

The Advance Car

The Official Newsletter of the Circus Historical Society

May 2023

It has been a busy few months for CHS! We recently launched a new video series on our YouTube channel called *Circus History Spotlight*, which features short conversations about circus history and the future of circus. You can watch the *Spotlight* series and catch up on past *Circus History Live!* recordings [here](#).

In April, we celebrated World Circus Day with a [special edition of Circus History Live!](#) featuring Zsuzsanna Mata, Wayne McCary, and Rodney Huey from the Fédération Mondial du Cirque. We were pleased to see CHS members from all over the globe celebrating World Circus Day by attending or producing shows, visiting circus history sites, holding talks or lectures, and attending other events.

As you'll see in the newsletter below, it has also been a busy few months for CHS members. We hope you will join us in celebrating their accomplishments and dedication to the preservation of circus history.

The CHS Convention 2023 is coming up, August 24 - 27 in Bloomington-Normal, Illinois, a place rich with circus history. Sign up before June 15 to get the Early Bird registration rate! Learn more about Convention and accommodations [here](#).

I hope that you enjoy reading *The Advance Car*. And, if you are not already a member, please [join us today](#) to receive all of the other benefits of a CHS membership including *Bandwagon: The Journal of the Circus Historical Society*.

See you down the road!

Bruce Hawley,
President, Circus Historical Society

Convention 2023 Registration is Open!

We can't wait to see you in Bloomington-Normal this August for Convention 2023. Learn more and register [here](#). (Register today! Early Bird rates end June 15!)



A promotional banner for the Circus Historical Society Convention 2023. On the left, five women in ornate, sequined green and gold costumes with long pink capes are posing. On the right, the text reads: "CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY CONVENTION 2023 BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL AUGUST 24-27 Register on circushistory.org". A small vertical photo credit is visible on the right side of the banner.



Kat Vecchio Named New *Bandwagon* Editor, Succeeds Greg Parkinson

Since 2018, Greg Parkinson has edited over 100 articles for *Bandwagon: The Journal of the Circus Historical Society*, an enormous contribution to the preservation of circus history. Please join us in thanking Greg for his outstanding service as he transitions from his role as editor to spend more time with family and focus on writing projects.

We are excited to officially welcome Kat Vecchio, long-time CHS member and Trustee, as the new editor of *Bandwagon*! Kat is a writer and documentary filmmaker whose work centers on American popular culture, history, and gender.

Read Greg's farewell and a warm welcome from Kat in the latest issue of *Bandwagon*.

Celebrating One Year of the *Bandwagon* Collection on Internet Archive

Since its launch in early June, 2022, the *Bandwagon* collection on Internet Archive has received over 21,000 views from around the world. The collection contains over 500 issues of the journal dating back to 1940. Thank you for making this collection a valued space for circus history! [Visit the collection.](#)



CHS Member Spotlight

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



Kevin Venardos Contributes Donation to CHS

In March, 2023, circus impresario and CHS member, Kevin Venardos, contributed a generous donation to the Circus Historical Society. The presentation came following the ribbon cutting for the new Venardos Circus big top by the daughters of famed clown Emmett Kelly, Monika and Stasia.



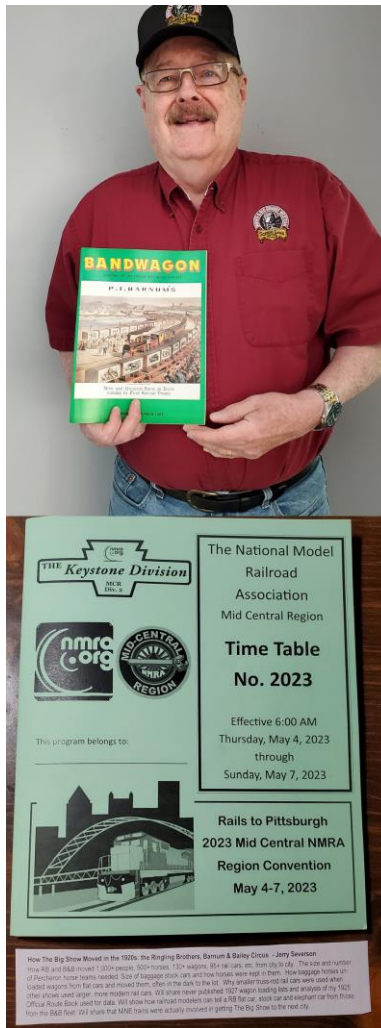
CHS Trustee Maureen Brunsdale Releases Biography on Art Concello

The biography of Concello is titled *In the Shadow of the Big Top: The Life of Ringling's Unlikely Circus Savior*. [Learn more](#).



World Circus Day with Old Bet in Somers, New York

CHS President, Bruce Hawley, helped the Somers Historical Society celebrate the unveiling of the new Old Bet elephant statue. [Watch the video here](#).



CHS' Jerry Severson Shares RBBB Train Lore with Rail Fans

by Stasia Kelly

When the Mid-Central region of the National Model Railroad Builders met in Pittsburgh recently, “The Circus Guy” was there! Attendees gave CHS member Jerry Severson that nickname after enjoying his well-attended convention clinic titled, “How the Big Show Moved – The 1920’s RB & BB Circus.”

This is the second time Jerry has delivered this presentation and he is passionate about the importance of sharing this important period in railroad history. He expects to put on more clinics for NMRA’s 16,000+ members in other regions and at their 2024 national convention in Cleveland. He is also reaching out to the National Railroad Historical Society and Railway & Locomotive Historical Society Convention teams.

Jerry said he is extremely grateful for the assistance he received from many CHS associates when developing the presentation, including Fred Dahlinger for capturing so many great photos, Chris Berry for the *Bandwagon* article Jerry said, “lit my fuse,” Maureen Brunsdale for her assistance with contacts, Peter Shrake, Bob Cline, and the inspiring 2022 CHS convention, where he found the official 1927 route book.

New Edition of *Curious People Wanted*

The Barnum Museum recently released another great edition of *Curious People Wanted* featuring Captain George Costentenus. CHS secretary, Amelia Osterud, assisted with some of the Captain's history and is working on a biography about The Tattooed Greek, to be released later this year. [Watch the video.](#)



Betsy Golden Kellem Nominated for Regional Emmy Awards

CHS member and trustee Kellem is nominated in two categories, *Performer/Narrator* and *Writer - Short Form Content* for [Showman's Shorts with the Barnum Museum.](#)



Cirque Mechanics' *Zephyr* Nominated for Drama Desk Award

Cirque Mechanics, founded by CHS member Chris Lashua, was nominated in the *Unique Theatrical Experience* category. [Read more on CircusTalk.](#)




Danise Payne Featured on Podcast

CHS member and legendary clown Danise Payne was recently interviewed on the Live Like An Acrobat podcast! Payne's new book, *Elbows in My Ears: My Life with Little People, Tigers, and Wardrobe Trunks* details her spectacular circus career. [Watch the interview.](#)

If you're a CHS member who has recently promoted circus history through publication, presentations, media appearances, or community talks, let us know! Email CHSmarketingpr@gmail.com

Upcoming Events



Jeanette Williams

CIRCUS HISTORY LIVE!

FEATURING CIRCUS RING OF FAME INDUCTEE
JEANETTE WILLIAMS

SUN, MAY 21, 7PM EDT
FREE ZOOM EVENT (REGISTRATION REQUIRED)

Join us on **Sunday, May 21 at 7pm EDT** for *Circus History Live!* featuring 2023 Circus Ring Of Fame inductee, Jeanette Williams.

Circus History Live! is a free Zoom event for CHS members and non-members. Registration is required. [Click here](#) to register today.

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