



Home of the
International Circus Hall of Fame

3076 East Circus Lane

Peru, IN. 46970

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Welcome to Peru

Welcome to the Circus Hall of Fame's special edition Newsletter. We would first like to introduce to you the new logo, designed by CHOF Board member, Matt Holdzkom from Indianapolis.

The Circus Hall of Fame is housed in five of the original buildings from the American Circus Corporation winter quarters that were in use from 1922 until 1944. These are National Historic Landmarks.

The Circus Hall of Fame is slowly shifting the emphasis from the Circus Hall of Fame as a current resident to the historical nature of the entire circus legacy that was here before us. While many of the buildings from the old winter quarters are no longer here, the foundations of the buildings still are and it doesn't take much effort to determine where the old buildings were.

We have created about 20 different signs of these old buildings and placed them around the grounds for you to literally take a walking tour of the old circus winter quarters. The horse barns, commissary, company store, paint shop and much more may be gone but the history lives on as we document more and more of this rich circus heritage.

American Circus Corporation Side Show Storage Barn

Built 1925

The long concrete base seen here is from the Side Show



Storage barn that was built in 1925. The building was 150 feet long, 60 feet wide and 30 feet tall. As more circuses stayed in Peru, more space was needed for storage.

The Roof was built with a long sided slope to the east. Presumably, this was to help deflect some of the eastern winds from hitting the larger wagon barn directly.

This two story building became a central storage facility for all of the Side Show equipment including tents, poles, banners, bally stages, ticket boxes, etc. This building also held most of the wooden seats, jacks and stringers.

After the property was sold in 1944 to Valley Farms, this barn was used to house farm machinery and poultry equipment.

On January 12, 1955, this two story building was destroyed by a fire.

Above is just one of the many signs that have been put in place. You'll learn when the building was built, how large it was, what it was used for and when did it go away and how.

There were actually several other buildings that existed on the old circus winter quarters that would have been on what is now private land that we do not have signs made for.

COVID -19

The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus was not what any of us has wanted to happen. We had made some big plans for our normally scheduled work week that was going to be held May 17th to 23rd, 2020. That has been cancelled. Unfortunately, all of our scheduled events that week have been cancelled and / or postponed for now.

The Circus Hall of Fame Museum is closed to the Public. According to the latest charts released in Indiana, we are not to be open to the public before July 4th, 2020.

It is of utmost importance to keep everyone safe. We have been hosting Oscar Garcia's All American Circus families at the Circus Hall of Fame for several weeks now. When the word came down to close the state, they were performing in Indiana. They have the ability to keep their animals outside and have some peace and quiet while they all wait for the magical word to go back to work again.

Since none of the Board members from around the country can travel to Indiana, we have not been able to do any work, clean anything, re-paint anything, or file away any papers. Our Office remains closed and there is no one there to answer the phones.

It has been a dramatic change for all of us. We have relied on our membership campaign every year to provide the income to operate the Circus Hall of Fame. With those memberships, donations came in as well. That simply hasn't happened this year like it has in year's past. Our festivals that we have participated in have not been allowed to happen and our expenses keep going out the door. We are struggling, just like so many others. Keep praying for all of us.

GIVING TUESDAY

This Tuesday, May 5th is a National Giving Tuesday opportunity to go out of your way to support your favorite charities, Non-Profits, Museums,, hospital staffs, etc. You'll see many campaigns hitting the Social Media platforms.

The Circus Hall of Fame has simply placed a DONATE button through PayPal on our website. When you click on www.visit.circushalloffame.com the button will be right there on the front page.



Giving Tuesday is spearheaded by Giving Tuesday.org. The Network for Good along with PayPal help with the collection and disbursement of Monies. If this sounds vaguely familiar, it's because they have had one of these Giving Tuesdays for the last seven years in December.

Because we are a 501c3 Non-Profit organization, your donations are completely tax-deductible with your donation receipt. You will be able to donate anytime you want on our website, even after Tuesday. It's simply the National amount of exposure will be for the actual Giving Tuesday campaign.

You can also become a member of the Circus Hall of Fame on our website. You'll find several choices from individuals to Family to Lifetime memberships. Our current Lifetime members continue to give as well.

LIFETIME MEMBERS

As hard as this COVID-19 virus has been for us all, we have been very blessed to have many new members join the Lifetime membership club at the Circus Hall of Fame.

Please welcome this year's new Lifetime members:

Barry Schaible
Stephen Keeler
Nancy Boyer
Charles Bleibtrey
Larry Brage
Larry Raphael
Dale Williams
Rob Peden

We are also very Thankful for the generous giving of our Lifetime members. We would like to give a huge shout out to:

Paul Binder
Carol Chayka
Michael Butash
Roger W. Bassett
Gayl Doster
Scot Silzer.

VOLUNTEERS



It is with great pleasure that we pay tribute to some of the amazing and generous volunteers that have helped keep the Circus

Hall of Fame open and running for so many years. Mike Butash, Dominic Yodice and John Wright have been coming to the Circus Hall of Fame for years to help preserve, rebuild, and keep up the many facets of the Museum. John is our Board President.



Peter Gorman of Vancouver, British Columbia has been a faithful volunteer and Board member for over 25 years. He is our largest advocate in working with other agencies. He also is the proud owner of the Two Hemispheres Bandwagon.



Cheryl Lee has been keeping our Circus Hall of Fame office open for many years. Peru's favorite funster, Pat Kelly has been an institution at the Circus Hall of Fame as he followed in his father's footsteps of Weary Willie.

Dennis Eckerley is well known in the Peru Community for his work at the Helping Hands Food Pantry and as an interpreter in the Miami County Courts. Dennis has done all he can from mowing the grass to picking up the mail and keeping track of all memberships and donations.



The Circus Hall of Fame wouldn't and couldn't exist today without all the terrific people that have helped over the years. Just in the last years we have had, Billie Rockey, Regine Brindle, Patty Drabing, Thomas Donadio, Matt Holdzkom, Peter Sturgis, Allen Kirk, Heather and Patrick Bracy, Nancy Stewart, Gordon Wendling, Richard Grimm, Tim Townsend, Bob Sapita, Megan Montgomery, Angie Heiberg, Jim Decker, Wayne Ames, Susan Hopper, Wayne and Donna Scheiner, Mary Kay Dunwoody, Doyme and Mary Snider, Zach Morecraft, Ron Droscha, and so many others that we may have missed.

CHOF Archives

The COVID-19 virus outbreak has kept us all at home. Fortunately, we were able to get some of the photographs and slides out of the Archives to start the preservation and documentation process. Using two different backlight scanners, hundreds of slides have been scanned since April. They date from 1945 to 1974. The glass negatives are the

oldest and rarest. They are much heavier than a regular film slide.



A few of them are actual old glass slides that date back to 1945 on the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. These are all part of the George Hubler collection in the Circus Hall of Fame Archives. George was a circus performer who became a Circus Producer. Many a performer worked dates for "Uncle" George. Many of his slides feature performers in his shows such as the incomparable, Tarzan Zerbini.

Several old rolled photographs have been worked on during these trying times. First, they are placed in a humidifier chamber for 12 to 24 hours. This puts moisture back in the paper again which allows them to be slowly unrolled and opened up. They are measured, photographed, and laid flat for several days with some weight to hold them flat. A few days later they can be repaired if needed.



In time, many will be framed to be displayed in a showcase all about the oversized panorama type circus photos.