

Big Top Oral History Project

Interview Log

LOC Filename: afc2012003_00293_ms02
Interviewee: Mike & Martha Moore
Interview Date: October 8, 2011

Minute Mark Topics presented in order of discussion on recording

00:00:00	Introduction
00:01:01	Place of birth, Mike
00:01:05	Parent's background
00:01:34	Parent's occupations
00:01:40	Kelly Swim partnership
00:02:00	Tent picture show circuit
00:02:45	First job in show business, Mike
00:03:02	Father acquired animals
00:04:01	Start of Tex Carson Jamboree & Wild Animal Show
00:04:40	Move to Hugo, Oklahoma
00:05:15	Schooling in Hugo, Oklahoma
00:06:18	Lived in boarding houses
00:06:59	On Miller family
00:07:51	Father formed partnership with D.R. Miller
00:08:25	Name change to Tex Carson Circus
00:08:40	Name change to Carson & Barnes Circus
00:09:07	Mother working on the show
00:09:32	Kids as workers
00:10:10	Mike started college in 1960
00:10:41	Mike married in 1964
00:11:05	Mike, last year trouped 1965
00:11:17	Father died in 1969
00:11:28	Mother sold her half of show to D.R. Miller
00:12:36	Mother died in 1997
00:12:42	D.R. combined Al. G Kelly and Miller Bros. Circus and Carson & Barnes Circus
00:13:47	Kelly Miller re-launched
00:14:34	Different perspectives on Carson & Barnes history
00:17:02	Place of birth, Martha
00:17:16	Living quarters in Hugo, Oklahoma as a youth
00:18:00	First memory of the circus and working, Martha
00:19:15	Martha learned bareback riding
00:20:38	Martha learned tight wire
00:20:50	Circus moved to Hope, Arkansas
00:21:08	Prejudice in Arkansas
00:21:48	Otto the Hippo at Arkansas fairgrounds
00:22:32	Mabel the Elephant
00:26:33	Martha continues learning acts
00:27:30	Martha refuses to learn human cannonball act
00:30:03	Typical day, Martha
00:31:17	Martha working on the sideshow

00:32:31 Downtime with other kids on the show
00:32:59 Sunday rituals
00:33:13 Mother's role
00:33:53 Taking baths
00:31:27 Mike's various jobs on the circus
00:36:32 Importance of timing
00:38:25 Sewing canvas tents
00:39:40 Paychecks
00:40:08 Working multiple jobs
00:40:25 Circus lingo (cherry pie, hey rube)
00:41:03 Circus lot orientation
00:41:57 Trailer incident
00:42:37 Protective environment of the circus
00:43:22 Circus life versus farm life
00:43:52 Circus life versus Indian tribe
00:44:51 Non-judgmental atmosphere
00:45:51 Confusion between circuses and carnivals
00:47:04 Circus as flexible, adaptive
00:47:42 Performers would ask to come back to work for circus
00:48:16 Father as Jekyll and Hyde person
00:49:30 Truck driving, Mike
00:50:35 Mike paid way through college through summer work
00:51:58 Family used as a way to fill hole in program
00:52:40 Going to Mexico to book acts
00:54:58 Martha on learning how to perform acts
00:55:52 Booking animal acts
00:57:12 Father enjoyed putting show together
00:57:50 Father's dream
00:58:50 Father's work during winter
01:00:14 Job category, performer
01:00:30 Job category, concessions
01:01:05 Job category, management staff
01:02:14 24-hour crew
01:02:39 Advertising crew
01:03:24 Fixer
01:04:28 Working men
01:04:51 Driver's licenses
01:05:22 Mechanic
01:05:47 Electrician
01:06:19 "Chief," Noah Newman
01:09:05 Father figuring out performance
01:09:22 Increasing rings from three to five
01:09:54 Tim McCoy joining show
01:13:17 Father's role as troubleshooter
01:13:59 Father oversaw performance
01:15:24 Father as quality control manager
01:16:06 Father as a fill-in
01:16:31 Mother's role in wintertime, costumes

01:17:36 Mother's role, payroll/office work
01:18:05 Mother's role, household duties
01:18:44 Money, bank deposits
01:21:09 Show proceeds/income generated
01:21:59 Straw house
01:22:53 Expenses on the road then
01:24:13 Living quarters
01:25:48 Winter quarters changes
01:26:44 Privacy important
01:27:00 Living arrangements in Hugo while going to school
01:29:05 Modern Trailer Park
01:30:01 Transitioning from circus to townner life
01:31:45 Photographs by state signs
01:32:40 Learned work ethic
01:33:23 Learned teamwork
01:34:00 Similarities with military kids
01:35:28 Show people as close knit group
01:36:27 Public reaction to early circus life, Martha
01:36:54 On using the terminology "like a circus"
01:38:33 On longevity of circus
01:39:19 Experiences growing up
01:41:05 Favorite venues/locations
01:42:49 On Mother selling the show
01:43:46 On Mother, as having the hardest role of all
01:45:01 On different show employees
01:47:46 Remembering Mabel the Elephant
01:48:28 On future of circus
01:51:10 Importance/care of animal acts
01:53:58 Remembering the Moore family circus history/legacy
01:59:26 End of interview