

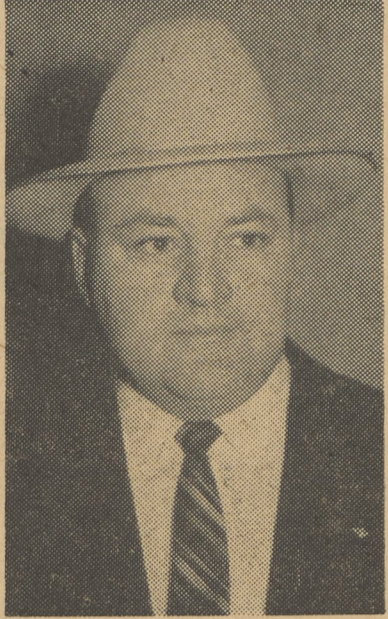
Reithoffer Shows Prepare For Their Fifty-Eighth Season Tour

Those resplendent orange show trucks parked along the highway just this side of Lehman on Route 115 are rivalled only by the bluebirds and robins as harbingers of spring.

Owned by Reithoffer Shows, they have received a thorough overhauling in winter headquarters and will be ready to take to the road as soon as the grass is green. From then until fall they will haul a star-spangled outfit for performance at benefits and fairs along the Eastern seaboard.

Part owner and headman of this enchanted fairyland is Patrick Reithoffer, Jr., former Westmoreland High School Industrial Arts instructor, whose family has for three generations been engaged in show business.

Third Generation



PATRICK REITHOFFER, JR.

The rotund, genial, general manager of Reithoffer Shows was born in Taylor but reared in Forty Fort where he graduated from High School. Even as a youngster, Pat dreamed of making the family show the biggest and finest on the road. Grandfather Started Business

In dreaming, thus, he was following the pattern established by his grandfather Julius Reithoffer, Sr., who after arriving in this country from Germany, established a store at Duryea and later conducted a stand and concessions at Harveys Lake. The experience at the lake may have encouraged him to purchase a merry-go-round with hand carved horses. Anyway, the purchase of the merry-go-round was the beginning of a business which was eventually to require fifty Packard trucks for its transportation. The show was one of the first to be transported by motor truck rather than by rail. Those early trucks had hard rubber tires. But that's another part of this story!

Julius, Sr., died last October 5 at the age of 98 in Philadelphia. He owned an entire city block on Eighteenth Street between Oxford and Columbia.

Three Sons Work With Show

Three sons of Julius worked with him in the show business, playing a string of fairs extending from Maine to Georgia. Patrick, Julius, Jr., and Eddie had the show in their blood from youth. Only Patrick Sr., is still active, giving his son all of the support to make the show tops in its field. Right now he is in Florida supervising the construction of a ferris wheel that folds up like an umbrella for easier transportation.

The other two brothers are dead having actually died on the lots where the show was playing. Julius (Uley) was stricken with a heart attack while the show was at Old Forge, Eddie died a year ago in July of a heart attack while the show was playing at Selinsgrove.

Is it any wonder that the show business is part of Pat's muscle, mind and every action for even as a boy he always had the welfare of the show in his mind. He recalls the sad days after the death of his devoted grandmother when old Julius, overwrought with grief, temporarily retired from the business.

After a few years his eldest son, Patrick, took the responsibility of booking and managing the show, the second brother, Julius assumed charge of personnel and the third brother, Edward, took charge of transportation.

Those were the days when those fifty solid tire Packard trucks were no longer assets—but disheartening liabilities. With the advent of pneumatic truck tires they were obsolete. Then the depression hit hard. But the elder Patrick was resourceful. From those difficult days, came new ideas and a new phase in the show business—the independent ride operator.

By splitting the equipment into smaller units and just operating rides, the organization was able to weather the storm and gain in strength. This operation was so successful, that the three boys who were now in complete charge, with only the supervision of their father, decided to remain as individual ride operators with individual units.

During those fateful days, Pat Junior travelled with the units in summer. In winter he attended Hargrave Military Academy in Virginia and later prepared for teaching at Millersville State Teachers' College. His thought, then, was to teach during the winters and work with the show summers.

But before that could happen, Pat was asked to keep an appointment with a rich uncle—Uncle Samuel. For three years he flew a bomber with the Fifteenth Air Force in Italy. He confesses now that he "thought about the show all of the time"—except when he was dreaming about Bette Bowman, a girl who had quite an impression on him, while he was in flight training at Rock Island, Illinois.

Bette is now Mrs. Pat Reithoffer, Jr. The couple has three children, Patrick III, in third grade; Ricky in first grade in Dallas Borough Schools, and Jan, 2 years old. Their home is on Luzerne Avenue during winters but in summer they travel the circuit with Pat in a beautifully equipped trailer.

Pat Enters the Business
With the ending of World War II, Pat completed his education at Millersville and then went on to the University of Florida, Gainesville, for his Masters' Degree. Along the way he taught three years in the Dallas Borough-Kingston Township School system.

Now was the time Pat thought to form an organized show in addition to the ride units. This wasn't an easy job! But the fond belief that there is always room for a clean, healthy show encouraged him

Both Pat's wife and mother wanted him to use a picture without a hat, but a born showman like a newsman is without a hat only when he is asleep . . . and good showmen aren't often asleep.

to make plans. With a highly skilled and completely loyal staff, he started the organization on its path of building its own mammoth show fronts and collecting the finest rides in the country.

A new winter quarters and shop in addition to those at Honesdale, Forty Fort and Reading, was established along Route 115. Here many of the forty-three rides and seven shows are developed and refurbished during the winter.

Today the Reithoffer Shows have three complete units on the road all summer long and most of the time four units are playing. New attractions are continually being developed so that long ago Pat gave up the idea of any other profession or vocation than show business.

Alert to the realization that a modern show has to be as clean as a whistle and twice as bright, Pat found that his policy paid off in February when after years of planning, he and his dad signed the contract for the Reithoffer shows to play Bloomsburg Fair this fall under their own banner. That means that all the units will be consolidated in one mammoth production.

That's a real feather for Pat but it will mean even more for Bloomsburg, for here is a fellow who has enthusiasm, initiative, and practicality. Combine those attributes with high ideals and youth—and you have a combination that is hard to beat.

Many New Features
There is pounding of hammers, the whine of saws and the sparkling sputter of welding machines these winter nights at the shop headquarters on Route 115.

New rides and new shows are being perfected. Only a week ago Pat bought a Japanese two man submarine and a Japanese suicide boat to become a part of the show. There are plans for a portable diesel power plant, cook wagon and other rides and equipment.

One of the newest features being developed there is the "Land of Make Believe" with ten different rides for children up to 10 years of age. It is a complete enclosure with separate rides for the little fellows extending thirty-five feet across the front and 12 feet high, guarded by all the colorful animals and characters of childhood.

It takes 70 Dodge and GMC trucks to transport the show now, but more than that will be required soon if Pat continues his dreaming.

and the Reithoffer shows really wear well. They have played the Honesdale Fair for more than 40 years. A tribute to old Julius, Patrick, Julius Jr., Eddie and Pat Jr., who have kept the Reithoffer banners up there shining!

Sherman Harter, Chosen For Board Of Trustees

Sherman Harter, Trucksville, was named trustee of The White Church on The Hill to complete the unexpired term of the late Thomas Carle at a meeting of the Board of Trustees held at the home of C. S. Hemmenway, Hillside Farm, last Wednesday night.

Mr. Carle was elected to the Board for a three year term in 1955.

Tapped For Honor Society At University Of Idaho

Robert Hillyer, University of Idaho, on an NROTC scholarship, has been tapped for Scabbard and Blade, national honor society for the armed services. He is also on the Dean's List. Hillyer is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Hillyer, Machell Avenue.

Bird Club Lists Spring Arrivals

Horned Larks, Doves, Red-Polls In Area

Bird Club members reported early spring arrivals at a meeting held Thursday night in the Library Annex. Horned larks, Edwin Johnson, president, reported, were seen at Lehman February 19. Robins have been in the area since January.

Recent arrivals are blue-birds, widely reported; gulls, at Harveys Lake; fox sparrows and red-winged blackbirds, meadowlarks, West Dallas, Lehman, Pioneer Avenue; red-polls, March 8, New Goss Manor; Crossbills, Lake.

Crows are everywhere. Song-sparrows have arrived, and mourning doves are cooing. Harry Allen's Oregon Junco still visits his feeder at the Lake, and Frank Jackson has a variety of birds, both winter residents and spring migrants.

Members compared notes on discouraging squirrels. Mrs. William Pethick catches them in a trap which does not injure them, and sees that they are released in the woods. Lacking a gunny-sack on one occasion, she immured the prisoner in the leg of a pair of coveralls tied at both ends, and had to drive like crazy to reach the woods before he chewed himself out.

Harry Allen, a faithful stand-by of the organization, was absent because of a cold. Present were: Edwin Johnson, president; Mr. and Mrs. Arnott Jones; Mrs. William Pethick, Mrs. Ellis Weaver, Mrs. William D. James, Frank Jackson, and Mrs. T. M. B. Hicks.

Open House At Rural Supply

Two-Day Program Starts This Morning

Rural Supply Company, one of the outstanding inland supply stores of the State, will hold its annual Spring Open House today and tomorrow.

The latest in home and farm equipment will be on exhibition with factory representatives presenting demonstrations. There will be motion pictures, music, prizes, and a free lunch.

The program today will start at 9 a.m. and continue until 9 p.m. Tomorrow's program will be from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Rural Supply Company's big modern store is located on the main highway between Muhlenburg and Harveyville.

Clarence Benscoter established the business in 1938. It is interesting to note that the location of the store was once known as Roosevelt. The post office located there was named in honor of Teddy Roosevelt. The postmaster at that time was Theodore Wolfe.

There have been great changes since then and one would hardly expect to find such a completely stocked modern store in this rural setting. Location is just a short pleasant trip from all parts of the Back Mountain area.

Spring Open House, which Mr. Benscoter has conducted for many years, will find hundreds of neighbors as well as old and new friends in attendance.

Services Today At 2 For Dan Robinhold's Mother

Dan G. Robinhold, Camp Hill, former resident of Machell Avenue, Dallas, lost his mother Tuesday night. Mrs. Bertha Tripp Robinhold, wife of Dr. D. G. Robinhold, Forty Fort, died in the Hillcrest Convalescent Home, Huntsville. She had been incapacitated since a fall down the stairs in her own home five years ago. Services will be conducted today at 2 from the Hughes Funeral home, followed by burial in Forty Fort Cemetery.

Nieces and nephews include two local residents: Mrs. Catherine Boote, Trucksville, and Clifford W. Space, Dallas.

Fractures Collar Bone

Mrs. Thomas Hillyer, Machell Avenue, is wearing her left arm in a sling since breaking her collar bone on Friday. Dr. Harry Smith, bone specialist, reduced the fracture. Mrs. Hillyer tripped over a branch in her own yard, falling on the point of her shoulder.

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Operating As Single Unit



The big show is often broken up to operate as three or four units known as the Blue, Green and Red Units. Here is shown just one of these ride units in operation at a Fireman's Fair.

Fronts Are Constructed Here



This mammoth front for the Haunted Castle breaks down so that it can easily be transported by truck. When the show arrives on the lot it is quickly set in front of the truck which then become a part of the Haunted Castle where boys and girls and their elders may run into all sorts of weird experiences. This front was built and painted at Dallas winter quarters.

Children's Home Needs Donations

Mrs. Norman Patton Speaks To WSCS

Dallas Methodist WSCS members, meeting Tuesday night at the church, were asked to bring to the April meeting donations for a box intended for Hollywood House, a children's home in Hazleton housing children from 4 to 14.

Needed are: cash gifts, clothing, records, viewmaster discs, facial tissue, metal foil, bean-bags, pillow cases, clothes for a boy doll, diapers, handkerchiefs, dungarees, clothing for large women. Mrs. William Cairl, Jr., read the letter describing the need, written by Mrs. Schmeer.

Mrs. Vern Groff presided. Mrs. William Baker, Sr., and Mrs. Percy Love, led devotions on the theme, Christian Discipleship. Mrs. Niles White introduced Mrs. Norman Patton, who spoke on Status of Women in the world.

Women's classes were asked to name representatives to serve on the Mother-Daughter banquet committee.

Mrs. Warden Kunkle and Mrs. Sheldon Drake were received as new members and a visitor, Mrs. Crews, was introduced.

Mrs. William Heaps reported on groups studying the five spiritual classics. The next session will be on Monday at 1:30, with Mrs. Zel Garinger, the final study group March 26 at the church.

Hostesses were Mesdames John Hildebrandt, Grace Klees, Homer Moyer, William Higgins, and Earl Weidner.

YMCA Drive Workers Plan Report Meeting

Charles Eberle and Robert Yost, co-chairmen of Back Mountain YMCA Financial Drive, announced this week that a report meeting of all workers will be held at the "Y" building in Shavertown at 8 p.m. on March 21.

The goal for this year, an increase over last year's budget, will enable the Back Mountain Y to expand the present program which now includes such services as Hi-Y and Tri-Hi-Y clubs at the schools, the Teen Club, and the Day-Camp.

Post Office Change

Mountain Top Post Office will be consolidated with and become a branch of Wilkes-Barre Post Office on March 31.

SEE

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WCTU Institute Tuesday, Dallas

Rev. Charles Frick Will Be Speaker

Dallas WCTU Institute will be held March 20 at the Dallas Methodist Church, carrying out the theme, "Go Set a Watchman." The morning program will start at 10:30 with devotions by Mrs. H. C. Riley, greetings by Mrs. William Heaps, and response from Mrs. Hill, Forty Fort.

Miss Bess Coughlin, Luzerne, will lead the Salute to the Flag, and ladies from Idetown will sing, followed by reports from treasurer and directors and a solo by Mrs. Harry Dymond.

Mrs. Edward Keen, Luzerne County president, will hold a parliamentary drill, and Mrs. C. S. Hildebrandt will lead noontime prayer.

Speaker for the afternoon session, 1:30, will be Rev. C. H. Frick, Huntsville Christian Church. Mrs. Ira Button will lead devotions, and Mrs. Mathers will give a flannelgraph.

Mrs. E. R. Parrish will preside at sessions, and Mrs. Homer Middleton will accompany.

Orange MYF To Present Drama

Mrs. Hugh Gebheart Directs Production

Members of Orange MYF will give a Lenten Drama on Thursday evening at 7:30 at the Orange Methodist Church. The play, entitled "Are Ye Able?", is under the direction of Mrs. Hugh Gebheart. Members of the cast, supported by the Junior Choir, are: Narrator, Daisette Gebheart; Pianist, Geraldine Miller; Choir Leader, Mary Hess; Cross Makers, Robert Phillips and Clinton Hess; Choir Boy, Robert Gardner; Counselor, James Mitchell; Nero, Barry Baird; Catherine the Great, Virginia Morgan; Young Banker, William Steinhauer; Young Boy, Roger Belles; Young Girl, Sandra Baird; Young People, Linda Carey, Nancy Hess, David James, and Henry Hess.

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