

The Trampolinist

By

Susan Albershardt

First Draft

## TIME

## VIDEO

## AUDIO

0:00:00	<p>Black screen.</p> <p>ANIMATION:</p> <p>Animated Dick Albershardt, in tuxedo, enters black screen from right, approaches a trampoline.</p> <p>Dick tries to jump on the tramp.</p> <p>Stumbles onto tramp, falls through sides.</p> <p>Gets serious, jumps higher.</p> <p>Tuxedo falls off to reveal a serious gymnast.</p> <p>ANIMATION MORPHS INTO A REAL PHOTO OF DICK ALBERSHARDT IN MID-AIR ON BLACK SCREEN</p>	<p>MUSIC: Faint note of a trumpet</p> <p>FX: Exaggerated “BOING BOING” sound</p> <p>MUSIC: Builds to a big band sound.</p>
0:00:30	<p>TITLE CREDIT: The Trampolinist</p> <p>DISSOLVE TO:</p> <p>HISTORICAL FOOTAGE: US Air Force plane taking off.</p> <p>HISTORICAL FOOTAGE: Dick appears in the open door of the plane with BOB HOPE and ANN MARGARET.</p> <p>HISTORICAL FOOTAGE: Dick performs in Bob Hope’s USO Christmas Show in Viet Nam.</p> <p>INTERCUT:</p>	<p>VOICE OVER: Why do some people do what they do? (beat) How do they choose what path to take?</p> <p>FX: Plane takes off.</p> <p>VOICE OVER: When do they finally feel successful?</p> <p>BOB HOPE: Trampoline artist, Dick Albershardt, here’s just a small part of his act.</p>

## TIME

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## AUDIO

HISTORICAL FOOTAGE: Soldiers laughing.

INT. DICK'S OFFICE – 2011  
MS Dick reminiscing.

INSERT PHOTO: Dick on tricycle

INSERT PHOTO: Dick in water show

INSERT PHOTO: Dick running track

HISTORICAL FOOTAGE: Dick practicing on a trampoline.

INSERT PHOTOS:

1. Dick doing handstand at top of a ladder
2. Dick doing handstand on a chair

INSERT PHOTO: Dick midair in IU gymnastic uniform

HISTORICAL FOOTAGE: Dick competing in National Championships

INSERT NEWSPAPER CLIP:  
“Albershardt Cops NCAA Title”

HISTORICAL FOOTAGE: Dick competing in front of judges

VOICE OVER: Meet Richard Albershardt. A man who turned his ability to do a double twist 20 feet in the air, along with the desire to make people laugh... into a unique career in the entertainment business.

**NOTE: Dick's audio is paraphrased.**

DICK:

My mother started me swimming at a tender age of 4...

...traveled the country doing water shows...wets my appetite for show business.

I decided on Indiana University and went out for baseball and track...

I didn't know what I wanted to do until I stumbled into the field house and saw a guy on a trampoline...

I got very much involved in it and I asked the coach if I could go out for the team and he said “What do you do? And I said well I can do a handstand...”

As time went on I got into competition...

...My sophomore year I won the big 10 championship...

...it frightened my mother...

...Then I got drafted into the Army...

But went back my junior year and won the National Collegiate Championship...

It was a very very serious time when people would stand at attention and march rigidly out to the judges...I

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INSERT PHOTOS:

1. Dick jumping rope on tramp
2. Dick dressed in tux and hat doing trick on tramp
3. Dick with celebrities on March of Dimes tour

INSERT PHOTO: Jill Harris

INSERT PHOTO: Dick and Jill wedding

INSERT PHOTO: Globetrotters' poster

HISTORICAL FOOTAGE: The Globetrotters

would do a little trip and the crowd would laugh...It relaxed me...I would relax myself by doing a little hambone...

I was stationed at Ft Leonardwood for my career in the Army...

I worked at the field house gymnasium and the NCO Club and entertained the troops...

They selected me for the March of Dimes Tour...

That's when Sam Pollack of the Pollack Bros. Shrine Circus came to see me and offer me a job...

I didn't want to be in the circus but it gave me a goal knowing that someone of importance was swayed by what they saw...

When I went back to Indiana University, after my stint in the Army, Jill Harris and I started dating and we married the next year in 1956...

A friend approached...Wally Choice, a basketball player in the All Star game, and said that Abe Saperstein wanted to see me...he wanted to take me on tour with the Harlem Globetrotters as a half-time performer... My father went with me to Chicago and I performed for Abe and his brother Morey...we didn't have contracts in those days...we shook hands...and Abe said "my word is my bond." In 1956, Jill and I got married and we spent our honeymoon on tour with the Globetrotters.

... We hit many countries around the world and 49 states... What they went through was just unbelievable...After the audience would clap and scream the Globetrotters could not find a hotel that would take them in and they would

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## AUDIO

## INSERT PHOTOS:

1. Colored Only hotel
2. White trade only restaurant
3. Black/White drinking fountains
4. Colored only beach

INSERT PHOTO: Publicity shot of Dick

INSERT PHOTO: Publicity shot of Joe E. Lewis

have to drive hundreds of miles to find a place to stay...

That was when restaurants wouldn't accept them...they had white and black drinking fountains...

As we got into the South it got worse and I realized what an injustice it was...

My NY agent, Mark Letty, got an offer for me to go into nightclubs...they are better audiences because they are contained. One time at a Globetrotters show, right in the middle of my act and I was probably 20 feet in the air, some guy walked across the basketball floor and it threw me...I was startled. That doesn't happen in nightclubs. Plus, I could take my family with me. Like in Las Vegas, I spent a year and a half at the Lido show...

The first big date I had was at the Palmer House in Chicago...in the world famous Empire Room with Joe E. Lewis, who was a famous comedian...

My agent suggested I change my name since Albershardt was so hard to pronounce and it was too long...He came up with the idea that my name should be Dick Albers. Kiddingly, I said, "They certainly get Gina Lollobrigida on the marquee...and he said "You're no Gina Lollobrigida!" So I started using it. Then they put in Variety..."Now appearing at the World Famous Empire Room – Don Albers!"

My collegiate-size trampolines were 9X15 which was entirely too big for night clubs. I then went to a smaller, 8x14, and finally to the elementary size 7x12. This was still impossible to travel with on airplanes...so I went to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where the Nissen plant was located. George Nissen is the

ANIMATION: Designing a trampoline that will fit in a suitcase

INSERT PHOTOS:

1. Boys in gym
2. Dick w/boys
3. Jill w/boys
4. Boys w/Mickey Mouse

INSERT PHOTOS:

1. Dick on camel
2. Dick with Lion

HISTORICAL FOOTAGE: Ed Sullivan on stage.

largest trampoline manufacturer in the world. I told George that I wanted the equipment cut into thirds, lengthwise, and he did just that, making it six end sections, six leg sections and two side rails. With the side casters this came to a total of 16 pieces.

I had 7 fibre cases custom made that could be carried like suit cases. These suitcases could fit in an elevator, French taxi, or helicopter.

I could put all of the pieces together in 10 minutes and it was easy to store in my dressing room.

We had our first son Rick, who was born in Tucson, then Mark came along a couple of years later, he was born in Indianapolis, and then Steve came along a couple of years later and he was born in Las Vegas, Nevada...and we came away from Las Vegas big winners...and 2 years later Dave was born in Indianapolis...

As the kids got a little older we had a motor home and traveled coast to coast...the boys were seasoned travelers before they hit school...we had a marvelous, perennial vacation...

Abe took me to Europe and we hit a lot of famous places...we hit the Olympic Stadium in Berlin, and Paris...the Casino DuLaBon in Beirut Lebanon...

In 1963, they let me go from Las Vegas for a weekend to do a favor for Ed Sullivan to do The Ed Sullivan Show, so I flew to New York and did my first Ed Sullivan Show.

ED SULLIVAN:

From the Stardust, which is a tremendous nightclub out in Las Vegas,

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HISTORICAL FOOTAGE: Dick starts his act...

HISTORICAL FOOTAGE: Dick joins Ed on stage after his act. They hold hands.

HISTORICAL FOOTAGE: From above: Dick twisting and turning on the tramp

Dick imitates Ed Sullivan

INSERT PHOTO: Dick in front of Radio City Music Hall

INSERT PHOTO: Dick on stage at the Olympia Music Hall

here's another great athlete and a wonderfully funny guy, here is, well, the trampoline comedy of Dick Albers...Richard!

DICK:

I eventually did 5 of them...Ed was quite a guy and I got to know him fairly well...and I thought he was a lovely man...

ED SULLIVAN:

Dick Albers...University of Indiana...You thank Tommy McDonald for letting you come out with the stars...Lets have a tremendous hand for the great Dick Albers...

DICK:

He was a writer...he asked me how I got started on the trampoline...and I said well I was a diver...and I was in the water so much I got sinus trouble early on and when I learned about the trampoline...it was dry diving so to speak... Well, Ed went out and told the audience...

Right here on our show...Dick got sinus trouble so bad the doctors told him he would possible lose his hearing and eyesight.

...He was a publicity man.

My favorite in this country was Radio City Music Hall and they had a magnificent 44 piece orchestra... and we would mingle between shows and I got to know an awful lot of people there.

...I think the Olympia Music Hall in Paris had to be one of my favorites and the London Palladium...They were both out of this world.

## INSERT PHOTOS:

1. The Latin Quarter
2. Lou Walters

INSERT PHOTO: Barbara Walters  
(circa 1963)

## INSERT PHOTOS (circa 1960):

1. Lido Show at the Stardust
2. Folies Bergere
3. Tropicana

In 1963 I played the Latin Quarter in New York and Lou Walters was the owner and we had magnificent crowds...

...When Kennedy was assassinated it seemed like someone threw a shroud over New York ...the city shut down...few people on the streets... and we had a small crowd when Ed Sullivan came to the show and urged me not to talk in the act. I said, "Ed, you can't make empty seats laugh."

...It was a low ceiling and I hit it with my feet, which stopped my twisting and spinning. Of course, I came down like a shot bird.

During that engagement I met Lou Walters daughter, Barbara, and we had a nice chat. She later became the Barbara Walters. She's quite a person, as her Dad was.

The interesting thing about some of the nightclubs and French shows like the Folies Bergere, the Lido, and Tropicana...they were very popular in Las Vegas and New York...

I worked back stage with a lot of naked ladies...

The wildest thing that happened in my life...my tuxedo pants went flying through the air and got stuck on a door in the ceiling that hid some lighting. The stage hands tried to get the pants down, but couldn't. In the next number, all the nude ladies came out and one by one saw the pants hanging from the ceiling and tried not to laugh, but gradually they all erupted into laughter and the breasts started giggling and then the audience started laughing...and it was a show stopper.

The big bands were my thing back in the good old days...



INSERT PHOTOS OF ALBUM COVERS:

1. Stan Kenton
2. Les Brown
3. Bob Crosby
4. Etc.

Dick imitates Louis Armstrong.

INSERT PHOTO: Dick mid-air touching his toes

HISTORICAL FOOTAGE: Dick's act on Bob Hope's USO Christmas Tour

HISTORICAL FOOTAGE: Dick talking to wounded soldier in hospital.

MUSIC: Faint note of big band music (possibly Les Brown)

Big band music was my thing back in the good old days because you could sing the songs, tap your toes and dance to the music.... I got to share the stage with some of these big bands like... Skitch Henderson, Stan Kenton, Buddy Morrow, Bob Crosby and the Bobcats...Les Brown and the Band of Renown...He became a wonderful friend.

MUSIC: Louis Armstrong's What A Wonderful World

I got a thrill out of meeting individualist that succeeded in their field like Louis Armstrong and ...give me some skin...and Little Jazz Roy Eldridge and one of my friends was Bill Harris who was an incredible jazz trombonist and Charlie Teagarden. These were names that were magic to me and played in the Jazz of the Philharmonic... and 45 musicians in the pit playing your music.

I had worked in the States with Bob Hope several times...the Calgary Stampede...then one year he asked me to go to Viet Nam with him...I wanted to go and felt vindicated since I had spent my Army career at Fort Leonardwood...

BOB HOPE:

With 19 gals you've gotta have a bouncer...ours is a guy they really dug... trampoline artist Dick Albers....

DICK:

Bob Bressler...Now where you from, Bob?

DICK (TODAY):

It was a very enlightening experience.

I believe the highlight of my career had to be the induction into the Indiana University Hall of the Fame in 1994 and my induction into the World Acrobatics Society as an acrobatics legend in 2003...A culmination of all of the years of hard work and perserverance...My mind is flooding with all of the people who have made this worthwhile...I just have to think that I'm the luckiest guy in the world.

The boys grew up on a trampoline... It was a marvelous thing for their athleticism...they gravitated to skiing, snow skiing, surf boarding, they could skate board and loved that sort of thing. Rick and Steve have skied the slopes of Switzerland and Steve and Dave sent to Hawaii and lived on the North Shore. They all loved sports. Dave could tear the cover off of a golf ball.

INSERT PHOTOS: Steve and Dave

Mark, Steve and Dave were carpenters and stage hands and they loved the work and loved what they did. Rick went to New York and has written some screenplays and Mark is still in love with being a carpenter.

We had a magnificent surprise 40<sup>th</sup> birthday party for David. Steve took him to the beach while we decorated so that he would realize how treasured and special he was. One week after this wonderful party, a deer ran out in front of his motorcycle and killed him instantly. That turned our lives upside down.

Merely six and half months later, Steve was helping his brother Mark trim tree

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and Steve fell on the concrete memorial they had made for David and he died instantly at the age of 42..

Time has to march on and you have to put one foot in front of the other and go.

I think I was very fortunate to come through this window in time. We've been married 54 years and we dearly love our 4 boys and now that we've lost 2 of them we find great delight into going out to the stores and the malls and finding kids that will give us a high 5. I found one boy that miraculously found my hand with a roundhouse and gave me a high 5. I said "My, aren't you something. How old are you?" He said, "I'm 4 years old." And I said, "My, you're big for your age." He said, "I sleep in my own bed."

FADE OUT:  
ROLL END TITLES