



## Circus Hall of Fame

3076 E. Circus Lane

Peru, IN. 46970

[www.visit.circushalloffame.com](http://www.visit.circushalloffame.com)

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## WORK WEEK . . .

The Circus Hall of Fame's annual work week is coming up fast. We are scheduled for the week of May 16<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup>. We are expecting volunteers from around the country to come and assist us as we prepare for a new summer season.



We will be working on changing displays again this year to give a new look to a great Circus Museum. We have been blessed to have received three major collections since October of last year.

A portion of the Clyde Reynolds 3/4" scale hand carved circus parade and Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus has been donated to us. This portion is requiring two entire showcases to be emptied and readied to put these exquisite models on display this year.

It was a real shocker to learn that our dear friend, fellow model Builder and Circus Hall of Fame Board member, Dominic Yodice, passed away in December.

### DOMINIC YODICE

MAY 31, 1946 TO DECEMBER 13, 2020



Dominic Yodice was well known as an expert of the filming of Cecil B. DeMille's classic, "The Greatest Show on Earth" in 1951. As a Circus Model Builder, he recreated in 1/4" scale, the 1951 Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus train. As a historian, he had purchased many of the actual costumes and artifacts from the movie.

Dom also served the International Circus Hall of Fame as a Board member for many years. His dedication and expertise, and the help of some great friends, refurbished the Ringling Ammo cage # 77 that housed Betty Lou, the Pygmy Hippopotamus with the jungle panels. Dom loved using his costumes in the Parade each summer. Above all else, Dom was a good friend to so many people. It is our sincere pleasure to share his passion here with all of you.

Dom's family graciously donated his collection to the Circus World Museum in Baraboo, Wisconsin, the John and Mable Ringling Museums in Sarasota, Florida and to the Circus Hall of Fame.

We are going to empty two more showcases to prepare to display Dom's amazing 1951 Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus train in 1/4" scale and to pay tribute to

a wonderful man who was recognized as the leading historian on the filming of Cecil B. DeMille's all-time classic movie, "The Greatest Show on Earth." Many of Dom's artifacts and collectibles from the Movie will be put on display this summer.

A major collection of Postal First Day Covers has been donated by Mr. Martin L. Severe. This collection of circus-oriented envelopes spans nearly 70 years of his collecting stamps as a hobby.



These will also be on display this summer in another smaller showcase.



Maybe you can work it out to join us during our work week, May 16<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup>. We have plenty of room to park campers, although we don't have water or sewer hook-ups. We'll serve up a lunch every day to keep you nourished and happy.

If you can't attend, maybe you can help with a donation for work on the wagons. You can simply mail a check made out to the Circus Hall of Fame to 3076 E. Circus Lane, Peru, IN. 46970 or you can use PayPal if you prefer. Simply login and click send money to

[Stigeract@gmail.com](mailto:Stigeract@gmail.com). Enter the amount and send.

Our work week activities are not confined to just changing displays. One of the things so many friends of the circus enjoy doing is working on a real circus wagon. We have plenty to work on.

With your generous donations, we have raised enough money to have the wooden wheels from the 1887 built Sig Sautelle Band Chariot taken in to be rebuilt. This project has already had all four wheels taken to Shipshewana, Indiana for the repairs.



We received the old Cole Bros. Circus Menagerie Canvas and Pole wagon # 42 as one of the artifacts that could be saved from the old Terrell Jacobs / Paul Kelly property on the west side of Peru. The State of Indiana Dept. of Transportation has purchased the property for future road use.

The last weekend in March, our volunteers started to wire brush the metal on the front to get a feel for how good it was, did it need to be replaced, etc. It held up fine. It was completely wire brushed and was then primed with a graphite based rusty metal primer. This actually helped fill in some of the rusty pitting making a smoother surface.

There is lots of work to do on this wagon including removing and rebuilding the back doors, changing the one wooden spoked axle out to one of the hard rubber axles from another wagon and reconstructing a floor in it again.



This wagon spent most of its career painted orange. That orange was a lead based military paint. We have since found the Coast Guard Orange that we will use to repaint this and one other Cole Bros. wagon at the Circus Hall of Fame



We also received the old bird cage from the Terrell Jacobs / Paul Kelly property. This was at the end of a line of cages for the lions and tigers. There is a chute door from the cages into this cage. The claw marks are visible in the wood. This makes us wonder if perhaps a pregnant animal was allowed in this cage to give birth and then put back in the cages a few days later where they could raise the babies in here. That would explain the mesh openings rather than bars.



The decorative scroll work at the top was all painted by veteran show painter, Art Johns, of Peru.



This cage will be re-installed in the west wing of the elephant barn that will have the concrete block wall rebuilt. To go along with this, are the five cage sections that came from the Kelly farm two years ago that adjoined this cage. That will be a recreation of what was inside the Terrell Jacobs / Paul Kelly cat barn.



Volunteers, Mike Butash, Bob Cline, Dom Yodice and John Wright spent most of a morning taking out the five sections of bars

and the painted boards from above them. Unfortunately, the walls with the chute doors are part of the structure of the building and may never be able to be salvaged once the State starts to demolish the buildings. We are keeping our fingers crossed.

Our work week efforts also turn to the former American Circus Corporation Office Building. Someone actually lived in this building up to 1994. A small kitchen was constructed in one room. That wouldn't be an original fixture in this building, so we will be removing the kitchen cabinets and the fake brick façade that was put up.



We are currently having a licensed electrician from the Peru area installing all new electrical components to bring power into the building again where our chief electrical volunteer, Bob Sapita and his help can start re-wiring the building.



It is the goal of the Circus Hall of Fame to rehabilitate this building in its entirety to become part of our research center and

Archives collection storage. We have already raised about \$1,600.00 to apply to fixing the windows in this amazing building. This building also has a full concrete block basement divided into four rooms.

Once again we return to working on an original circus wagon. The former Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus Bandstand wagon needs to be wire brushed down to be painted again. There are some areas of metal that need to be cut out and replaced from all of the rust.



Once we can get it wire brushed down and primed, we can start working on putting the wings back on the wagon. Our good friend, Dominic Yodice explained that the wings were made out of 1" steel angle iron with a 3/4" piece of plywood inside. This gave a very small lip which was just enough to keep a band member's chair from going over the edge.



The above photo is from the 1970s. This is what the wagon will look like once the wings are re-attached.

We are also going to begin working on the restoration of the old Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus # 1 water wagon for the Commissary / Cookhouse. This wagon was built back in the 1930s and modified over the years.



( This photo is courtesy of the Milner Library, Special collections at the Illinois State University. The slide is from the Sverre Braathen collection )

We will basically be starting from the ground up as the steel frame is laying on the ground right now. We will have the frame put up on concrete blocks where we can start scraping and wire brushing the frame. We have had enough money donated to get one tire under all four corners for the time being That's important in that it will allow us to move it around.



Once we have the frame cleaned up and primed again, we can look forward to

reconstructing the wooden body. There was a steel water tank in the lower half of this wagon that has totally rusted out.

Last, but not least, will be the scraping and painting of the barns at the Circus Hall of Fame. We will rent a spray system and an articulated device to reach the upper elevations but a lot of the painting can be done from the ground levels.



The bottom levels of the large barns are concrete block so it won't take much to prepare those walls to be painted. The upper levels are all wood and will require a good scraping before any paint can be applied. The windows are all trimmed in white after the basic yellow has been applied.



There are two sides of the old Office Building that still need to be painted along with the barn walls. Both of these walls are also wooden and will need to be thoroughly scraped before being painted.

Feel free to join us in Peru for our annual work week. We would love to have you visit.

May All Your Days, Be Circus Days !