

Lincoln Park Zoo's 115-Year Elephant History

'Lost to Follow-Up'

Six elephants who once lived at the Lincoln Park Zoo between 1903 and 1974 have been categorized by the zoo industry as "lost to follow-up" ever since they were transferred to other facilities or animal brokers. This means that the zoo does not know when or how the elephants died or whether they ended up being dragged around the country with a traveling circus or living in squalor in a Third World zoo.

Shanti

There was much fanfare when Shanti was born at the Lincoln Park Zoo in 1990. The zoo used abusive circus-style training at the time, which caused baby Shanti to become aggressive. Shanti reportedly suffered a broken leg when she was left chained and unattended overnight. In 1994, Shanti became unruly, causing her keeper to suffer broken ribs, a broken sternum, a collapsed lung, and a deep back wound.

In a controversial move, the Lincoln Park Zoo separated 4-year-old Shanti from her mother, Bozie, and shipped her to the Buffalo Zoo. She only lasted there for five months and was then transferred to a circus trainer, Murray Hill, who operates a private farm in Missouri that is not regulated by the federal government. Hill's facility consists of a barn that closely resembles a dark, damp, concrete dungeon and a very small paddock that only allows the elephant to take a few steps. Shanti nearly ended up with a traveling circus when Hill advertised in *Circus Report* that he wanted to retire and sell his property with the elephants. Shanti is now at the Houston Zoo, where she was bred prematurely at just 11 years old. Whistleblowers tell PETA that Shanti is unable to care for her newborn because of her youth and inexperience and that her female calf is struggling to survive.

Bozie

Shanti's mother, Bozie, was captured in Sri Lanka in 1975. In 1997, Lincoln Park transferred her to the Baton Rouge Zoo. In 1998, she was sent to the Dickerson Park Zoo temporarily for breeding purposes. During that same year, Dickerson Park Zoo employees beat one of the elephants who was on breeding loan and later paid a \$5,000 fine to settle charges of violating the federal Animal Welfare Act in connection with the incident. According to a witness, the elephant was beaten for 2_ hours with bullhooks and pieces of wood. Bozie was returned to Baton Rouge, where she miscarried in 1999, and she was subsequently subjected to invasive artificial insemination procedures. Baton Rouge still uses an outdated circus-style elephant-management system that involves corporal punishment using bullhooks and prolonged chaining.

Binti and Keke

Industry insiders report that Bozie's close companion at the Lincoln Park Zoo, Binti, was devastated by Bozie's departure and developed extremely neurotic behavior that escalated into self-mutilation. Binti was captured in Africa in 1980 and was just 3 years old when she arrived at the Lincoln Park Zoo the following year. She and Keke, another wild-caught African elephant, were shipped to the Caldwell Zoo in Texas in the fall of 2000. Three years later, Keke was transferred to the cash-strapped, deteriorating Dallas Zoo. In 2004, the Dallas Zoo was fined

\$10,000 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture after a gorilla escaped from his cage, injured several people, and was gunned down by police.

Siri

Siri was captured in Thailand and lived at the Lincoln Park Zoo for just over a year in the 1970s. Suffering from arthritis and chronic breathing problems, Siri now lives at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo in New York, where elephants are forced to perform circus tricks to entertain zoogoers under threat of punishment.

Indu

Indu was captured in Thailand in 1965. She lived at the Lincoln Park Zoo from 1966 to 1979 and was then loaned to the Houston Zoo, where she gave birth to Pearl in 1988. When Pearl was just 2 years old, she was shipped to the Lincoln Park Zoo and died less than five months later. In the wild, female elephants stay with their mothers for life and nurse until age 5. Because of the stress caused by premature separation from their mothers, many baby elephants in both zoos and circuses have died. Even though zoo personnel knew that Pearl was sick, she was left unmonitored overnight and was found dead on the morning of September 2, 1991. Indu was bred five more times, and all five calves died. She became deeply depressed and spent her days standing alone in the Houston Zoo's cramped elephant yard with her head down and her face to a wall and nearly killed a keeper in a fit of rage, breaking his collarbone and four ribs. Still owned by the Lincoln Park Zoo, in 1998 she was moved to the Phoenix Zoo, where other "troubled" elephants have been sent as well.

Kate, Elke, and Deed-a-day

Kate was captured in Asia when she was less than a year old and shipped to the Lincoln Park Zoo in 1963, where she died at age 5. Elke was captured in Africa and shipped to the Lincoln Park Zoo in 1961, when she was 2. She was later shuffled off to three other facilities and died at age 33 at an Ohio theme park. Deed-a-day was captured in Asia and died at the Lincoln Park Zoo in 1942, when she was just 23.

Elephant Consultant Don Meyer

Beginning in 1982, Wisconsin-based Don Meyer served as an elephant-management consultant to the Lincoln Park Zoo for more than 20 years, even after video footage of his extremely cruel training methods was made public. Meyer was videotaped orchestrating training sessions in which elephants were restrained with block-and-tackle, surrounded by keepers, and repeatedly beaten. One eyewitness to his barbaric training methods described "the elephant being beaten with baseball bats, ax handles, and [Meyer] using electrical charges plugged into [a] 110-volt electrical outlet [to shock the elephant]. ... During this five-month training period, the elephant was never out of the barn and her leg chains were never removed. She had three to four leg chains on her at all times." The elephant was covered with cuts and open wounds, and when she was later let into a pasture, "the elephant could hardly walk."