

## Big Top Oral History Project

### Interview Log

LOC Filename:           afc2012003\_00287\_ms02  
Interviewee:            Lucy Loyal & Dolly Pirtle  
Interview Date:         June 30, 2011

#### **Minute Mark   Topics presented in order of discussion on recording**

00:00:00	Introduction
00:00:46	Place of birth, Lucy
00:01:02	Parent's background
00:03:14	Place of birth, Dolly
00:03:21	Parent's background
00:04:04	Grew up in Sarasota, Dolly
00:04:22	Met spouse, Dolly
00:04:32	Left circus and entered law enforcement, Dolly
00:04:48	Dolly's mother continued with circus until retirement
00:06:08	Background on the Loyal circus tradition
00:09:33	Family first came in 1929 to the U.S.
00:09:36	Came to stay permanently in 1932
00:11:17	Parent's learned circus trade from older generations
00:11:42	Importance of education
00:11:51	Practicing as kids
00:12:15	Invention of tricks – one person flying act for Dolly
00:13:50	Trapeze bar from Dolly's youth
00:14:55	Love of horses, Lucy
00:15:24	Family's specialty in circus
00:17:21	Rivalry among circus performers
00:17:42	Riding acts performing at Madison Square Garden
00:19:36	Pas de deux act
00:20:20	Falling in love with the Zacchini's
00:21:39	Lucy's mother entrance into circus life in the 1940s
00:23:03	Lucy's father getting permission to marry
00:24:21	Earliest circus memory, Lucy
00:24:43	Earliest circus memory, Dolly
00:25:36	On practicing trapeze, Lucy
00:26:50	Learning to play instruments as children
00:28:08	Feeding grandfather's bear, Martin
00:28:38	Vitamin A, B, C punishment
00:29:50	Grandfather's patience, lack of
00:32:31	Having a choice in terms of acts
00:34:02	Never forgetting acts
00:34:21	Parent's worked on circus, while kids stayed with grandparents
00:35:09	Visited Al G. Kelly & Miller Bros. Circus and then family joined show, Lucy
00:36:09	Family worked on Al G. Kelly & Miller Bros. Circus, Dolly
00:36:57	Lucy learned to ride on horse Cincinnati
00:37:44	Loyal family horses
00:38:34	Lucy's father as horse trainer

00:40:13 On training horses  
00:41:52 Horse treats, sugar cubes  
00:43:03 Taking care of horses, animals  
00:44:51 Names of horses  
00:47:08 Being raised in a bilingual household  
00:48:45 Ages of Lucy and Dolly when grandfather passed away  
00:49:05 Uncle and Aunt took over grandfather's role  
00:49:09 Loyal family started to go separate ways  
00:52:44 Generations of Loyal's continue today  
00:53:34 Naming children after family members  
00:55:33 St. Armands Circle in Sarasota, Florida  
00:57:05 Family on circus today  
00:58:10 More on Vitamin A, B, C  
00:59:40 Family memories in Cuba during revolution  
01:00:42 Looking after children on the lot  
01:01:54 On Ringling trains, Dolly  
01:03:00 Making up school work, Dolly  
01:03:28 Hating school, Lucy  
01:06:43 On quitting school, Lucy  
01:07:27 Lucy's children and school  
01:08:41 Lucy's grandkids and school  
01:08:51 Lucy's grandkids on circus  
01:10:33 Feeling of closeness to circus, Dolly  
01:10:52 On missing circus, bringing back memories, Lucy  
01:11:48 Surviving because of circus  
01:12:44 Ability to take bath in gallon of water  
01:13:00 Taking baths today  
01:13:40 On electricity  
01:14:11 Parent's trailer caught fire  
01:15:28 Example of family breakdown of salary, expenditure decisions  
01:18:31 Parent's moving around brand new trailer on lot, Dolly  
01:20:26 Frog covered trailer  
01:21:07 Trip to Florida Keys as a child, weather  
01:23:06 The family act after grandfather passed away  
01:24:05 On leaving the circus, Dolly  
01:24:47 Performer lifespan  
01:25:02 Injuries  
01:27:20 Relatives performing later in life  
01:29:25 Researching family members  
01:30:16 Lucy's circus work  
01:32:07 Lucy's daughter performing in riding act as a little girl  
01:33:00 Blow downs, tent  
01:33:15 Sewing the canvas tent  
01:33:24 Making flying act nets  
01:33:44 Trouble with llama acts  
01:34:12 Lucy's mother working in the circus  
01:34:59 Wearing the monkey suit, Lucy  
01:36:04 First time meeting D.R. Miller, Lucy

01:39:01 Elephant pulling Loyal family to winter quarters  
01:40:03 Hanging on the guy lines  
01:40:37 Going under the seats  
01:41:53 Selling banners to city merchants  
01:44:22 Weenie roast under trailer, Lucy's brother  
01:44:53 Practicing in the old barn  
01:45:34 First winter quarters location for Carson & Barnes  
01:46:42 On history of Carson & Barnes  
01:47:11 Lucy's family show history  
01:52:13 Remembering Carson & Barnes moving to five ring circus  
01:53:37 Barbara Miller as performer  
01:54:08 Family relationships on the circus  
01:54:50 Still involved with Carson & Barnes, Lucy  
01:56:21 Reasoning behind retirement, Lucy  
01:56:51 Lucy's comedy act  
01:57:43 Sewing in wintertime, Lucy  
01:58:59 Flying act later in life, Dolly  
02:00:04 Dolly on Al G. Kelly & Miller Bros. as a young girl  
02:01:39 Making a living versus showing off  
02:02:21 On doing it over again, Dolly  
02:03:00 On keeping family tradition alive, Lucy  
02:04:19 On family history, Dolly  
02:04:57 On death of circus, Lucy  
02:05:50 Tent shows versus building shows  
02:06:33 Law enforcement career path, Dolly  
02:08:17 On showering  
02:09:03 Practicing  
02:09:54 Off-season activities for performers  
02:14:45 On learning how to sew, sewing costumes  
02:17:32 Changes in costume material  
02:21:58 Feathers/headpieces  
02:22:10 Capes  
02:22:57 Shoes/pumps  
02:24:00 Costume trunk  
02:25:00 Circus City Trailer Park, Sarasota  
02:25:55 Modern Trailer Park, Hugo  
02:27:39 Lucy on making Hugo, Oklahoma home  
02:31:00 Lucy on family remains  
02:34:47 On horses getting loose in town  
02:37:18 On Mother being buried at Showmen's Rest, Dolly  
02:38:45 Looking back on family memories  
02:44:20 End of interview