

The Advance Car

The Official Newsletter of the Circus Historical Society

July 2023

Happy Independence Day! We are excited to bring you another edition of *The Advance Car* to share updates and highlight our members.

Convention 2023 is less than two months away, August 24 - 27 in Bloomington-Normal, Illinois. Kenneth Feld, Chair & CEO of Feld Entertainment, is this year's keynote speaker. His address, *Reimagining The Greatest Show On Earth*, will feature an interview by Chris Berry, CHS Vice President. Learn more about Convention, view the program, and register [here](#).

CHS members continue to shine in their efforts to promote and preserve circus history, as you'll see below. Please join us in celebrating their immense contributions!

The next issue of *Bandwagon: The Journal of the Circus Historical Society* will arrive for members in late July. In the meantime, don't forget to check out the [CHS YouTube channel](#) for past recordings of our monthly series, *Circus History Live!* and for episodes of our new series, *Circus History Spotlight*.

If you are not already a member, [join CHS today!](#)

See you down the road!

Bruce Hawley,
President, Circus Historical Society

Register Today for Convention 2023

We can't wait to see you in Bloomington-Normal this August for Convention 2023. Learn more and register [here](#).

CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY
CONVENTION
2023
BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL
AUGUST 24-27
Register on
circushistory.org

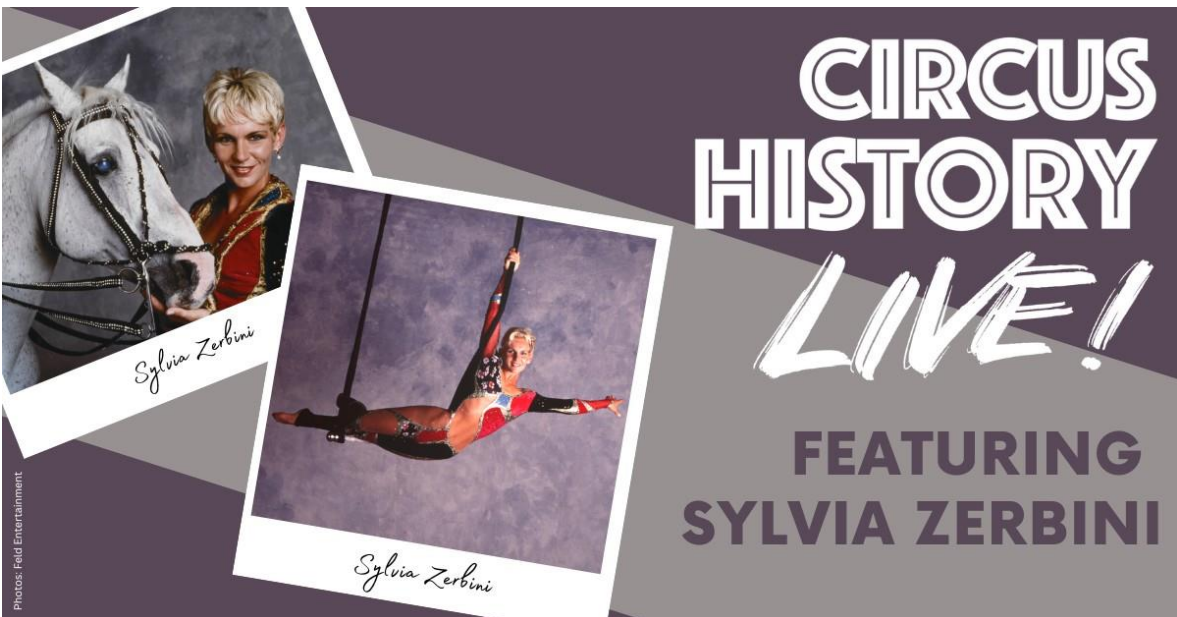
Photo: Mervyn Library Collection
1962, Ringling Brothers Circus parade float



CHS Facebook Group: Over 13,000 Members

Our popular Facebook Group recently surpassed 13,000 members! Thank you to all members of the Group who contribute expertise, photos, discussion, and love of circus history.

Interested in joining the Group? [Click here](#) and answer the entry questions (they help us keep out spam and bots!). CHS volunteers approve requests as soon as possible.



Watch the Latest *Circus History Live!* Featuring Sylvia Zerbini

Our latest episode of *Circus History Live!* featured legendary aerialist and equestrienne, Sylvia Zerbini. [Watch the recording](#) on the CHS YouTube channel, and don't forget to subscribe! Thank you for your continued support of our monthly program.

CHS Member Spotlight

Recognizing our members and their dedication to the preservation of circus history.



Under the Big Top class, winter 2019

For the Love of Circus and Lifelong Learning

by Lynn Duncan

In 2017 I took my grandson to see the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus in Greenville, SC. At the time we believed it would be the last time we would ever see The Greatest Show On Earth. As I watched the RBBB Circus I started thinking about how closely tied the history of the circus is to the history of our country. They both have a history that spans over 200 years and that got me started on a project to research the history of the circus in America.

This led to an opportunity in 2019 to teach a course in the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Furman University in Greenville, SC. The course, *Under the Big Top: The History of the Circus in America Since 1793*, was very well received. Belinda DeBelli, who had been a showgirl for the RBBB Circus Blue Unit in the 1970's, took the course and she talked to the class about her experiences.

A number of circus folks/fans have since joined classes to talk in person or via Zoom. The list includes Bob Childress, Roger Smith, Bruce Hawley, Lane Talburt, Bill Reynolds, LaVahn Hoh, Pete Shrake, Stasia Kelly, Aine Norris, Maureen Brunsdale, Betsy Golden Kellem, David Carlyon, Jim Lavender, Timothy Tegge, Barbara Tegge, and Belinda Debelli.

If you're interested in knowing more about the OLLI course or in developing an OLLI course in your community, please feel free to contact me at echoes92@charter.net.



Photo: ©Eric Antoniou

CHS Trustee Wins Regional Emmy for Barnum Museum Series

Betsy Golden Kellem, CHS member and trustee, won a Boston / New England Regional Emmy Award for The Barnum Museum [Showman's Shorts series](#).



Hideaway Circus Podcast: An Oral History of the Circus

Hosted by CHS member Josh Aviner with Lyndsay Aviner, this podcast features over 100 episodes of interviews, circus history, and performing arts trends. [Listen here](#).



Photo: United States Awning website

Devin Jernigan Examines Circus Architecture

In a recent project and exhibit, CHS member and Yale University School of Architecture Ph.D. student Devin Jernigan examined United States Awning and its history of tent making for the circus industry. [Read more about the project](#).

If you're a CHS member who has recently promoted circus history through publication, presentations, media appearances, or community talks, let us know! We try to highlight as much as possible in each issue. Email CHSmarketingpr@gmail.com

POTTER & POTTER AUCTIONS
CIRCUS • SIDESHOW • ODDITIES

JULY 29, 2023 • 10:00 AM



Dented Carcass Tiger, est. \$10,000.000



Salving the Phenomenal, est. \$500.000



"Mummified" Head in Case, est. \$600.000

Our annual sale of the UNUSUAL, the AMAZING, and the BIZARRE is set to feature a wide range of AMAZING antique objects, from classic VINTAGE lithographs (and the maquettes used to design them), to REMARKABLE cabinet cards and photographs, sideshow banners, and fairground art, including carousel animals and horses. STRANGE taxidermed items will also cross the block.



Prosthetic Glass Eye Collection, est. \$2,000.000



Al G. Barnes Superb Spectacle Adults and The Parade of Gold, est. \$800.000



Jack Cripe, Human Salamander sideshow banner, est. \$2,000.000



Edward J. Kelly, Congress of Freaks with Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Combined Circus, Season 1926, est. \$1,000.000



Johnny Eck, Pen Knife Circus Wooden Figurines, est. \$600.000



Clyde Beatty Greatest Wild Animal Trainer of All Time poster maquette, est. \$800.000



The Mondari Viper Humaine, est. \$800.000



Walker L. Main Trained Wild Animal 3 Ring Circus, est. \$800.000



New York Museum of Anatomy, est. \$400.000

LIVE AUCTION

Bid in Person • Via Phone • On Line

5001 W. Belmont Ave. Chicago, IL 60641 | potterauctions.com | info@potterauctions.com | 773.472.1442



Images in The Advance Car used with permission from The Ringling, Milner Library Special Collections at Illinois State University, and private collections.