



LITTLE BIG TOP—The side show is just one of the many interesting features in Navyman Parker's miniature circus.

### Sawdust and Salt

Model-building is not an unusual pastime among Navymen, but James M. Parker, YN3, has given the hobby a different twist.

He's building a model circus—complete with side show.

According to Parker most other model circus enthusiasts try to recapture the past with oldtime wagon shows. "So far as I know," he says, "there are just two model circus builders who have mud (truck-borne) shows—myself and someone in Maryland."

Jim just started his circus in March 1959, but his love for the world of sawdust, spangles and the spectacular goes back to his boyhood. Whenever the circus was in town, he was

always on hand. He has been a member of the Circus Fans Association of America since 1957.

Now attached to the 14th Naval District Passenger Transportation Office at Pearl Harbor, Parker finds being in the Navy a considerable help in building up his collection of miniature animals and figures. He started the collection when he was in Japan two years ago and now has model animals from all over the world.

These must be just right in every detail, and in his vast menagerie he has camels made in Australia, a rhinoceros from Great Britain and several horses from Germany. Altogether he has a total of 69 members of the horse family, ranging from draft animals to baby burros.

Most of his figures have come from ordinary model railroad sets, but you'd never guess it to look at his nearly completed side show. At present, the attractions include four midgets, a bearded lady, a fire eater and a tattooed lady. Normally, all of them would have been just plain people hanging around a model railroad layout, but thanks to Parker's alterations they have now found their way into his Congress of Freaks.

The owner of the Parker Brothers Circus makes his own flat-bed trucks and wagons, using model trucks and wagons as a base. He then builds the bodies of balsa wood, working with parts from model circus wagons. The finished product then joins a variety of circus vehicles that range from an automatic stake driver to a

"dining department semi"—more commonly known as the "cook house."

Because space is limited, Parker is unable to set up his show in its entirety. He works on one unit at a time, and is now completing his side show.

There is too much sawdust in Parker's blood for him to stop at model building. He also collects circus photographs, posters and music, and occasionally "clowns around" in the familiar face paint and costume of the traditional circus funnyman. He has joined the Circus Historical Society, and he hopes to become a life member of the Circus World Museum.

—By Lynn Turner, JOSN, USN.



ON THE JOB—Jim Parker, YN3, USN, takes care of clerical tasks at 14th ND, Passenger Transportation Office.



OFF THE JOB—Yeoman Parker is a circus man at heart. Here, he dons clown costume for some youngsters.