

# THE CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC. PRESENTS

## NEWS & VIEWS

*Bringing Circus Past and Present Together!*

The Circus Historical Society Newsletter  
Bob Cline – Newsletter Editor

[www.circushistory.org](http://www.circushistory.org)

Vol. 10, No. 1, Feb. 2019  
Chris Berry – Co-Editor

**“Our Mission is to Preserve, Promote and Share through Education, the history and cultural significance of the circus & the allied arts, past and present.”**

### SARASOTA IN MAY

NOW, is the time to register for the Convention and make your hotel reservations for the huge Circus Historical Society Convention in Sarasota in May of 2019 by contacting Hilton Garden Inn, 8270 North Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL. 34243. The rooms are \$ 99.00 for a single and \$109.00 for double occupancy rooms. This includes your Breakfast. You can call **941-552-1100** to make reservations. Be sure to tell them this is for the CHS. These rates will be good two days before and two days after the Convention as well. You can also make your reservations online at <http://group.hiltongardeninn.com/CircusHistoricalSociety>



Your journey in Sarasota begins on Wednesday May 1<sup>st</sup> with your check-in and a reception at the Showfolks of Sarasota in conjunction with the CFA tent, that evening. You'll have plenty of panels and presentations on topics of the Circus on Thursday

and Friday, then the largest auction ever held by the Circus Historical Society will be conducted by Freedom Auction Company of Sarasota. This auction is projected to contain over 500 items. WOW!

The Banquet will be a special event in itself at the Circus Arts Conservatory and will announce this year's Thayer Prize winner. In addition to all of this, you'll have a four day pass to see the Ringling Circus Museums. Tours of John and Mable Ringling's home, Ca d'Zan are additional charges.

Freedom Auction Company has conducted a few circus memorabilia auctions at Showfolks of Sarasota over the years. The company is operated by CHS members, Brian and Kisha Hollifield. The online catalog will be posted for perusal and pre-bidding in late April. Bidding will be available onsite during the auction in addition to worldwide participation via the online platforms of LiveAuctioneers and Invaluable.

There are two ways to participate as a seller. As a donor, your items will be sold with 100% benefit to the CHS. As a consignor, all proceeds, less the auction commission, will be paid directly to you, the seller. Freedom Auction Company will contribute an additional 10% of the hammer price on donated items along with a portion of their proceeds of the consigned items to the Circus Historical Society. If you have items you would like to sell, please contact the folks at Freedom Auction Company by calling 941-725-2166 or [info@freedomauctions.com](mailto:info@freedomauctions.com).

## **NEW MEMBERS . . . . .**

We are pleased to welcome our new members that have joined since our last newsletter.

- # 5046 – Steve Ransohoff  
Ketchum, ID.
- # 5047 – James Harkness  
Fredonia, KS.
- # 5048 – Jeff Killian  
Moreno Valley, CA.
- # 5049 – Brian Hollifield  
Bradenton, FL.
- # 5050 – Elizabeth Telford  
Midlothian, TX
- # 5051 – Josephine Weaver  
New Smyrna Beach, FL
- # 5052 – Winn Morton  
Lancaster, TX.
- # 5053 – Natasha Shatzkin  
Princeton, NJ
- # 5054 – William J. Weinshrott  
Fond du Lac, WI.
- # 5055 – Mike Hoffman  
Delaware, OH.
- # 5056 – Ed Minas  
Novi, MI.
- # 5057 – Lauren Lowe  
Wynnewood, OK.
- # 5058 – Christina Horton  
Sarasota, FL.
- # 5059 – Peter Sturgis  
Baraboo, WI.
- # 5060 – Viola Gould  
Glencoe, MN.
- # 5061 – Angela Lackey  
Santa Cruz, CA.

- # 5062 - Bill Armstrong  
Quaker City, OH.
- # 5063 – Ringling House B & B  
Baraboo, WI.
- # 5064 – Dan Maguire  
Florissant, MO.
- # 5065 – Jan Biggerstaff  
Las Vegas, NV.
- # 5066 – Steven Shelton  
Danbury, NC
- # 5067 – Nicholas York  
The Colony, TX.
- # 5068 – William Watts  
Bedford, VA.
- # 5069 – Gwendolien Sabbe  
Belguim

## **GONE, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN**

Since our last newsletter in November, we have learned of six more members that have passed away that we did not know about at the time.

- |                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| # 780 – Dennis Watson      | April 18, 2018   |
| # 1311 – Henry Bush        | August 31, 2018  |
| # 1655 – Robert McLaughlin | July 8, 2018     |
| # 1706 – Robert J. Harris  | October 25, 2018 |
| # 2132 – Joseph A. Manier  | May 25, 2018     |
| # 2240 – Robert W. Connor  | October 1, 2018  |

## **THAYER PRIZE**

Have you read, heard or seen a piece about the circus that grabbed your attention as being the best you have experienced lately? Nominate it for the acclaimed Thayer Prize. All Nominations must be submitted by February 20, 2019. Issued by the Circus Historical Society in Honor of the late great Stuart Thayer, the prize adds to their credits and carries a \$ 500.00 gift along with it. The prize winner will be announced at the Sarasota Convention in May.

Contact Thayer Prize Chairman Niles “Buddy” Calhoun with your nomination at 19 Sylwood Place Jackson, MS 39209-9755 or [nilesca@aol.com](mailto:nilesca@aol.com)

## AN OLD PHOTO....



This daub was seen on May 19, 1912. The original negative is part of the Conover Photographic collection.

## THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF THE MAJOR AWARDS FROM THE 43RD INTERNATIONAL CIRCUS FESTIVAL OF MONTE-CARLO, 2019.

THE PRIZES WERE AWARDED BY THE JURY PRESIDED OVER BY HER SERENE HIGHNESS, PRINCESS STEPHANIE.

**CLOWN D'OR** (Golden Clown) plus an extraordinary prize for **Martin Lacey, Junior**

**CLOWN D'OR** ( Golden Clown) for the group of performances from the Royal Circus of **Gia Eradze**

**CLOWN D'ARGENT** (Silver Clown) Duo Just 2 Men, Troupe Aliev, Troupe Filinov, Troupe Acrobatique of China for their group of performances

**CLOWN DE BRONZE** (Bronze Clown) Elephants from the Joseph Gärtner family, Trio Without Socks, Cesar Dias, The Prilepin Quartet, Duo The Owl and the Pussy Cat, and Charlotte et Nicolas (born in Monaco).

## RING OF FAME . . . . .

This year's group of Inductees into the Ring of Fame at St. Armand's Circle in Sarasota included:

The **Hernandez Troupe**, which originated in Cuba and Germany by Manuel and Lisa Hernandez, was often billed as "those bouncing, twisting titans of the teeterboard," the release said. Throughout their time in the circus, the family also presented various circus acts while traveling through the U.S. and around the world. Though the family doesn't perform anymore, they continue the family circus business by teaching, directing, producing and writing. The youngest sibling just completed his first book, called *Circus Legends*," the release said.

The second inductee is the late **Ron Morris**, a circus entrepreneur and impresario. Morris established Sarasota's Spotlight Graphics, which has been an industry leader in circus poster, program and ticket printing. His career also saw him producing circuses, serving as past president of Showfolks of Sarasota and a Circus Ring of Fame board member, the release said.

Third is **Carla Wallenda**, daughter of the late Karl Wallenda. She holds the title of being the "senior-most daredevil," the release said. In 2017, at the age of 81, she appeared on Steve Harvey's "Little Big Shots: Forever Young," where she performed her sway pole act.

The final inductee of the class is the **Rodos Troupe and Palace Duo**, an aerialist team comprised of Hans and Rosie Rode. In 1972, the family established the Old Heidelberg Castle in downtown Sarasota, which featured Bavarian-style food, music, dancing and acrobats, the release said. The family also made circus, TV and stage appearances throughout their career.

The induction was held on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019, with a concert by the Windjammers. Long time Circus Historical Society member, Brian Liddicoat serves as the President of the Ring of Fame.



## ORLAND - MARA - BY CHRIS BERRY

In 1931, Mario Orland and Julia Mara joined Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey with a sensational act unlike any of the “high dive” acts previously presented in the Greatest Show on Earth. Twice a day Miss Mara, a trained ballet dancer, would be strapped to Orland’s back from a pedestal about 40 feet (not 80 as the poster indicates) above the Hippodrome track. He would then leap off of the pedestal, hit the chute squarely in the center and slide swiftly into a net at the end of the ring.

Orland has performed the stunt alone for many years in Europe before adding a female partner - and when they joined Ringling in 1931 the act was a sensation - and was enough of an attraction to demand a special lithograph.

Incidentally, Orland was Italian and Mara was half-German and half-Spanish, and according to press stories neither could speak to each other in their native language - but both knew French and that was how they would communicate. Press interviews were always conducted in French with the multi-lingual equestrian director Fred Bradna translating the questions and answers.



## 2019 - AN ANNIVERSARY YEAR



( Chris Berry collection )

One hundred years ago, the circus winter quarters in Bridgeport, CT. was buzzing as final preparations were being made for the world’s first “Super Circus.” The combination of Barnum & Bailey’s Greatest Show on Earth and Ringling Bros. World’s Greatest Shows was only weeks away as John and Charles Ringling were making plans for the first performances of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows at Madison Square Garden on Saturday March 27, 1919.

Despite the major challenges associated with combining two groups of rolling stock and equipment, two performances and two staffs, the 1919 season generated more profits for the Ringling brothers than two shows had delivered the previous year.

In 1969, fifty years after the two circuses first combined, and fifty years ago this winter, two separate shows again toured America, both as Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus – but now designated as the “Red” and “Blue” units and no longer under Ringling ownership.

The events that happened in 1919 and in 1969 will be among the topics of the Circus Historical Society Convention in Sarasota, Fl from May 1-4, and in an upcoming issue of Bandwagon.

## DID YOU KNOW . . . . .

Wallace and Co.’s Great World Menagerie, Grand International Mardi Gras, Highway Holiday Hidalgo and Alliance of Novelties opened for the first time on April 26, 1884?



## Convention Registration

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Spouse / Guest : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email : \_\_\_\_\_

Registration per member and Spouse / Guest \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ 140.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
 Non-member Registration includes New membership \_\_\_x \$ 200.00= \_\_\_\_\_  
 Late Fee after April 1<sup>st</sup> = \$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ 25.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
 Registration at the Door = \$ 50.00 late fee \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ 50.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total included = \_\_\_\_\_

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**For any questions, please contact Chris Berry at [circusposters@gmail.com](mailto:circusposters@gmail.com)**

Send your Reservations and check, payable to the Circus Historical Society to:  
 Bob Cline – CHS Sec. / Tres.  
 2707 Zoar Road  
 Cheraw, SC 29520