

Free Press Family page

Circus wild animal trainer doesn't need women's lib

Mrs. Tommy Hanneford states flatly that she doesn't need to be "liberated". Feeling that she had reached the peak of her career in the dangerous field of performing on the high trapeze, Princess Tajana, as she is known professionally, turned this past winter to something she describes as "less demanding and not so exhausting". That something is presenting a mixed group of jungle-bred leopards and pumas in a big steel arena.



She will be appearing with the Hanneford Three Ring Circus when it performs at the Milton Arena on Saturday, July 8 and Georgetown Arena Tuesday, July 11.

Own career
"I am a married career woman - and I have always guided my own career", she claims in a quietly pleasant and matter-of-fact way.

While working with wild animals is a relatively new experience for the slim and attractive German-born daughter-in-law of circus owner George Hanneford, Senior, her circus background is nearly lifelong.

"When I was a child, I was always climbing all over everything", says Tajana, whose family was not in show business. "One day my mother took me to the beauty shop in Heidelberg to have my hair curled."

"There was a well-known circus aerialist living in our town and we met her there. She told my mother she thought I might have talent and asked if she might train me."

Tajana was seven then. When she was in her teens, pupil and teacher became partners and shortly after came to the United States to appear with a circus. But in America the partnership lasted only two years. Tajana became a member of the Hanneford Family and, with a single trapeze act, made a name for herself.

On TV
Over a period of several years, she made a total of five featured appearances on the then-current Ed Sullivan TV Show. She appeared on other television shows and in the major circuses. Last year, she reached the ultimate goal of performers in the variety field - a month-long starring engagement in New York's famous Radio City Music Hall.

"I felt that I had gone as far as I could go with the trapeze," she says. "After all, it is a limited field - not like being a dramatic actress. I needed a new challenge."

That challenge, she decided one day, would be to become a wild animal trainer. Although she had always been fond of animals and familiar with them, dealing with the wild variety was to be a wholly new experience.

Months of practice followed under the expert tutelage of veteran wild animal trainer Captain Frank Simpson, one-time stunt man and test pilot. Her first experiences were a bit more nerve-racking than hanging by her heels sixty feet in the air without a net.

"I decided then that if the kitty cats didn't chew me up, I'd be all right," she recalls. And she was right. Slowly and patiently, she developed a smooth performing routine in which the big cats do such things as sit up and roll over on command, walk the plank, jump through a hoop of fire, and even push a baby carriage.

Asked if she had any advice for women who feel "trapped" in their life or career, she smiled and suggested "Just try something more interesting!"

Gail Douglas course graduate

Gail Norene Douglas graduated from her Registered Nursing Assistant Course with a special pinning ceremony on Thursday, June 15. Received by each student were their name tags and their graduating pins from White Oaks Secondary School. Along with 12 other students Gail took this two year course including her secondary diploma, which was received on Friday, June 23 at White Oaks.



Attending the ceremony on June 15 were Gail's parents Mr. and Mrs. Norman Douglas of Acton, brothers Norman and William, grandmothers, Mrs. Ann Douglas and Mrs. Alice Worstfold from Toronto. Mr. and Mrs. George Chenery, aunt and uncle from Toronto and Gail's godmother Mrs. S. Kolody, who is also an aunt.

Gail attended Speyside Public School at its opening year, Stewarttown Senior Public, Acton District High and finally White Oaks Secondary School. Gail is now working part-time in Milton District Hospital.

GAIL DOUGLAS
Gail has accepted a position in Beardmore, Ontario near Lake Nipigon.

Graduate posted to CFB Chilliwack

Stewart McCulloch graduated from Sheridan college in the Electrical/Electronic Technology course. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. James McCulloch, Nelson Court, and is a graduate of John F. Ross collegiate, Guelph.

He has been in the militia, and has now received a commission in the armed forces. He was three weeks at Canadian Forces Base Shilo, Manitoba, and is posted to CFB Chilliwack July 6. He expects to be training in marine engineering in the sea element of the forces.

Stewart leaves the ranks of the Rams due to his commission. He was an important factor in the team's winning the lacrosse championship last year. Stewart has also been active with the fair board.



STEWART McCULLOCH

Honors degree

Graduating recently from the University of Guelph, with an Honors Bachelor of Arts Degree in Mathematics, was Stephen Howard Coles, of Guelph.

Attending the convocation were his wife the former Brenda McKeown of Acton, and their son, Trevor, also his parents Mr. and Mrs. Howard D. Coles of St. Marys, and formerly of Alice St. Acton.

Steve received his early education at Robert Little and Acton District High Schools.

LOST anything? The police have had given to them this past week a gold watch, found in the water at the swimming area at the park, and scuba diving goggles, also found at the lake.

R.N. degree at Ottawa

Cathy Cummings Evers graduated from Ottawa Civic hospital with her R.N. Degree on June 15.

She is a granddaughter of Mrs. Lillian Eaton of Acton, and Mrs. Eaton attended the graduation ceremony. Cathy's parents are Mr. and Mrs. Claude Cummings of Manotick, near Ottawa. Mrs. Cummings is Mrs. Eaton's daughter Dora.

Anyhow, I decided that this was the year for another one, just to put a bit of spice in my life, and led Gord conversationally to the point where he could utter some sort of compliment with no great strain.

We lay there side by side, watching the swallows flashing by the windows and up under the eaves for quite a few minutes. Gord thoughtfully rubbed his foot against mine.

Finally the moment came. He took a deep breath and said "You have the nicest roughest heels to scratch my feet on."

This is my love.



By Wendy Thomson

I was a terrible patient. I could only be still for just so long, then I'd jump up (slowly) dash into town, do the wash, then pop back into bed for when Gord came home. (To give the appearance of following doctor's orders, I mean). Over the past couple of months, I get a lot of thinking done, acquired a fairly good tan, and let my fingernails grow to a decent length, but every time I started thinking of writing a column, my mind went blank.

The foregoing achievements are hardly anything to write about, and there's usually very little of interest that happens in bed. (That doesn't sound right, but I'll give the eraser a rest and let it stand.

Three incidents I guess there were three amusing incidents, though.

The first was when Gord came to bed one night around midnight with a box of baby ducks. I'm afraid I couldn't rouse myself beyond the point of looking blearily into the carton then sliding back under the covers.

Sue-hound, on the other hand, was in the tail-end of a false pregnancy and, on hearing the peeping, was over-joyed to hear her babies had been born (even tho' without her). She sprang onto the bed (and me) and proceeded to try to crawl (all 80 pounds of her) through the two inch air hole in the top.

The next morning, however, after trying doggedly to lick the feathers on one duckling flat, Sue spit a few times with a disgusted look, contented herself with just lying rolling her eyes at them from time to time.

Farm terminology
The second incident came when we had visitors, a couple interested in farming. Gord was going over some of the farm terminology in tutorial tones, ending up by saying that mostly, animals aren't considered to be "Pregnant." A cow is "in calf", a horse "in foal", a dog "in pup", and so on.

I was getting a little restless and to liven things up a bit, I asked musingly if a pregnant camel is considered to be "in camel". Before Gord recovered from that, I continued "and is a hen 'in egg'?"

My dazed husband was still staring at me wondering if I was really that dense, when our visitor, in all innocence, came out with the perfect classic answer. Unfortunately, it would be even in its innocence, game for the

editor's pencil, and must be left to the imagination.

My love
Incident number three. Every now and then, about once every four years or so, Gord surprises me speechless with a compliment. I can't remember just when the last one was, but it was quite some time ago.

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WHEN THE circus performs, she's called Princess Tajana. At home, she's Mrs. Tommy Hanneford of Hanneford's circus. She thinks women bored with their lot should try something different—like she did!

York's famous Radio City Music Hall.

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Attends reunion at first school

The school where she taught 56 years ago was revisited by Mrs. Lillian Eaton on Saturday, June 24.

The school is at Port Hoover, four miles out of Little Britain near Lindsay. It was Mrs. Eaton's first school when she began her teaching career as a young girl in 1916. The school is being closed and the reunion was arranged of former teachers and pupils. They came from miles away to mark the occasion.

The school is to be sold this Saturday.

Mrs. Lillian Eaton traced her former pupils of her 1916-17 term; all of them were there who could come, but to her surprise she realized half of them are now dead.

Making the trip to the reunion with Mrs. Eaton were her daughter Mrs. Branstion of Guelph, Mr. Branstion and their daughter.

Supper served to bus tour

Last Thursday 50 Golden Age club members from Alma, Elora and Fergus stopped off in Acton for their supper. They were on a day's bus excursion which had taken them to Black Creek pioneer village.

The group arrived at the United church here and were served sandwiches, tarts, cookies and cake by 10 members of the U.C.W. The group was a very

happy one and included some residents of a nursing home. A clergymen, Rev. Maxwell, also came along on the trip with the older people.

In the group was a Canadian checkers champion, a gentleman who's over 90 years of age.

The catering, as arranged in advance, was profitable for U.C.W.

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Personals

Mr. and Mrs. John Brown of Calgary, Alta., visited with Mr. and Mrs. Melvin McCulloch for a few days.

Mr. and Mrs. Gerry Olinski and daughter Mary-Kaye of Kitchener visited relatives here over the holiday weekend.

Mrs. Lillian Duval, Kitchener and Mrs. Jean Clarke, Brantford, visited friends in Acton last week.

Town of Acton employees, their wives and friends got together for the annual steak barbecue at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Marshall, R.R. 2, last Wednesday evening. About 35 attended.

Many of the teachers are taking special courses and university classes during the summer vacation. Many of them are aiming for university degrees now.

Two Acton couples were surprised to meet each other at the airport at Halifax this week, and they flew back on the same plane. Mr. and Mrs. Bert Hinton and Cathy had been combining a holiday trip and the convention of the Canadian TB and RD Associations. Mr. and Mrs. Lorne Youngblut were down east for a C.A. convention.

Randy Weldon, Dale Fisher and Gary Turkosz left Saturday on a car trip to western Canada. They are driving Stewart McCulloch's car out for him since he travelled by military transport to his posting at C.F.B. Chilliwack.

HOW you pronounce the word "Erin" is an indication as to your length of residence, says the Erin Advocate. If you say "Air-in" - you are definitely a newcomer; if you say "Ear-in", you are a native.

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