic to honor Merle Evans' 50 years with the circus. They needed one more tuba player and would I be

interested? "Are you kidding? Of course I'm interested!" "The catch is the rehearsal is at 11:00 p.m. and will last until 12:30 a.m., because that's only time we can get the auditorium. Do you have a problem with that?", Paul asked. "Nope", I said. "I'll be there."

When I walked into the back of the rehearsal hall, the percussion section was a Who's Who in person: Hascal Harr, William Ludwig, Boom-Boom Browning, and Paul Yoder! There was a tuba player sitting next to the bass drum, an empty chair, and four more tuba players. The player next to the bass drum said to me, "Young man, you sit right here!" That was Bill Bell and on my left was Harvey Phillips! Wow, I thought, what am I doing here? Paul introduced me to Merle and away we went. The whole band was a collection of pros, including Byron Autry, Ted Buenger, Floyd Cooley, and Roland Sherbundy, in addition to those already named.

Tunes included: *Old Glory Triumphant* (Duble), *A Country Shuffle* (Holmes), *Dance of the Imps* (King), *Crimson Petal Waltz* (Jewell), *Storming of El Caney* (Alexander), *Russian Circus March*, *Mambo Medley*, *Hungarian Medley*, *Circus on Parade*, *Sunnyland Waltzes*, *Go Galop*, *Royal Decree* (English), *Ragged Rosey* (King), *Quality-Plus* (Jewell), *Mr. Circus* (arr. Yoder). The program ended with Sousa's *Stars & Stripes Forever* with the tubas playing the piccolo part!

At the first break, while Merle told a few stories of the circus, Mr. Bell turned to me and asked where I played. I said, "I'm a junior high school band director in the suburbs and direct a community band." His response to me was, "Young man, you should be playing!" That was my greatest moment! I never played better than on that concert, and never will again! **What a thrill!**

*[That 1968 Merle Evans Concert is on our website.]*

# 2021 CONVENTION UPDATE

From your 50th Anniversary Year Committee

Because we are not able to meet in person just yet, Windjammers Unlimited is going to have a Virtual Convention! The dates for you to save for this fun series of events are **JANUARY 12 – 17, 2021**.

Included in this special event will be online instrumental instruction clinics, educational seminars, group socials, and recording rollouts.

The week will start on Tuesday, January 12 with an event “at” the Ringling Museum plus a “How to ZOOM” class followed by a Meet & Greet Social utilizing the ZOOM technology. Learn how to ZOOM, if you haven’t already, and then hang out to catch up with your WJU friends!

Clinics and other happenings will run from Wednesday to Friday. Saturday will be a group Attitude Readjustment Hour followed by a BYO dinner and meeting with a presentation by Charlie Conrad, our “banquet” speaker.

On Sunday, we will be joining the Circus Arts Conservancy for an online event that will feature us with our “virtual band” recordings and the Sailor Circus.

No masks required! Plus, no travel, no lodging fees, just a fun time from the comfort of your own space!

The Virtual Convention will be free to all WJU members in good standing!!!

**Remember, all Memberships expire December 31, 2020. You can RENEW FOR 2021 anytime on or after October 1, 2020. Go here <https://mywju.org/join-wju/> and do it NOW so you don't forget!!**



You have already received information on participating in the recording bands opportunity, and we hope you did so and had fun in the process. We are excited about seeing and listening to the results in January.

The tunes chosen for the recordings are as follows: *Big Cage Galop, Billboard March, Bravura March, Broadway One-Step, Georgia Girl rag, The Greatest Show on Earth, Roses of Memory Waltz, and Stop It!* Individuals could choose which ones they wanted to play and record ... any or all. And some may have chosen to submit multiple videos featuring their playing on different instruments.

We look forward to your participation in January ... and throughout our 50th Anniversary Year!

**50th Celebration Committee:** Lynette Garlan (Chair), Linda Butts, Rod & Aldena Everhart, Paul Hefner, Andrew Rawls, Joe Shearin & John Wetzel.

## WINDJAMMERS MEMBERSHIP

**REMINDER: ALL WJU MEMBERSHIPS EXPIRE ON DECEMBER 31st**

**PLEASE TAKE TIME TO RENEW NOW ... EITHER ONLINE (It's easy!) ... or VIA CHECK**

Windjammers membership is open to all of those interested in the preservation, education and 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. Current annual dues are \$10 for Youth members (18 years old and younger), \$40 for Individuals over 18, and \$47 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.

**RENEW ONLINE at MYWJU.ORG**

**Share your enthusiasm for traditional circus music with others and encourage them to join Windjammers Unlimited.**

**Our 50th Anniversary Special: 50% off the annual dues for new members signing up between October 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021. Those Memberships will run through December 31, 2021. CODE: 50off**

# A GROWING TREASURE TROVE ... MYWJU.ORG

By Rod Everhart, WJU #1351

Our new **MYWJU.ORG** website was launched May 8, 2020, and if you haven't checked it out in the last few weeks, then you are not aware of the literal "Treasurer Trove" of content that has been added. And it will continue growing in the months and years ahead.

Our website now offers member access to:

**288 Circus Fanfares 1971 - 2019**

**61 Bios and/or articles on Hall of Fame laureates**

**313 Audio files of professional circus bands equaling**

**25 Hours of music ... 37 "event" headings**

**80 Audio files of the WJU 2015 Summer band equaling**

**3 Hours of music. Much more will be added soon.**

**70 Articles on the Musical Program of a circus/year**

**32 Web Articles in WJU Blackjacket or Archive tabs**

All of this is available to you as WJU Members. Just log into the website and explore the historic and entertaining content you will find there. Forgot your password or never logged in? No problem, your ID is your email on file with WJU and you can click the reset password button to have a new link sent to you. (But check your SPAM bucket!!) Have any other access issues? Then email [Webmast@mywju.org](mailto:Webmast@mywju.org).

Thanks to Eric Beheim (WJU #66) for sharing his circus music collection with us in a joint effort to preserve these often rare and sometimes one-of-a-kind historic sound tracks. Look under the web's PRESERVATION tab.

Like to hear the Merle Evans and Ringling-Barnum band's commercial records for 1930 (Victor), 1941 (Columbia), 1949 (Capitol) and 1953 (Decca)? They are all there for you to hear. [See *Victor article on Page 22*] How about the Ringling band's appearance on the Fitch Bandwagon radio shows in 1943, 1944, 1945, and 1946? Likewise.

What about REAL circus recordings under the Big Top or at Madison Square Garden? Click on the 1962 Mills Bros. Circus and hear bandleader Joe Stephan and his band, or check out the Ringling-Barnum Circus Band at the show's opening at the Garden in 1955 and 1962. There are 37 recorded "events" on line so far, including the above and the 1961 Clyde Beatty - Cole Bros. Elephant Act, the 1963 Hanneford Riding Act, the "Production" music from Ringling for 1949 and 1950, and many others.

You won't understand what a wonderful collection this is until you sign onto the website and sample it. It is also an important asset for Windjammers Unlimited and further proof that WE ARE the Circus Music Historical Society with a focus on Preservation, Education and Performance.

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## LION & MIRROR BANDWAGON

By Rod Everhart, WJU #1351

Originally known as the **St. George and the Dragon** telescoping tableau, the earliest references have it as a parade wagon with the Forepaugh Circus in 1881. Some hypothesize the wagon was imported from England. In its original form, the top-mounted figure of St. George in the act of slaying the fabled dragon was its theme. However, the St. George figure was removed sometime before 1890 and used as a separate float. The tableau was again modified in 1891. It then became the lead bandwagon with the Ringling Bros. Circus and was renamed **Lion & Mirror Bandwagon**. In 1907 it was replaced by the new **Swan Bandwagon** with its twenty-four horse hitch. (See P. 23, July/August 2020 *Circus Fanfare* for Swan Bandwagon photo.) With that, the Lion & Mirror bandwagon became the second or sometimes side show bandwagon.

The Lion & Mirror bandwagon remained in storage from January 1915 until November 1925 when George Christy bought it along with several other wagons. When Christy Brothers Circus closed in 1930, the wagon was stored at their Houston, TX quarters. In 1934, the newly organized Cole Brothers Circus of Rochester, IN purchased the bandwagon, using it in parades in 1935 and 1936. The wagon was then stored under cover for 10 years before being moved to a farm where it was exposed to the elements. It was "saved" by the Block & Kuhl Department Store of Peoria, IL who restored it for use in their annual Thanksgiving Day Parades. After the 1961 parade, it was presented to Circus World Museum in Baraboo, Wisconsin, where it currently resides on display. The last time it was painted, the body was painted red with a beautiful gold leaf applied to the carvings.



# CIRCUS MUSIC SNIPPETS

By Rod Everhart, WJU #1351

## **RUSSELL ALEXANDER** (euphonium/composer)

Born in Nevada City, MO in 1877, Alexander played first with Belford Carnival. Then in 1897 he signed on with the Barnum & Bailey Circus as arranger and euphonium soloist for a five-year tour of Great Britain and Europe. He then joined his brothers (Newton and Woodruff, plus James Brady) in The Exposition Four, a vaudeville comedy team. Russell and Woodruff were each treated in sanitariums for tuberculosis, and Russell succumbed to the disease at age 38 in 1915. He was added to the WJU Hall of Fame in 1978 and honored with a Windjammers Unlimited plaque and concert in 2015 in the town of Liberty, NY where he is buried.

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## **BELFORD'S CARNIVAL MARCH** (Russell Alexander, 1897)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c5f5P4MoUlk>

At age 18, Alexander played euphonium with the 8-person G. W. Belford Carnival of Novelties show band. *Belford's Carnival March*, published by C.L. Barnhouse, was especially popular with sideshow bands playing the Bally Line outside the sideshow tent, enticing the crowds to gather and then pay an extra admission charge to see the "marvels" hidden inside. Under the Big Top, Merle Evans often used this march for the high pole acts and the liberty horse routines with the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. Also published in 1897 was Alexander's *Burr's Triumphal March*, dedicated to D.V. Burr, Belford's musical director.

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## **CHARLIE DUBLE** (composer)

Charles Edward Duple (1884-1960) was born in Jeffersonville, IN. His specialty was the lower brass instruments... trombone, euphonium, baritone and tuba ...and he was known to have played with at least 20 different circuses, including Barnum & Bailey, Hagenbeck-Wallace, Sells-Floto, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, Miller Brothers 101 Ranch Wild West, and the Russell Brothers Circus. Duple was quiet and reserved, but also had what was called "a clever sense of humor." After a 23-year career on the road as a circus windjammer and composer, Charlie Duple returned to Jeffersonville. WJU Hall of Fame 1980.

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## **BRAVURA MARCH** (Charles Duple, 1909)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kYhn8JhM23M>

This march is Charlie Duple's best known march, although the authorship has often been attributed to other composers. It was first published by Church in 1918 while Duple was playing trombone in the Sells-Floto Circus band. At least a half dozen arrangements have been published in the years since. Technically, it is a minor-key march of the type that was often used for wild animal acts or foreign displays because of its "exotic" flavor. However, it switches to a major key after the first strain. *Bravura* has also been considered as one of the great military marches and all the service bands have recorded it.

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## **FRED JEWELL** (composer)

Frederick Alton Jewell was born in Worthington, IN in 1875. He started on tenor horn but soon switched to baritone. He also was skilled on clarinet, cornet, trombone, calliope and violin. He left high school to join Gentry Bros. Dog & Pony Show. That was followed by Wallace Circus on baritone and trombone, then band director of Gentry. He played baritone with Ringling 1902-1904, baritone and calliope with Great Floto Circus/Sells-Floto Circus, and then joined Barnum & Bailey on baritone in 1907. He was bandleader 1908-1910. He took a break from the circus but was band director for Hagenbeck-Wallace 1916-1917. Jewell died in 1936.

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## **QUALITY-PLUS MARCH** (Fred Jewell, 1913)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8LUGciwfN0>

Fred Jewell was a noted composer of circus music. Jewell was director for the Barnum & Bailey Circus (1908-1910) and the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus (1916-1917). Apparently the piece had remained unnamed and unpublished until Jewell saw the phrase "Quality Plus" on a billboard while traveling by train. It was then published by C.L. Barnhouse in 1913, and has been one of Jewell's most popular circus pieces ever since. In 1919, Charles Barnhouse hired Jewell to direct the Iowa Brigade Band in Oskaloosa, IA. In 1923 he returned to his hometown of Worthington, IN. Fred Jewell was inducted into the Windjammers Hall of Fame in 1975.

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## **AL SWEET** (composer)

Albert C. Sweet (1876-1945) was born in Dansville, NY. He was the bandleader for the Ringling Brothers Circus from 1906-1911. In 1911, he published his most noteworthy work, *Ringling Brothers Grand Entree*. The grand entry piece was also often used for animal acts. Like most circus band directors, Sweet played cornet, playing his first circus at age 14 with Stowe Brothers Circus. He was the music director at Edison Phonograph Company 1901-1905. Following his time with Ringling, he directed several other bands not associated with circuses, including his own Dunbar's White Hussars "vaudeville" band. WJU Hall of Fame 1982.

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## **RINGLING BROTHERS GRAND ENTREE**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUT7AB4rwwA>

In 1906, Charles Edward Duple wrote a march with this title. However, Al Sweet also wrote one titled *Ringling Brothers Grand Entree* and published in 1911 by Rossiter. It is his best known composition. Sweet's other "circus" tunes were few, but included *Bandalero March* (Helf & Hager, 1908), *The Battle of San Juan Hill* (Fischer, 1909), *Broncho Buster March* (Fischer, 1908), *Colossus March* (York, 1907) and *Coeur d'Alene* (Fischer, 1910). Al Sweet's time with Ringling and his famous *Ringling Brother's Grand Entree* earned him a spot in the Windjammer Hall of Fame as the 1982 laureate.

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# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## TRUSTEE CANDIDATES FOR JANUARY 2021 through DECEMBER 2024 Term

### TERESA COSENZA, WJU #3692



**Teresa Cosenza** has been a member of Windjammers Unlimited since 2018. She is a retired music educator having retired from West Geauga Local Schools in 2017 after 30 years of teaching. While at West Geauga Teresa taught Instrumental music from the 5th grade beginning program through high school. Her bands consistently received Superior ratings at Ohio Music Educators Association (OMEA) adjudicated events.

Teresa has served as an adjudicator for OMEA for 30 years. In retirement she continues to serve as an adjudicator as well as serving as Coordinator of Performing Groups at the annual OMEA Professional Development Conference. She is also a free lance musician performing as a piano accompanist for school choirs and instrumental soloists at recitals, festivals and competitions, as well as a trombonist in professional and community concert bands and ensembles.

In addition, Teresa works for Prodigy Student Travel as a tour manager. She received her Bachelor of Music, Music Education from Bowling Green State University and a Master of Music, Music Education from The University of Akron. Besides playing trombone and conducting with Windjammers Unlimited, she has been a member and soloist with Lakeland Community College Civic Band and the Sounds of Sousa Band. She has performed in the Lakewood Hometown Band, W.D. Packard Concert Band and the Mansfield Symphony Orchestra. Besides being a member of Ohio Music Education Association, Teresa is a member of the National Association for Music Education and the American Federation of Musicians Local 4. Honors and awards received include Sigma Alpha Iota, Phi Kappa Phi, Kappa Delta Pi, Pi Kappa Lambda and, in 1986, Teresa was included in Outstanding Young Women of America.

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### GERALD GUILBEAUX, WJU #2002



A member of the Lafayette Concert Band since its inception in 1982, **Gerald Guilbeaux** has been the Conductor/Music Director of the band since 1993. He is also the founder and conductor of the Acadian Wind Symphony, a select wind ensemble which performs during the summer months and at special events. Under his direction, the Lafayette Concert Band became the 1999 recipient of the Sudler Silver Scroll, an international award recognizing excellence in adult community bands, administered by the John Philip Sousa Foundation.

He has earned a national reputation as an advocate for the adult community music movement and is Past-President of the Association of Concert Bands. A member of Windjammers Unlimited since 1996, he has conducted the Circus Hall of Fame Band and is chair of the Conductor Committee of WJU.

He has twice been awarded the Citation of Excellence by the National Band Association and received the Diploma of the Order of Merit from the John Philip Sousa Foundation.

Mr. Guilbeaux is an active guest conductor, serves on the Selection Committee for the Sudler Silver Scroll, is Vice-President/Treasurer of the John Philip Sousa Foundation and is the administrator and assistant conductor of the Sousa Foundation's National Community Band. He was elected Chair of the Associate Member Committee of the prestigious American Bandmasters Association and has served as a member of the Board of Directors of ABA.

He is the proud father of three daughters, Amy, Lynn and Chrissy. Granddaughters, Carly and Cameryn O'Quain, Addison Thompson, Lily Bone and grandsons Lucien Bone IV and Mark and Henry Thompson add tremendous joy to his family life.

## BI-ANNUAL ELECTION

Windjammers Unlimited holds its election every two years with Trustees serving a four year term. In prior years, a President and Vice President were also elected each time. However, with the recent approval by members to change the society's By-Laws, the Board of Trustees will now include ten persons, all Trustees, including four from the 2018 election. Then the Trustees themselves will elect a President and Vice President from among the Board. For this transition election, six Trustees are to be elected. The sixth nominee having the lowest votes, will serve a two-year term instead of four. In 2022, and subsequent bi-annual elections, five Trustees will be elected.

### **GREG BITLER**, WJU #2080



**Greg Bitler** joined Windjammers Unlimited in 1997. He resides in Danville, Pennsylvania, but previously lived in the Berks County area for 19 years. He began clarinet lessons in fourth grade (November, 1962) with Richard Klinedinst, and began playing bassoon in 10th grade under Danville High School Band Director, Ken Warmkessel.

Greg graduated in 1975 from Bloomsburg State College with a B.S. in secondary social studies. He substitute taught for 3 years in the schools in the Danville area. In 1978, he started employment at Danville State Hospital. In 1986, he decided to pursue a second career, and graduated in 1991 from Bloomsburg University with a B.S.N. in nursing. He is a member of Sigma Theta Tau, national honorary nursing society. He worked at Berwick Hospital and Sunbury Community Hospital during the next three years. Then in 1994, he decided to leave Danville, and accepted a position with the PA Department of Health in Pottsville. He later moved to St. Lawrence in 1997, and took a position in the Southeast District Office of the PA DOH in Reading. He was a Community Health Nurse Supervisor from April 2005 until his retirement in March 2013.

Greg played with the Ringgold Band of Reading for 21 years. He was band secretary from 2002 until 2015 and was a trustee for two years before that. He still plays occasionally with the Boyertown Alumni Band, and the Rajah Temple Band. In 2016 he moved back to his hometown of Danville, PA and now plays with bands in his hometown area including the Danville Community Band, of which he is now president, the Catawissa Military Band, Milton area Community Band, and Selinsgrove Adult Band.

### **William Yoh, Jr.**, WJU #1190



**William Yoh, Jr.** has been a member of Windjammers Unlimited since 1989. He is a trombonist within the various ensembles and has conducted at WJU's Annual Conventions and Summer Meets. William is also a member of the Windjammers Membership Committee.

Bill is a music educator at Robert Louis Stevenson Elementary School of the Arts in Merritt Island, Florida, and conducts its orchestra, concert band, and choir. He graduated from the University of Michigan in 1986 with a Bachelor's degree in music education and performance. Bill also attained the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification in 2004 and has been an assessor, writer, and reviewer for the association. He has taught at the elementary and secondary levels during the past 34 years.

Presently, William selects music, directs, conducts, and plays trombone for the Historic Cocoa Village Playhouse in Cocoa, Florida, and has some 100+ musical productions to his credit. During his early years, Bill played trombone with the Keystone Band of Rehrersburg, PA and Perseverance Band of Lebanon, PA. Within Florida, he has performed with the Brevard Community Band and Central Florida Winds. He also had the honor to play trombone in Carnegie Hall and abroad with the 1980 America's Youth in Concert European Tour.

## TRUSTEE CANDIDATES

*continued*

### Don Covington, WJU #119



Music and the circus have been recurring themes throughout piccolo player **Don Covington's** life. At the suggestion of his college band director, he auditioned for the U.S. Navy Band in Washington, DC. While that position didn't materialize, it still led to his entering the Navy where during flight-training he was the drum major and assistant director of the Naval Aviation Officer Candidate Band in Pensacola, Florida. After earning his wings, he served as a naval aviator aboard Pacific Fleet aircraft carriers, had tours in Washington, DC and was naval attaché at the American Embassy in Paris, France. He retired as a Captain after a 30-year military career.

His second career was with the circus. During thirteen years with New York-based **Big Apple Circus** in administrative roles, including Company Manager, he and his family traveled the country full time with the show. Don is the past national president of **Circus Fans Association of America** and is the current president of the **Circus Historical Society**. Don was on the executive committee for the World-Wide Circus Summit in 2015. Based in Coronado, California, he is currently a consultant to the circus industry. Don has been a Windjammer since 1973. Don is current Vice President of WJU.

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### April Zink, WJU #1253



**April Zink** has been a member of Windjammers since 1989. She was Editor – *Circus Fanfare* from mid-2006 through mid-2015. April is a current Trustee, so is running for re-election.

While a college student, April toured over-the-road for six seasons with **The Circus Kingdom** as a trumpeter. During that time, they produced three CDs of circus music.

As a member of Windjammers, April has been an advocate for building youth membership as well as inviting cross-over membership from the other circus fan organizations. She is also a Trustee of Circus Fans Association of America. She has organized Circus Bands for the CFA Convention and the International Independent Showmen's Association's annual charity circuses.

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### Frank Manola, WJU #3444



**Frank Manola** is a retired computer scientist from Wilmington, MA, northwest of Boston. He received degrees in Civil Engineering from Duke University and in Computer Science from the University of Pennsylvania and played trombone in the bands of both schools.

Frank now plays tuba in community bands in Wakefield, Reading, and Rockport MA. Frank's wife, Judi (WJU #3445) plays clarinet and is with some of those same bands. Frank also participates in a brass quintet.

Frank has been a Windjammer since 2012 and served on the WJU Strategic Planning Group in 2019. He is also a member of the Circus Historical Society, and the Coast Defense Study Group, a historical preservation society. His other interests include the history of technology, traditional jazz, and railroads.

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## WINDJAMMERS MEMBERSHIP - *time to renew!*

**Drew Trapani, WJU #3695**



**Dr. Andrew P. Trapani** is a Chicago native who grew up in a family of musicians. He studied piano and percussion in his early years, joining the Chicago Federation of Musicians at age 17 and playing drums professionally with most of the best bands in Chicago. He played with big bands, Dixieland bands and everything in between and was the steady drummer with the Dick Sarlo Orchestra for 35 years. His music career provided for 10 years of college (Loyola University; University of Illinois College of Dentistry) attaining a DDS degree and an MS in biology. Upon completion of orthodontic residency, Drew entered the US Army and served 2 years at Fort Sill, Oklahoma as Captain in the dental corp. While at Fort Sill, he played four nights a week in a lounge quartet. After the Army stint, he returned to Dundee, Illinois where he established a successful orthodontic practice. He practiced for 42 years and continued his passion for playing music. Upon retirement in 2015, he and his wife, Pam, moved to Sarasota. Currently, Drew is a member of the Suncoast, Venice, and Manatee Concert bands. He is also a percussionist with the Lakewood Ranch and Suncoast Wind Ensembles, the Venice Community Symphony, and Windjammers. He has directed and played with the Windjammers Dance band the past 2 years. He has his own 6 and 18-piece dance bands and also plays with several combos and big bands in the area. He is married to the world's biggest Viking Fan. They have 5 children and 7 grandchildren. Pam had a long career in the golf industry and is now pursuing a career in illustration.

**Marvin Manring, #3688**



**Marvin Manring** (WJU #3688) has been a Missouri music educator for 35 years. He graduated in 1985 from Central Methodist College (now University) and played under the baton of Keith House (WJU #558). The CMC band recorded two albums with Merle Evans in 1984 while Manring served as band manager. He played for several seasons as a member of the American Federation of Musicians Local 217 in the 1980s, holding down the tuba section with Windjammer Bob Barnes in many concert performances and big band gigs on trombone. Manring has taught in the Missouri school districts of California, Slater, and Stockton, where he currently resides. He joined WJU in 2018 and was a guest conductor in the 2018 summer meet in Oskaloosa, IA. He is active in many local civic organizations and charitable foundations in addition to his school position, and has most recently filed for the position as House Representative for Missouri's 128th District. He resides in Stockton with wife Mary Anne (WJU #3683) and enjoys down time on the golf course and Stockton Lake. Daughter Liz has returned Stateside from her husband Josh's military band posting and son Lucas manages a runner's physical therapy clinic in Austin, TX. They are both low brass players, making the family unanimous.



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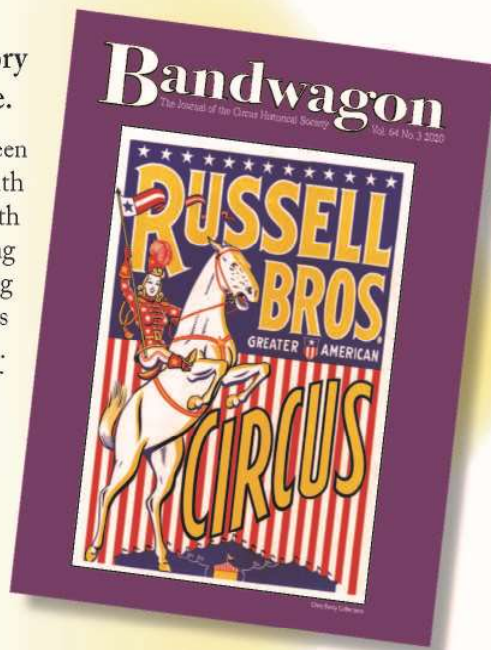
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# RINGLINGS 1978 TV SPECIAL: *Circus Super-Heroes*

By Eric Beheim, WJU #66



The band members warming up before the start of the Sunday morning recording session.

Beginning in the mid-1950s, the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus would do an annual one-hour television special hosted by a guest celebrity such as Arthur Godfrey, Roy Rogers, Johnny Cash, Danny Kaye, or Barbara Mandel.

In 1978, and in addition to its regular TV special hosted by Dick Van Dyke, Ringling did a second TV special that showcased four of its top stars from back then: aerialist Elvin Bale, high wire artist Pedro Carrillo, polar bear trainer Ursula Boettcher, and flying trapeze ace Tito Gaona. Titled **Circus Super-Heroes**, this TV special was hosted by Olympic gold-medal winning decathlete Bruce Jenner (better known today as Caitlyn Marie Jenner). Portions of this special and all of its music were taped during the Blue Unit's July 1978 appearance in San Diego, which is how I got to participate in my first and only network television recording session.

Recently, I wrote out an account of the taping of the *Circus Super-Heroes* TV special for my two little granddaughters so that, when they are older, they'll have a record of how their grandfather once played for a network television show. Since this account will also be of interest to many of you, I've made it available for publication in *Circus Fanfare*.

We first heard that the Circus' TV special was going to be taped in San Diego when Blue Unit bandleader Ronnie Drumm called Bart Hazlett, Ringling's long-time contractor who hired the local musicians for the band each year. Although San Diego is not a major television production center like Los Angeles or New York City, the musicians Bart always used for the Ringling show were more than capable of playing for a network television program. Among them were trumpet player Johnny Best, who had once worked with such famous "name" bands as Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, and Artie Shaw, and trombonist Ray Heath, who had once been a member of Spike Jones' City Slickers. The rest of the players had equally impressive backgrounds. Ronnie Drumm even remarked, "This is a good band," after the rehearsal that was held just before opening night.

During that rehearsal, and after playing through the music for that year's show, we read through the music for Ursula

Boettcher's polar bears and Pedro Carrillo's high wire act, both of which had been videotaped earlier at Ringling's Circus World theme park in Haines City, Florida. This music was to be recorded during a special 3-hour recording session scheduled for Sunday morning. (See the June 2008 issue of *Circus Fanfare* for a complete listing of Ursula's music, and the October 2008 issue for a listing of Pedro's music.)

Since both Elvin Bale and Tito Gaona were appearing with that year's Blue Unit edition, most of their sequences (and their music) were videotaped in the San Diego Sports Arena during matinee performances. (See the August 2008 issue of *Circus Fanfare* for a complete listing of the music that was played for the Blue Unit in 1978.)

Whenever videotaping was to take place, an announcement was made to let the audience know that the performance would be interrupted for Bruce Jenner's introductions, for retakes of the performers' tricks, etc. When Bruce Jenner announced that a particular trick would be done again in slow motion, there was always laughter from the audience and from the performers themselves.

To keep the performances from running too long on taping days, the comedy skit that opened the second half, and Jewell New's lion act were cut from the program. In addition to the videotaping that took place during performances, several sequences were taped without an audience being present.

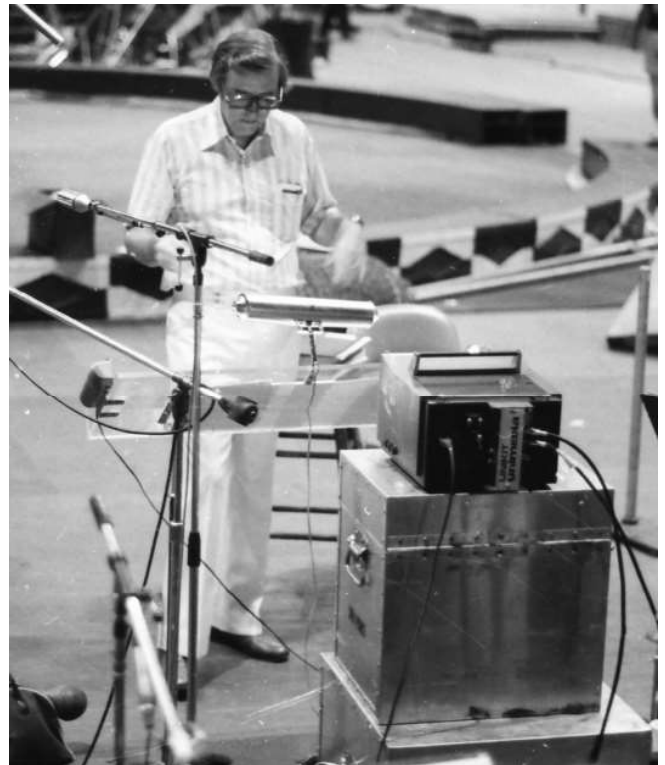
Arriving early for the Saturday morning performance, I got to watch the camera crew videotape Bruce Jenner delivering his good night remarks while sitting on Tito Gaona's trapeze. Afterwards, he dropped into the net the way that fliers always do. On another occasion, between performances, a heavily padded video camera was shot from Elvin Bale's cannon to give television viewers some idea of what Elvin experienced when he was shot from the cannon and into a net.

In addition to his regular flying act, Tito Gaona was videotaped attempting to perform a quadruple somersault, where he had to turn over four times in mid-air before

connecting with the hands of the catcher. Although he came close, Tito was never able to accomplish this seemingly impossible feat. For some takes, Tito wore a helmet camera so that viewers would get some idea of what he was experiencing while performing the quadruple. During a Blue Unit appearance in San Diego four years later, I had the opportunity to see flyer Miquel Vazquez perform the quadruple somersault during two consecutive performances.

Sequences for this program were also videotaped at two other San Diego locations. Elvin Bale performed his single trapeze act with his rigging hung from a yardarm of the 1850's sailing ship "Star of India", which is moored at San Diego's embarcadero as a floating museum. He also performed his high wire motorcycle thrill act with the rigging set up several hundred feet over the beach at Torrey Pines State Park.

The special Sunday recording session began promptly at 9:00 a.m. After the recording session, Ronnie Drumm gave me his annotated copy of the **Circus Super-Heroes** videotaping schedule, which has proved invaluable in preparing this article.



Blue Unit band leader Ronnie Drumm conducting the music for one of the acts that had been videotaped in Florida.

As the first step in the recording session, there were the usual microphone tests to make sure all the instruments were properly balanced. Then, using a video monitor, bandleader Ronnie Drumm conducted the music for Ursula Boettcher's polar bear act while watching the videotape made in Florida. We went straight through her music, just like we were playing it for a regular performance. Next, we recorded Pedro Carrillo's wire act music straight through.

A guitar player joined the band when we recorded the *Circus Super-Heroes* theme song, an original number that had been specially written for the program. We recorded both an instrument version and a second, shorter version to which a female vocalist would later be added.

We finished up the session with a few shorter items. Elvin Bale's act performed on the *Star of India* had an optional ending which had him falling from his trapeze into the water. For this we recorded a "sour" chord. (However, this optional ending and the "sour" chord did not appear in the final program.)

We also recorded chords in every key so that they could be edited in as needed. We finished up by recording a modern jazz/rock/pop number for a Pedro Carrillo stunt that had him walking on a high wire that had been strung through the center loop of the Zoomerang, the space-age roller coaster at Circus World. After the session ended, there was just enough time to put the bandstand back into order and grab a quick lunch before the start of the regular 1:30 p.m. matinee of the Blue Unit's circus performance.

4TH R E V I S E D as of 7/13/78  
 "CIRCUS SUPER HEROES" VTR SCHEDULE  
 THURSDAY, JULY 13 (CONT'D) vii

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2:30P - 5:30P VTR CIRCUS SHOW:

NOTE: AFTER CLOWN WALKAROUND, HAROLD RONK WILL INTRO GAONAS; MUSIC WILL STOP; HAROLD WILL INTRO BRUCE JENNER

(18) BRUCE INTRO TITO GAONA IN FRONT OF RING 1

(19) FLYING GAONA TRAPEZE ACT  
 NOTE: TITO WILL BE MIKED FOR ENTIRE ACT  
 A. TITO SHOULD WAIT FOR BRUCE INTRO & WAVE TO HIM  
 B. ARMANDO DOUBLE SOMERSAULT  
 C. TITO DOUBLE PULL  
 D. ARMANDO DOUBLE LAYOUT  
 E. TITO TRIPLE BLINDFOLDED  
 F. TITO DOUBLE DOUBLE (POSSIBLY)  
 G. TITO BOUNCE TO NET, BACK TO CATCHER'S BAR AND SAYS "GOODNIGHT"  
 NOTE: WE NEED A BOW FOR MONTAGE

NOTE: AFTER CLOWN TUMBLING IN RING 1 HAROLD WILL RE-INTRO BRUCE WITH ELVIN

(40) BRUCE & ELVIN INTRO TO GIANT WHEEL FROM RING 3

(41) ELVIN BALE GIANT WHEEL ACT  
 NOTE: HAROLD EXPLAINS TAPING OF P.O.V. WHEEL

(41) P.O.V. PARTS OF ELVIN BALE WHEEL (FILM)

NOTE: AFTER KONDOVI HIGHWIRE ACT, HAROLD WILL RE-INTRO BRUCE WITH ELVIN

( 8) BRUCE & ELVIN OPENING TALK & INTRO ROCKET SPOT IN RING 3

(10) ELVIN BALE ROCKET SPOT WITH BRUCE JENNER (WITHOUT ENTIRE CAST)  
 NOTE: WE NEED A BOW FOR MONTAGE

(43) ELVIN GOODNIGHTS (LOOP ELVIN LATER)

5:30P ROCKET FIRING TEST  
 LOOP ELVIN GOODNIGHTS AND "YES" AND "READY"

5:45P WRAP

NOTE: AUDIENCE SHOTS DURING OTHER ACTS

An annotated page from Ronnie Drumm's copy of the **Circus Super-Heroes** videotaping schedule.

Later, just before the start of the evening performance, we received two paychecks. One was for having played ten circus performances that week, and the other was for the 3-hour recording session. You can probably guess which one had the larger amount!

**Circus Super-Heroes** didn't air until the Spring of 1979. In San Diego, it aired the day after Ringling's annual TV special. The program opened with video footage of Bruce Jenner competing at the 1976 summer Olympics in Montreal, where he had won his gold medal. Next, it cut to him riding on the Zoomerang roller coaster at Circus World. (Circus Super-Heroes also served as a sort of commercial for the theme park, which had opened only four years earlier.)

The roller coaster sequence led into the opening theme song to which the female vocalist had been added. After some introductory remarks from Bruce Jenner, the action shifted to the San Diego Sports Arena as Elvin Bale's cannon was rolled in while the band played the main title music from the original "Star Wars" film.

Bale's cannon act, which actually came at the close of the Blue Unit's performance, provided the TV special with a strong opening. After the cannon shot, the scene shifted to the Guest Participation Circus at Circus World, where Bruce Jenner, under Pedro Carrillo's guidance, attempted some wire walking. This led into a condensed version of Pedro's high wire act. Then it was back to the San Diego Sports Arena for a condensed version of the Flying Gaonas' act featuring Tito.

Next, the scene shifted to Torrey Pines State Park where Elvin Bale and his twin sister Dawnita performed their high wire motorcycle act. Then, the program jumped back to Circus World for a condensed version of Ursula Boettcher's polar bear act. Next, it was back to San Diego and the Star of India, where Elvin Bale performed his single trapeze act from one of the ship's yardarms. Bale worked to his regular music, which had been recorded during a performance.

Then, each of the four "circus super-heroes" performed a final trick. Tito attempted the quadruple somersault. Pedro walked the high wire through the center loop of the Zoomerang, while coaster cars filled with screaming people sped around him. Accompanied by Harry J. Lincoln's *Sliding Sid*, Ursula's polar bears were introduced to a new water slide and swimming pool that had been custom-built for them at Circus World. Elvin Bale's final trick was a condensed version of his gyro wheel act which always concluded with the band playing the finale from *Dance of the Hours*. Then, each star said goodnight. The program concluded with Bruce Jenner sitting on Tito's trapeze and wishing the audience good night before dropping into the net. The longer instrumental version of the *Circus Super-Heroes* theme music was then heard during the program's closing credits.



Blue Unit drummer Ricky Drumm (Ronnie's son)



Ronnie Drumm conducting & following the action on a monitor



Sax section on break between numbers. Eric Beheim at right

# OUT OF THE PAST ...

## ... Zack Mulhall's Wild West

By Chuck Finley



Col. Zack Mulhall on his horse Olive Bell leading his Cowboy Band at New York City, October 1907. His show was called both Col. Zack Mulhall's Wild West Show and Col. Zack Mulhall's Congress of Rough Riders and Ropers. His daughter Lucille was on the show and took it out at least one season.

Zack Mulhall (1847-1931) was a circus and wild west showman, a pioneer frontiersman, local mayor, Presidential friend, railroad stock agent, and rancher. He may have been born as Zack Vandiveer, with his parents dying while he was quite young. It appears he was adopted from a convent by other family members and given their last name of Mulhall.

In 1889 he participated in the "Last Run" of the Opening of the Oklahoma Territory and claimed 140 acres. This humble small ranch would grow to encompass 80,000 acres. Zack moved his family (wife + 2 daughters, later a son) on to the small ranch. In 1890, the people of the ranch town then called Alfred successfully petitioned to change the name to Mulhall, and Zack was elected its Mayor in 1890. The girls were sent to a Catholic school in the nearby Territorial Capital of Guthrie. His daughter Lucille showed great talents with roping and horsemanship.

The mayor of Guthrie asked Zack to put on a western show featuring his daughters, Lucille (age 13) and Agnes (aka Bossie), and some of his cowboys for visiting officials. The first show was in 1899 and put on under the title of Zack Mulhall's Congress of Rough Riders and Ropers. This show is usually credited in circus circles with being out from 1900 to 1915. I have also seen the title listed as Zack Mulhall's Wild West Show, which may or may not have been a formal

title. Zack and Lucille had close personal ties with Teddy Roosevelt, beginning back when he was running for Vice President and continuing beyond the end of Mulhall's show, so I tend to think the correct title for the entire life of the show was Congress of Rough Riders and Ropers.

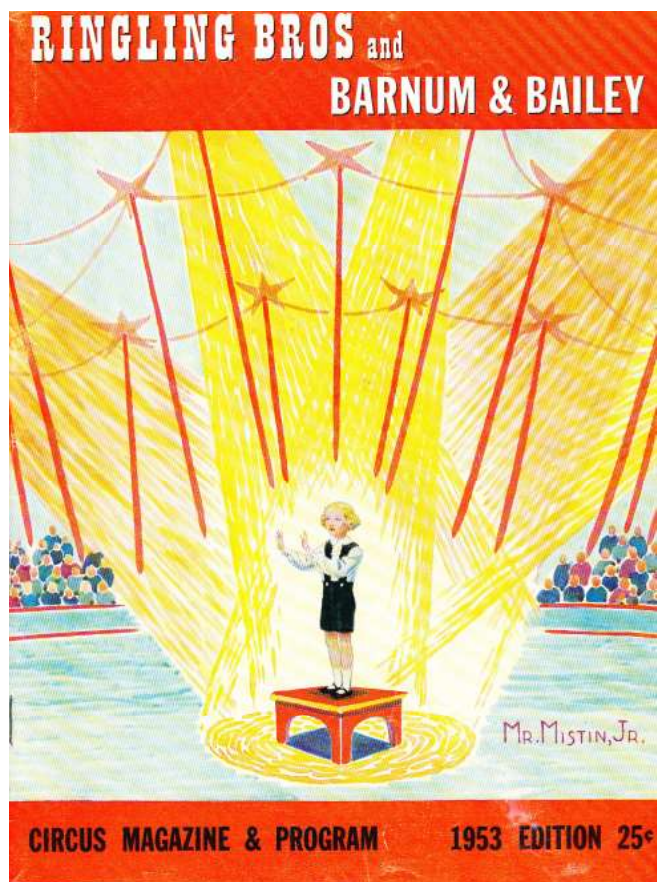
Lucille Mulhall is perhaps the greatest woman in rodeo. She was World Champion Roper, when the competition included both men and women, not separate brackets for men and women as it is today. The newspapers (especially in New York) had difficulty fully describing this small young woman from Oklahoma, so the term "Cowgirl" was coined to describe Lucille. She is also credited with taking the Mulhall show on the road when Zack was laid up with medical maladies.

The show's Cowboy Band was active at least as early as July 1903 as documented by the Guthrie newspaper article mentioning a show put on by the band to promote the Oklahoma exhibit to be at the 1904 World's Fair. The show's big break did come when it performed at the Saint Louis World's Fair of 1904. Lucille was a feature act, but appearing with her on the show was the young trick roper "the Cherokee Kid", who was later known by his real name of Will Rogers. Tom Mix is also attributed to the show, but I can't confirm that he appeared. What is recorded is that Zack met Tom Mix as he worked as a bartender in Oklahoma City. Tom Mix was a frequent visitor to the ranch and was friends with both Zack and his son Charlie.

**Photo and above information courtesy of Chuck Finley and the Circus Historical Society.**

# A CIRCUS MUSICAL ODDITY

By Eric Beheim WJU #66



## Mister Mistin, Jr.

The featured center ring attraction of the 1953 Edition of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus was described in that year's souvenir program as the:

*"PRODIGIOUSLY PROCLAIMED PHENOMENON John Ringling North's Latest and Greatest Importation The Tiny Musical Prodigy Who Has Astounded Millions In Europe, Asia and Africa MR. MISTIN, JR. THE CHILD WONDER OF THE WORLD First Time in America."*

The object of this ballyhoo was a mere lad of five or six who, accompanied by Merle Evans and his band, played Suppe's *Poet and Peasant Overture* on the xylophone, and then a medley of popular tunes.

Harold Ronk is the one who introduces Mistin. At this stage in his career, Ronk only appeared as Ringling's announcer and "singing ringmaster" during the New York, Boston and Philadelphia

stands. Others took over those tasks once the show began playing elsewhere.

North had encountered Mistin at a circus in Stockholm and was captivated on the spot. Not only was Mistin featured on the cover of Ringling's 1953 souvenir program, but he was also the subject of an article written for the program by Roland Butler which described him as weighing thirty-six pounds, standing thirty-six inches tall, able to speak five languages fluently and who practiced from one to two hours daily. Reportedly, he could hear a tune played through and then could repeat it flawlessly on his xylophone.

As a performer in Sweden, the boy went by "Baby Mistin", but Ringling dubbed him "Mister" to emphasize the child's prodigiousness. His real name is Roland D'Haeveloose and he later performed in Europe as Roland d'Avell.

The reactions to this offbeat act varied from "so-so" and "what's this doing in a circus?" to "I think that's rather exciting." Ringling's General Manager Art Concello, while not a big fan of the act, conceded that it went over "fairly well." (However, what Merle Evans thought of it has been lost to posterity.) Like most novelties, however, Mistin only lasted a single season.

Fortunately, a recording was made of Mistin's act while Ringling was appearing in Madison Square Garden in New York. **Members of Windjammers, Unlimited can now listen to Mistin's xylophone act on our website at MYWJU.ORG, Preservation tab, Circus Music subtab.**

**NEW TO THIS CONTINENT —**  
Astounding Array of Amazing Acts and Artists  
Culled From The Cream of Creation, including  
**The Prodigiously Proclaimed Phenomenon,**

**MISTER MISTIN, JR.**

*The Tiny Musical Prodigy Who Enthralled Millions in Europe, Asia and Africa.*  
NOW PRESENTED FOR THE  
**FIRST TIME IN AMERICA**

**1953 Mobilization of Marvels**  
Colossal Congress of the Earth's  
Foremost Riders, Aerialists, Acrobats,  
Gymnasts, Jugglers, Equilibrists,  
Contortionists and Big Top Sensationalists.

**MARVELOUS MISTER MISTIN, JR.,  
THE CHILD WONDER OF THE WORLD**



## The Gilded Cage

By Robert J. Schoenberg May 18, 1953  
*The Harvard Crimson* - REPRINT

In the spotlight his name is **Mister Mistin, Jr.**, and he is a little boy of five-going-on-six. As the star of the circus he is the envy of all who ever gummed spun sugar. His blond hair is long and in curls, and his Lord Fauntleroy suit shows no wrinkles. But who would dare call the confidante of lion tamers a sissy?

Since he is the star, Roland, as he is known to such intimate dependents as his mother, father, and big brother, pretty much calls the shots around the bigtop, even with interviewers from newspapers. "I talk English good," he said, when we were first introduced. "And I talk five languages too: English, my own French, Flemish--write this down," he broke off, pointing sharply at my notebook. "And, let's see, Flemish and Dutch and Swedish." Then he began to stretch.

"Come Roland," his mother said. "Time to dress for the act. You can talk afterwards." "No!" he shot back. "Please, Roland, you don't want this gentleman to think that you are not a nice little boy. Let me dress you." "NO!"



Mr. Mistin, Jr.'s 5th birthday. On the circus lot August 5, 1953 with Allen Pivotti, son of an aerialist. Sverre Braathen photo; ISU Milner Library Collection.

"All right, Mama," the older brother said. "Let him talk while he dresses." Roland unscrewed his face from the brink of a tantrum and flashed a truly Continental smile. "Come," he told me. "I will tell you more. Will that man take my picture?" He turned to the photographer. "You can use the bright light that goes BOOM."

He let his mother undress him, only balking when she rubbed oil on his face and hair. "I have two friends here I play with," he sputtered through the wash-cloth. "One is French, too, but you know," pointing to his head, "he's not so smart, and he is afraid of the animals. But the English boy whose father has the lions, is good. He knows what to do when a snake comes by. Do you know that?"

I admitted I didn't, but before he could explain, his brother came to take him into the arena. "Come with me," Roland commanded, so I joined the entourage. On the way we went by performers returning from the rings. They evenly divided between smiles and mutterings as Roland jostled past them.

While waiting for his cue, Roland told me about his act. "I play the xylophone." When he finally stepped before the audience that's about all he did. Everyone else feels that Mr. Mistin, Jr. would make a fine side show feature, but John Ringling North thinks it's a great act.

His mother came for a final check-up, but he waved her aside. "Go away, over there," he said, pointing towards infinity. She shrugged and left. Before he went into his act, Roland flashed me another beatific smile and said, "You can talk more when I'm alone," then walked off in the brilliance of converging spotlights.

"He's a real little devil, like all boys," his mother said, smiling. "But he has the genius, and that makes a difference. It makes it all right--don't you think?"



# RINGLING'S RCA VICTOR RECORDS in 1930

By Eric Beheim, WJU #66

In his 1982 autobiography *It Was Better Than Work*, veteran circus press agent F. Beverly Kelley describes how, in 1930 when the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus was playing Philadelphia, he arranged for Merle Evans and the Ringling band to visit the RCA Victor studios in nearby Camden, New Jersey. There, they recorded six sides with some of the best circus music ever written: *Memphis the Majestic/Circus Echoes*, *Entry of the Gladiators*, *Pageantry*, *Colossus of Columbia*, *Old Glory Triumphal*, and *Gentry's Triumphal*. An air calliope joined in with the band for *Entry of the Gladiators*, *Pageantry* and *Old Glory Triumphal* giving those marches a real old-time circus sound.

The Ringling-Barnum band's Victor recording session took place only five years after the introduction of electronic recording. Not only were these records louder, but the fidelity was greatly improved over records that had been made using the old acoustical method, where the performers sang or played into a large horn. Victor referred to its new electric recording process as "Orthophonic" and came up with a fancy new "scroll" label to identify its electrically recorded records from its earlier acoustical ones.

In 1930, Victor's recording engineers were still learning how to get the best results from early microphones and vacuum tube equipment. Recording the powerful Ringling Band inside a studio undoubtedly taxed this early recording equipment to its maximum, and it's a wonder that these recordings turned out as well as they did.

The six sides recorded by the Ringling Band were released on three 10-inch black label records, using the Victor "Orthophonic" Scroll Label circa 1930-1935:

- 22438-A: *Memphis the Majestic/Circus Echoes*S
- 22438-B: *Entry of the Gladiators*
- 22474-A: *Pageantry*
- 22474-B: *Colossus of Columbia*
- 22671-A: *Old Glory Triumphal*
- 22671-B: *Gentry's Triumphal*

According to Steven C. Barr's *The Almost Complete 78 rpm Record Dating Guide* (II), records 22438 and 22474 were released sometime after June 1930 and record 22671 was released early in 1931.

**These were the first commercial recordings that Evans and the Ringling-Barnum band made**, but they would not be the last. The three Ringling Victor records were sold during the hard times of the Great Depression when phonograph records were a luxury that few people could afford. While no information is available as to how many copies of these records were sold, it was certainly far less than the Ringling band's later recordings made for Columbia, Decca and Capitol in the 1940s and early 1950s.

From 1930-1935, Victor had the "Orthophonic" Scroll Label seen on the adjacent page. After October 1937, Victor introduced the "Circular style" label (below) that, with slight variations, Victor would use for its 78-rpm records throughout the remainder of their life.

As a long-time collector of 78 rpm records, I began searching for the Ringling Victors in the early 1970s. In addition to antique stores, this quest took me to thrift stores, flea markets, garage sales, and swap meets. I also contacted several dealers who specialize in rare and hard-to-find records. But it wasn't until I began searching for them on eBay that I was finally able to acquire all three. Even then, I often had to buy two or more copies of the same record to find one that wasn't worn out from repeated playings.

Once I finally had good copies of all three records, I transferred them onto my computer's hard drive and, using an audio restoration software program, removed the clicks, ticks, and surface noise, producing "clean" copies of all six sides. Although they have the primitive sound quality of early electrical recordings, the three Ringling Victors provide fine examples of Merle Evans and the Ringling-Barnum band performing circus music over 90 years ago.

**Access and listen to the six sides of the 1930 Ringling-Barnum recordings on our website at:**

[www.mywju.org](http://www.mywju.org) under the **PRESERVATION** tab and **CIRCUS MUSIC** subtab.



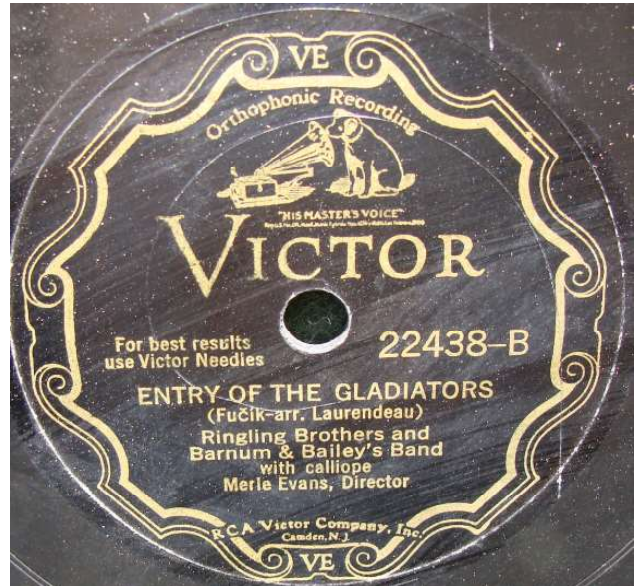
Canadian pressing "Bat Wing" design



"Circular style" label after Oct. 1937



CIRCUS ECHOES, Introducing *Memphis the Majestic* (A.W. Hughes, Russell Alexander)



ENTRY OF THE GLADIATORS, (Fučík, arr. Laurendeau)



PAGEANTRY - March, (Karl L. King)



COLOSSUS OF COLUMBIA - March, (Russell Alexander)



OLD GLORY TRIUMPHAL MARCH (C.E. Duple)



GENTRY'S TRIUMPHAL MARCH (Fred Jewell)

# MUSIC FOR ELEPHANT ACTS

By Eric Beheim, WJU #66

Next to steel arena wild animal acts, no act was more integral to a circus performance than an elephant act. For those of us old enough to remember the circus as it once was, elephant acts, and the music played for them, were always a highlight of the performance.



Recently, I went back over my earlier articles on circus musical programs and gathered together a representative sampling of just the music used for the elephant acts. They are presented here along with some comments and observations.

## 1959 Cristiani Bros. Circus

*On the Square March* (Panella), Unidentified Waltz, *I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls* (Balfe), *On the Square March* (trio), *The Hearse Song* (traditional), *Ringling Bros. Grand Entry* (Sweet), *Turkey in the Straw* (traditional), *The Streets of Cairo* (Bloom), *The Merry-Go-Round Broke Down* (Friend-Franklin), *Quality-Plus* (Jewell), *London Bridge* (traditional), *Quality-Plus* (trio), *Aida: Grand March* (Verdi), *Lohengrin Entrance Music* (Wagner), *On the Square* (reprise).

In 1959, the Cristianis' bandleader was Ramon Escorcía (WJU Hall of Fame 1979) who had had many years' experience playing in circus bands, including the under-canvas Ringling-Barnum band. The music he programmed for the Cristianis' 1959 elephant act was probably quite similar to that which old time circus band leaders like Victor Robbins (WJU Hall of Fame 1976) and Eddie Woeckener (WJU Hall of Fame 1999) programmed back in the 1930's.

## 1961 Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus

*Olympia Hippodrome* (Alexander), *The Waltz You Saved for Me* (King-Flindt), *Rock-a-bye Baby* (Trad.), *On the Square* (Panella), *Hearse Song*, *Abdullah* (King), *Cachita* (Marín), *Mambo Jumbo* (Prado), *The Merry-Go-Round Broke Down* (Friend), *Quality-Plus* (Jewell), *London Bridge is Falling Down* (Traditional), *Bravura* (Duble), *Grand March from "Aida"* (Verdi), *Royal Degree* (English), *Lohengrin Entrance Music* (Wagner), *Knights of the Road* (Orlik).

A recording that was made during a performance in Orlando, Florida on November 1, 1961, documents that the 1961 CB-CB elephant act was a fast-paced affair that lasted less than 6 minutes. The bandsmen really had to be on their toes to catch the many quick music changes.

## 1962 Mills Bros. Circus

*Entry of the Gladiators* (Fučík), *Entry of the Gladiators* (trio), *Robinson's Grand Entry* (King), *Robinson's Grand Entry* (trio), *The Merry-Go-Round Broke Down* (Friend-Franklin), *Bravura* (Duble), *Bravura* (trio), *Quality-Plus* (Jewell), *Quality-Plus* (trio), *The Awakening of Spring* (Chas. Bach), *E Pluribus Unum* (Jewell), *E Pluribus Unum* (trio), *Abdullah* (King) (played for the head carry trick), *Colossus of Columbia*.

In 1962, the Mills Bros. bandleader was Joe Stefan (WJU Hall of Fame 2007), another alumnus of the under-canvas Ringling-Barnum band. It is not hard to image Merle Evans programming this same music for elephant acts back in the 1920's.

## 1962 Cristiani-Wallace Bros. Circus

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

In 1962, the Cristiani-Wallace bandleader was Howard Stratton. While not too much is known about his background, the music he programmed for that year's elephant act certainly qualifies as "traditional."

## 1965 Ringling-Barnum

*Barnum & Bailey's Favorite* (King), *Elephants that Never Forget* (an original song written for this number), *Entry of the Gladiators* (Fučík), *Papa, Won't You Dance with Me?* (Styne), *Robbins Bros. Grand Entry* (Gilson), *Entry of the Gladiators* (reprise), *Galop Go* (Jewell) and *The Billboard March* (Klohr). After the elephants left the arena, a single elephant did a dance on the hippodrome track to *Hello, Dolly!* (Herman).



"The marvel is not that elephants dance so well but that they dance at all. Evans and trainer Francis Fizzel ponder music for this new step." (Buckles Blog)

*Robbins Bros. Grand Entry, Entry of the Gladiators* and *The Billboard March* were all numbers that Merle Evans undoubtedly used often for elephant acts on the under-canvas Ringling show.

### Oscar Cristiani Elephants

*Entry of the Gladiators* (Fučík), *Dance of the Archers* from the "Prince Igor Polovetzian Dances" (Borodin), *The Young Prince and Princess* from "Scheherazade" (Rimsky-Korsakow), *Dance of the Wild Men* (another of Borodin's Polovetzian Dances), *Pahjamah* (Henry & Onivas), *The Charleston* (Johnson), *The Streets of Cairo* (Bloom), *London Bridge*, and *Procession of the Sardar* (Ippolitov-Ivanov).

The Oscar Cristiani Elephants was an independent act that frequently appeared at Shrine and Grotto circus engagements during the 1960s and 1970s. Its special music score prepared by Bill Pruyn (WJU Hall of Fame 1997) combined traditional elephant act music with selections from the light classics.

\* \* \* \* \*



\* \* \* \* \*

Mention should also be made of the special music that was written for elephant acts over the years. Perhaps the most famous example is the music written by Igor Stravinsky for the 1942 Ringling-Barnum Ballet of the Elephants number and which was later published under the title *Circus Polka*. Merle Evans and his windjammers hated the piece, but even worse, so did the elephants!

Beginning in 1943 and continuing through 1944, Ringling-Barnum's elephant act was the military-themed **Changing of the Guard**. The 1943 Fitch Bandwagon radio broadcast featuring Merle Evans and the Ringling-Barnum band included a song written for this number and titled *She's the McCoy*.

The 1950 Ringling-Barnum performance concluded with *Jungle Drums*, a rousing elephant number that the souvenir program described as "A Weird, Wild, Tom-Tomic Jubilee in the Fantastic Land of Mumbo Jumbo with Native Girls, Boys, and Elephants." Henry Sullivan's original score for this number was one of the highlights of that year's musical program.

In 1955, the Ringling-Barnum elephant number was titled **Mama's in the Park** and featured an original theme song written by John Ringling North. *The Polka Dot Polka*, a catchy tune written for the 1961 Ringling-Barnum elephant act was later recorded by Ringling's long-time announcer-vocalist Harold Ronk for his solo album *A Day at the Circus with "Mr. Singing Ringmaster."* (Columbia ML 9540).

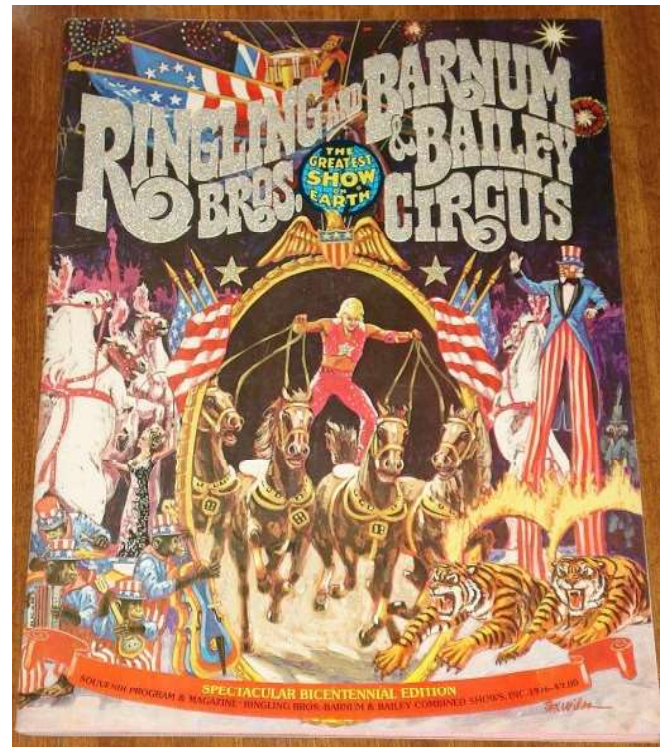
During the years when Irvin Feld served as Ringling-Barnum's producer, the elephant acts were always incorporated into elaborate production numbers featuring special music scores prepared and arranged by Bill Pruyn. What follows are some of the more memorable ones from those years:

### 104th Edition: Barnum & Bailey's Razz Ma Tazz (1974)

The music score for this Roaring Twenties-themed number included such period hits as *Puttin' on the Ritz*; *La Cumparsita*; *The Charleston*; *Collegian*; *Varsity Drag*; *Yes Sir, That's My Baby*; *Dill Pickles*; *If You Knew Susie*; *Runnin' Wild*; and a selection from George Gershwin's 1926 musical *Oh, Kay!*

### 106th Edition: Red, White and Blue Rampage (1976)

Presented during the U.S. bicentennial years, this number's musical score was intended to evoke the feelings of patriotism and American pride that were prevalent back then: *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, *Old Piano Roll Blues*, *On a Wonderful Day Like Today*, *Circus On Parade*, *I Love a Parade*, *God Bless America*, *When the Saints Go Marching In*, *The Invincible Eagle March* (Sousa), *South Rampart Street Parade*, *Boogie-Woogie Bugle Boy of Company B*, *This is My Country*, and *Grand Old Flag*.



Program Cover for Ringling's Bicentennial Edition - 1976

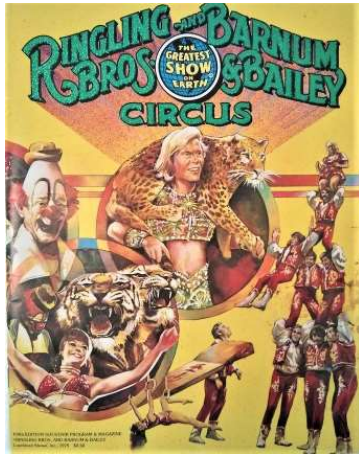
### **108th Edition: Exotic Eastern Adventure (1978)**

One of the most elaborate elephant production numbers of all time, this one boasted a musical score that included *Fanfare* from the musical "Kismet", *In the Steppes of Central Asia* (Borodin) (aka *Sands of Time* from "Kismet"), *Dance of the Ababu Princesses* from "Kismet", *Bacchanal* from the opera "Samson et Delilah" (Saint-Saens), *Wedding Procession* from "Le Coq d'Or" (Rimsky-Korsakov), *Girl Friend of the Whirling Dervish* (Warren), *Orientele* (Cui), *Serenade* (Borodin) (aka *Night of My Nights* from "Kismet"), *Procession of the Sardar* (Ippolitov-Ivanov), *War March of the Tartars* (Karl L. King), a fragment from *Scheherazade* (Rimsky-Korsakov) and a reprise of *Dance of the Ababu Princesses* as the elephants exited the area.

While this score might not have been traditional in the old-time sense, it remains my all-time favorite elephant act music.

### **109th Edition: Gypsy Fandango (1979)**

A then-recent hit movie titled "King of the Gypsies" undoubtedly served as the inspiration for this number featuring **Gunther Gabel-Williams**. When Gunther made his entrance, he was announced as "the King of the Gypsies." The music score included excerpts from Monti's *Czardas*, an excerpt from one of Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsodies*, *Dark Eyes*, *Romany Life* (Victor Herbert), and *Play Gypsies*, *Dance Gypsies* (Kalman) among others.

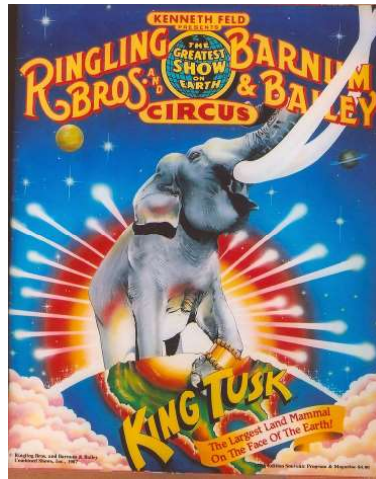


### **110th Edition: Elephant Calypso (1980)**

"Elephant Calypso" had a high-energy score of mostly 1940s pop tunes with a South American flavor: *Sing a Tropical Song* (McHugh), *The Peanut Vendor* (Simons), *Heat Wave* (Irving Berlin), *Bim Bam Bum* (Morales), *Brazil* (Barroso) plus several other popular sambas and mambos from that era.

### **112th Edition: Elephant Highland Fling (1982)**

Standing tradition on its head, this number featured wardrobe and music that were Scottish. The score opened with selections from Lerner and Loewe's musical "Brigadoon". When the elephants made their entrance, it was to *The Kilties March* (Morris) which in turn was based on famous Scottish folk songs. Other music included lively arrangements of *The Blue Bells of Scotland*, *The Campbells are Coming*, *Roamin' in the Gloamin'*, *Comin' Thro' the Rye*, *Annie Laurie*, *Loch Lomond*, and some additional numbers from "Brigadoon". Surprisingly, all of these numbers worked quite well for an elephant act and certainly were more appropriate than the disco music that had been played for Gunther's elephant act a few seasons earlier.



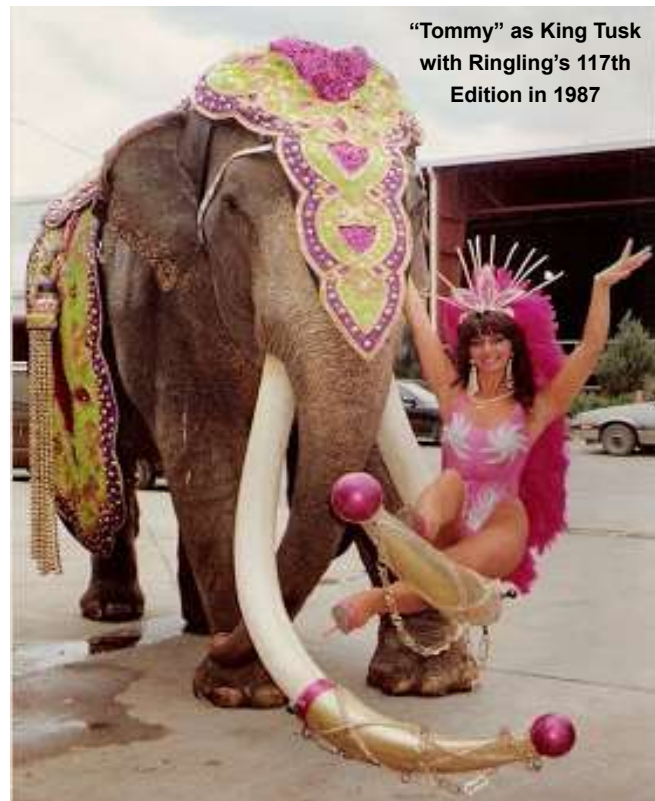
Billed as the "Largest Land Mammal on the Face of the Earth", King Tusk was introduced as a Special Attraction in 1987's "117th Edition."

Previously known as "Tommy", he arrived in this country shortly after WWII. As he grew in size, he developed a magnificent set of tusks. In the 1960s and 70s, he appeared at all the major Grotto and Shrine circuses.

### **117th Edition: King Tusk (1987)**

This was not that edition's elephant act but a production number intended to introduce Ringling's latest animal attraction King Tusk (aka "Tommy"), Tony Diano's big male tusker who, because of his mild disposition, was reliable enough to be used for touring and performing. The music score for this number included *Caesar's Triumphal March* (Mitchell), *Oh, You Circus Day* (Lessing-Monaco), *Fanfare* from "Le Coq d'Or" (Rimsky-Korsakov), *Luleta's Dance* (Ring), *March of the Mogul Emperors* (Elgar), *Bridal Procession* from "Le Coq d'Or", and *Procession of the Sardar*.

The musical highlight of this number was *March of the Mogul Emperors*, which was played as King Tusk/Tommy was walked around the hippodrome track. It perfectly conveyed the grandeur, power, and implied menace of a large bull elephant with long tusks.



"Tommy" as King Tusk with Ringling's 117th Edition in 1987

# BACK COVER COMMENTS ...

## W.N. MERRICK & FOREPAUGH & SELLS BROS. CIRCUS

By Chris Berry, WJU #3959

### *The Equestrienne March (1902)*

At the turn of the 20th Century the phonograph was still a new invention and the parlor of many American homes included an upright or spinet piano. Amateur musicians collected sheet music and to meet the demand *The Equestrienne*, composed by 2005 WJU Hall of Fame laureate William N. Merrick, was printed and sold at performances of the Adam Forepaugh and Sells Bros. Circus.

Merrick started his career as a circus musician in 1875 with Raymond & Co. and Van Amburg's Menagerie which wintered in his hometown of Zanesville, Ohio. After that first season the 20-year-old cornet player was hooked, and the following year he became a part of Louis Heck's band on the Sells Bros. circus, succeeding Heck as bandmaster in 1884, a position he held until 1895 when he moved to the Great Wallace Shows.

After three seasons with Great Wallace, Merrick became bandmaster of the now-merged Adam Forepaugh and Sells Bros. Circus, a position that he held in 1902 when he wrote *The Equestrienne*, and dedicated it to Mary Sells, the daughter of Lewis Sells, who along with his brothers Ephraim and Peter had founded the Sells Bros. Circus in 1872.

By the turn of the 20th Century, the Sells brothers, along with James A. Bailey and W.W. Cole each owned a third of what was then titled Forepaugh & Sells Bros. Circus.

Two years after this music was published Ephraim and Peter Sells were both dead, and Lewis sold the remaining shares of the circus to James A. Bailey. In 1905, William Merrick joined the William P. Hall Shows, and then moved to the Hagenbeck-Wallace

Circus on cornet for the rest of his career. For his 38th and final year with a circus band (1913), Merrick was also back in the bandmaster role, having replaced Park Prentiss.

Merrick owned a farm and a cement business in his hometown of Zanesville, OH. In retirement there, he continued to play cornet and lead the town band. In 1936, a presidential election year, he composed the tune "Vote for Landon". Kansas Governor Alf Langdon received 8 electoral votes to Franklin Roosevelt's 523, so apparently Merrick's tune was not helpful. Merrick died December 20, 1938 at the age of 83.

As for Miss Mary Sells, at the time *The Equestrienne* was published she was eight years old. Although her father and uncles would soon leave the circus business, she was proud of her association with the circus. She died in 1952 at the age of 58.

### *Clown Songster*

Early American circus clowns, such as Dan Rice, were known more for their songs and jokes than they were pantomime or slapstick, and when this "Songster" was sold at the Adam Forepaugh & Sells Bros. Shows the days of the talking clown were numbered. Ever expanding circus tents meant that clowns whose voices could be heard by smaller audiences were impossible to discern in a huge big top.

Songsters included not only music but also humorous lyrics, and they were a popular souvenir of circus day in the latter part of the 19th Century. The *Clown Songster* edition shown on the back cover, published by Will Rossiter of Chicago, claims "50 up to date latest songs and music," and features the circus founders on its cover.



## 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 usually 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, MYWJU, 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.

**Our address is:** P.O. Box 31145, Independence, OH 44131-0145.  
Officer and Trustee contact information is shown on Page 2.

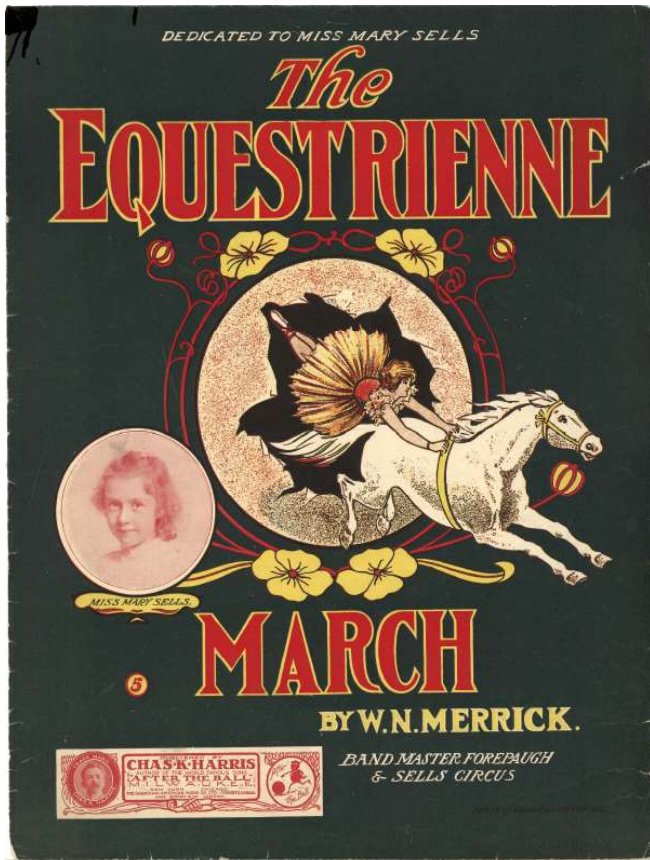
**Our website is:** [mywju.org](http://mywju.org)



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**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

Special "Virtual" Convention January 12 - 17, 2021 (see page 7)

Windjammers Summer Meet (Mon. - Sat.) July 19 - 24, 2021 Gainesville, Georgia