

ATHERTON'S ICONS

Celebrating Atherton's 100th Birthday

The First Circus: Menlo Circus Club

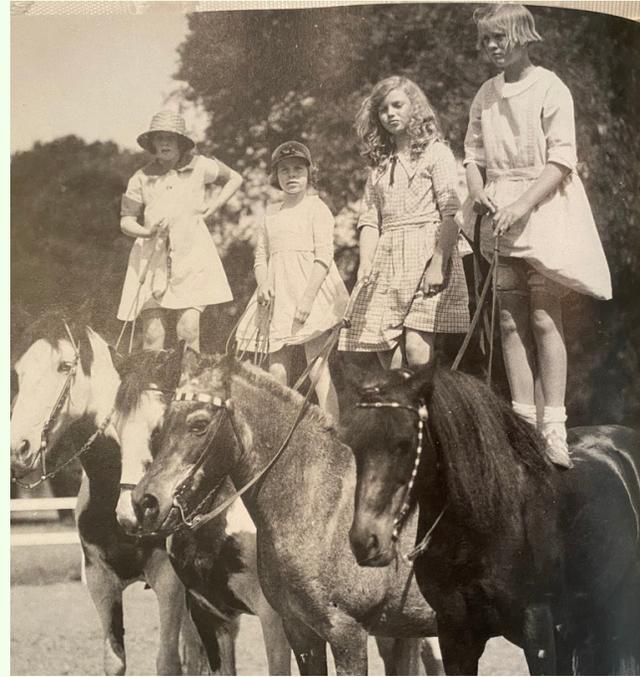
Three bored teenage girls were looking for something “different” to do in the summer of 1920. Eleanor Weir, Evelyn Taylor, and Timmy Doyle asked Eleanor’s mom if they could put on a “circus” to show off their pets and horses. “Yes”, was the answer on the condition that they raised money for charity.

With the eager help of their other friends, Betty Downey, Henrietta Frazer, Zelda Eliot, Elizabeth Wiel, Louise Hahn, and Walta Linforth, the first circus raised \$500 for the Stanford Home for Convalescent Children. In 1970, Eleanor Weir Tilden gave an interview remembering those first “circus” events as just a lot of fun with everyone doing whatever they wanted to do.

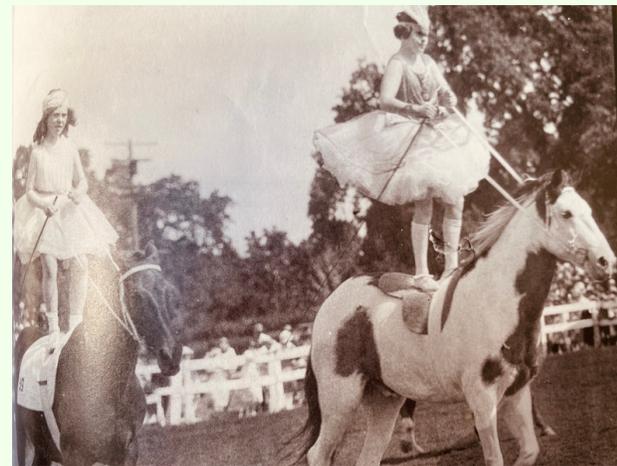
Eleanor said, “I had a goat that jumped: I had a Persian cat and a dog, and the others all had an animal of some kind. If any animal could do a trick.. we could show them off. I was the oldest of the three... about 14 ...so I was the ringmaster. We had costumes, nothing fancy...It was all well received.”

The annual “Circus” quickly grew, and in 1922, an advertising brochure was circulated which included an entrance fee and a raffle which raised a profit of over \$10,000.00 for charity!

(Source: Under the Oaks by Pamela Gullard & Nancy Lund)



Diana Dunphy, Rowena Dunphy, Sibyl Coryell, and Evelyn Taylor performing at the first circus that they organized.



Sibyl Coryell and Rowena Dunphy balancing in costume.



**Save the date! Atherton's Centennial
Celebration will be on
September 24, 2023 at Town Center.**