

The
Carousel

News & Trader

October 2013
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ON THE COVER:



October, 2013
Vol. 29, No. 10

Although small compared to the likes of Gavioli and Limonaire, Charles Marengi's organs were not small. From 1905-10, many large Marengi dance hall organs were sold to venues in Europe and even Russia. Only one large Marengi organ is known to survive – now at The Thursford Collection in Norfolk, England.

Photo: Shane Seagrave

Inside this issue:



When Mortier first built this huge dance organ, it had no name. We now know it as the Mortier "Minerva" ... 15

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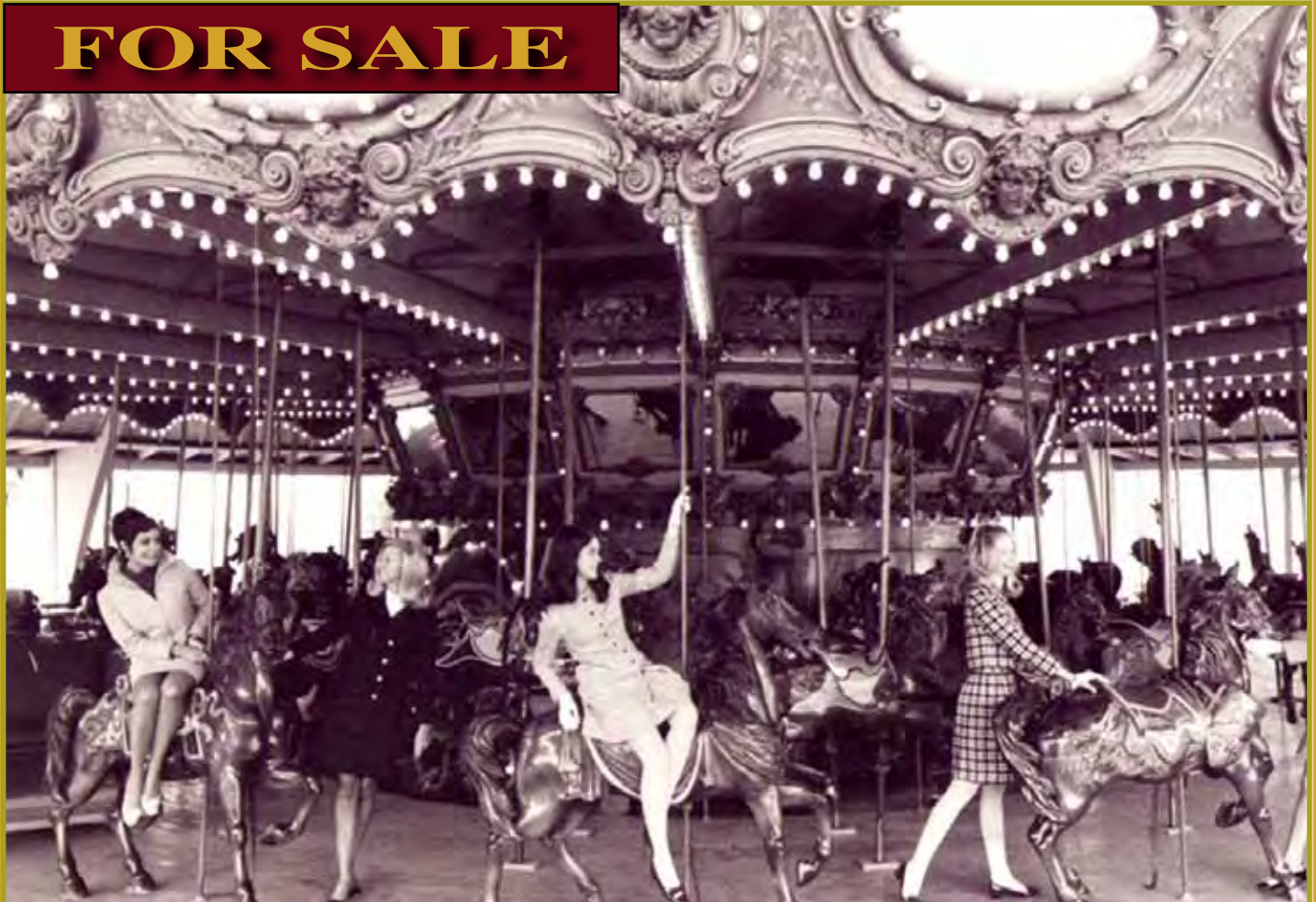
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Next Month:

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ALL THINGS CAROUSEL FOR OVER 35 YEARS

From Dan's Desk

Message from the publisher,
Dan Horenberger



Scary-Go-Round Time Again

It's that time of year. More and more seasonal carousels have extended their seasons and become scary-go-rounds for Halloween. so it's time to go out and have some fun and support your local carousel. This type of event keeps growing every year. Some locations make more income from the Halloween and Christmas time then they do all the summer. Over the years these events just keep getting more and more elaborate, as well as important to the carousel's successful operations. If you haven't been to one, check your local carousel and have a scary good time.

Orr Family Farm Returns After Tornado

The Southwest Oklahoma City farm was in the direct path of the monster tornado in May. Fortunately, everyone in the **Orr Family**, their employees, even their animals survived. But the storm destroyed buildings, mangled its carousel, and debris covered the property.



Children enjoying "ZooBoo" at Como Park Zoo and PTC #33. Como Zoo will be transformed for ZooBoo October 19th, 20th; and October 25th – 27th this year. For information, visit www.comozooconservatory.org/support/zooboo.

*As most of our readers know, PTC #33 at Como Park in St. Paul, MN, is also known as **Cafesjian's Carousel** for its largest benefactor, **Gerard Cafesjian**, who recently passed away. See page 10 for his memoriam.*

This fall, the train and the pumpkin patch will be back, as well as the zip line, giant jumping pillows, and carousel. They're adding a new theme called "The Farm Fun Yard" with more children's activities. They started growing the



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Floyd Moreland and carousel survived the recent devastating fire in Seaside Heights, NJ. Photo courtesy of Seaside Heights Tourism website, www.exit82.com.

corn maze in July. This year, it'll be shaped like a tornado. The grand reopening was set to take place in late September. For more information, go to www.orrfamilyfarm.com.

Seaside Heights Jersey Boardwalk Fire

The fire started under the pier in Seaside Heights, New Jersey, last month. It was at the south end of the area at Fun Town. Several blocks were burned and many of the buildings are a 100% loss. The Chance carousel that did survive Hurricane Sandy didn't survive the fire. The fire department did a great job as the fire moved quickly to the north, stopping just blocks away from the historic **Floyd Moreland Looff/Dentzel Carousel**. We hope the New Jersey shoreline gets a break and has time to rebuild for next season.

From Down Under, The Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens' Steam Carousel on the Move

Carousel owners Mark and Judy Money are looking for a permanent location in the Salamanca area for their historic carousel. The Moneys want a five-year lease with an agreement to operate the 1882 merry-go-round year-round. The proposed area for the amusement ride is the small parking lot between the two Salamanca lawns. Alderman Marti Zucco said at a Parks and Customers Service meeting that a merry-go-round at Salamanca would be a "win-win". Mr. Zucco said the parking lot could be moved. There are precedents for waterfront carousels, with one in Sydney and another in Geelong. "If we're serious about heritage, this is it," he said. The carousel was removed from the Botanical Gardens in July because it had run without a regular schedule.

Spillman Carousel a Centerpiece for Barrett-Jackson January 2014 Auction in Scottsdale, AZ

A 1922 Spillman Carousel will be featured in the prime time sales at the next **Barrett-Jackson** January Car Auction in Scottsdale. The carousel will be up and running in the main tent. This will be one of the first non auto-related pieces ever offered on prime time TV by the famed auction company. Recent success from other carousels being in car

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This 1922 Spillman carousel will be a featured item in the nationally televised Barrett-Jackson Car Auction in January.

Barrett-Jackson's annual car auctions has made this possible. The sale will be previewed and shown on TV by **FoxSports1**, the old **Speed Channel**. This will be the first carousel sold in real time while being televised on national TV. In the past, several other private carousels in car collections have been shown by the auction company, but never sold.

For more information about the carousel, visit Brass Ring's website at www.carousel.com and go to the Antique Wooden carousel for sale area. (BTW: If you haven't visited lately, the entire carousel.com site is all new). Also check with barrett-jackson.com for the sale time of the carousel.

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IN MEMORIAM

Gerard Cafesjian, Philanthropist and Savior of PTC #33



During the winter holiday season in 2012, Cafesjian put some of his private collection on display as a gift to the city. Among the rare figures was this Dentzel tiger from the carousel at Kiddie City Amusement Park in Queens, NY, which had not been seen by the public in nearly 60 years.

By Elizabeth Mohr

**Reprinted courtesy of www.twincities.com.*

Gerard Leon Cafesjian, the benefactor who helped save the famed Como Park carousel, has passed away, according to Armenian news reports.

Cafesjian amassed his wealth as an executive at West Publishing, where he worked from 1952 until 1996. His philanthropic pursuits went well beyond the salvage and restoration of the Cafesjian Carousel, as it's now known. He also founded the Cafesjian Family Foundation, the Cafesjian Museum Foundation and the Cafesjian Center for the Arts.

Cafesjian, 88, formerly of Roseville, had retired and was living in Naples, FL.

Cafesjian was born in 1925 in Brooklyn, N.Y., to Armenian parents who immigrated to the United States in 1915, according to a biography on the Cafesjian Center for the Arts website. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and later earned a degree in economics from Hunter College and a law degree from St. John's University Law School. He began working for West Publishing in New York City and later was transferred to the St. Paul office.

In 1988, Cafesjian joined an effort to save the 1914 [PTC #33] merry-go-round that had spun at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds for 75 years. He and others contributed more than \$2 million to save the 68-horse carousel from being broken up and auctioned off.

1925-2013

When the carousel was unveiled, Cafesjian bought 100 tickets to give away to children and sat on a park bench to observe the event. "I can't think of getting more pleasure per dollar than what I've gotten already," Cafesjian said.



Gerard Leon Cafesjian
Cafesjian Center for the Arts photo

The Cafesjian Carousel, which was named in honor of its major benefactor, was restored and initially installed in Town Square in downtown St. Paul, MN.

"I knew it was worth saving and had to be saved," Cafesjian told the Pioneer Press in 1990, just days before the refurbished carousel was set to make its public debut. "We can all be proud of the way everybody got behind it."



When the carousel was unveiled, Cafesjian reportedly bought 100 tickets to give away to children who wanted to ride it and sat on a park bench to observe the event.

"I can't think of getting more pleasure per dollar than what I've gotten already," Cafesjian said at the time.

The carousel was moved to storage in 1996 and found its permanent home in Como Park in 2000.

Through his philanthropic organizations, Cafesjian sought to bring economic relief and artistic venues to Armenia and to promote Armenian art and history to the rest of the world.

Cafesjian's wife, Cleo, died in March. The couple met during WWII and were married in July 1947. The couple had adult children, one granddaughter and three great-grandchildren.



PTC #33 Brief History

In 1914, Austin McFadden paid the Philadelphia Toboggan Company \$8,500 to build a carousel, bring it to St. Paul, and assemble it on the grounds of the Minnesota State Fair. He ran it as a concession for many years, after which it passed into the hands of other families. In 1988, the Minnesota State Fair carousel was put up for sale. By the time the story hit the news on Nov. 11, 20 horses and a chariot were already headed for a Dec. 10 NYC auction.

Peter Boehm and Nancy Peterson, a St. Paul couple who had become interested in historic carousels only a year before, read the story and decided to try to save the carousel. They learned that the purchase price was just over \$1.1 million for the carousel to be sold intact and immediately formed a non-profit organization called Our Fair Carousel, (OFC). They opened a bank account, PO box, and announced their intention to the Twin Cities media to acquire the carousel and operate it "for the people of Minnesota." As contributions came in, the St. Paul City Council voted to use city resources to guarantee a bank loan that would enable OFC to purchase the carousel.

Boehm and Peterson traveled to New York and completed the purchase of the carousel just 10 minutes after the auction had begun. By terms of their agreement with St. Paul, they had one year to raise the more than \$1 million to repay the loan. They created an Adopt-A-Pony program, with sponsorships of a horse on the carousel ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000.

In addition, with the help of volunteers, they operated the carousel at the Minnesota State Fair one more time in 1989. More than 108,000 people rode the merry-go-round



in its 75th and final year at the State Fair, and the riders bought thousands of T-shirts, posters and buttons to generate funds for the cause. In the midst of these fundraising efforts, a "mystery donor" pledged \$600,000, about half of what was needed. His identity was later revealed as Gerard L. Cafesjian, and the carousel was named for him.

By the deadline in December 1989, OFC had raised about \$900,000. The City of St. Paul, through one of its agencies, extended a long-term loan for the remainder. Cafesjian would also be a major donor for the restoration and the new pavilion to house the carousel in Como Park.

For more information, visit www.ourfaircarousel.org.

Carousel and Band Organ News Briefs

Although the Verbeeck 165 Arrived in 1996, it was Faceless Until Now Seabreeze Park Band Organ Façade Debuts



Matthew Caulfield photos

While the Verbeeck 165 band organ was delivered to the park in 1996, the organ finally got its façade this September.

Matthew Caulfield

Special to The Carousel News & Trader

Just in time to make the CN&T Band Organ Issue, Seabreeze Park has unveiled the new façade for its Verbeeck 165 band organ. The Verbeeck 165 was delivered to the park in 1996 without any façade which has finally been painted and installed on the band organ. The band organ, dressed in its new clothes, made its public appearance on Saturday, September 7, 2013, for the park's "Final Fling" weekend, the last two days before the park closes for the 2013 season. We will re-open in 2014 in mid-May as usual.

Shown right is how the façade looked as the painting first progressed.

Bob Whiteside got the wrong impression from some European façade photos George Norris gave him, and strayed a bit from the desired colors, so he had to over-paint. Some decades down the line when restorers look for the Seabreeze façade's original colors, they will find that layer and draw the wrong conclusion.



Carousel Calendar

AUCTIONS

Nov. 16, 2013

Union, IL. Donley Auctions presents a huge carousel, music and more auction. PTC #72, an 1880s steam carousel and an Allan Herschell converted to solar power will all be offered as a whole units only. Lots of mechanical music, antique cars and motorbikes, a soda fountain and more. See ad on page 9 in this issue.

Jan. 12-19, 2014

Scottsdale, AZ. Barrett-Jackson January Collector Car Auction. This year, in addition to all of the great cars, there will be a 1922 Spillman carousel featured, and auctioned, live on national TV. For more up-to-date information as the auction approaches, visit www.barrett-jackson.com.

ANNUAL SPINS FOR HISTORIC CAROUSELS

October 3-14 2013

Newfield, ME. 19th Century Willowbrook Village living museum. The 1894 Armitage Herschell operates Thurs., Fri., Sat. and Sundays in October until the museum closes for the year On Oct. 14. This is your last two chance to ride the carousel this year surrounded by fall foliage. For information, (207) 793-2784 or www.willowbrookmuseum.org.

Through - Oct. 20, 2013

Dallas, TX. Big Tex. Annual State Fair of Texas. Ride the 1920s Dentzel. The largest state fair in the US dating back to 1886. (214) 565-9931 or visit www.bigtex.com.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Nov. 18-22, 2013

Orlando, FL. "Imagine" is the theme for 2013 as the IAAPA Attractions Expo returns to Orlando. Product displays, industry events, behind-the-scenes facility tours and education program focused on trends, opportunities, and best practices. IAAPA Attractions Expo is the thriving marketplace for the attractions industry. Visit www.iaapa.org.

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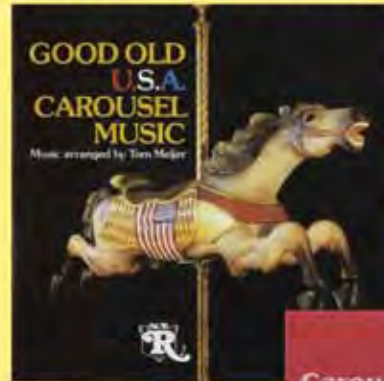
Meridian, MS. COAA Rally meets Soule Steamfest. This will be the third time COAA has shared this event in Mississippi. Pairing of mechanical organs and steam engines is an ideal combination and The Great Dorset Steam Fair in England is a good example of how much fun that can be. Step back in time when travel by train was preferred, the steam engine was king, and mechanical music was all the rage. Come and enjoy the southern charm that this Mississippi railroad town has to offer where they are famous for Magnolias, Mint Juleps, and Southern Hospitality! Hosted by Jean Orcutt, 4mspiper@bellsouth.net, (601) 679-7326 or www.steamfest.weebly.com. or visit www.coaa.us.

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The price, including community meals, rooms with a view and fireplace but no TV to interrupt, is \$375 for double occupancy and \$525 for single occupancy. New this year: payment plan now available.

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Three Historic Carousels

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ONE AUCTION

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Confiscated in Holland by the Germans During WW II to Entertain Soldiers

Originally the 92-Key Mortier Had No Name, Now It's the "Minerva"



1. The 92- key Mortier in its original state. The reiterating snare drum is shown in the lower front. On the left is the second owner, Frans Monjé and on the right, his son, Marinus (Marin) Monjé. Photo taken in Breskens in the 1930s.

By Tom Meijer

**Reprinted courtesy of "Het Pierement" and "Mechanical Music"*

This 92-key Mortier organ was built in 1927, with serial number 1018. At that time it had no name. In the first years, it was played in the café annex dance-hall, 'Het Keldertje', (the basement) in Eeklo, Belgium.

In early 1930, the organ was imported to Holland by Frans Monjé in the small town of Breskens. For many years he hired out the organ during the festival season (photo 1). He also had it playing in his own dance hall at the address, Eerste Zandstraat, in Breskens.

In 1940, at the start of World War II, the Germans occupied Holland. They claimed the organ for requisition and placed it in a green, wooden army shed, for amusement of the German soldiers who were settled in Breskens. It's a wonder the organ remained undamaged during the war period.



The unnamed organ would become the "Minerva".

Justin Pinchot photo



At the start of WW II, the Germans claimed the organ for requisition in Holland and placed it in an army shed for amusement of the German soldiers settled in Breskens.

Breskens was liberated by the Allied Powers in 1944. The organ was still in the army shed, where from that moment on, liberation festivities were held. It played its music now for the English and Canadian liberators and the free citizens of Breskens. After the soldiers had left, Frans Monjé finally got his organ back. He moved both the organ and the wooden shed to the village, where it all was built up again. From 1945 until 1953, this was a famous dancing-hall in the region.

A few years later, his son, Marin Monjé, took over the business, including the organ. Between 1958 and 1960, various 45-rpm records were issued under the title "Mortierorgel Breskens", with popular hits from that period. In this way the organ became well-known all over Holland.

Wim in 't Hol

In 1963, the Mortier was sold to Wim in 't Hol from Alkmaar (Northern Holland). He named the organ 'Minerva', after the Roman goddess of arts and crafts. He had it modified, so that the volume became loud enough for use in the



Photo 3. A sugar packet from café-restaurant 'De Fortuin' with a drawing of the Minerva.

open air. Then he placed the instrument on a large truck and went on tour to several cities in The Netherlands and Germany (photo 2, pg. 18).

In 1966, Wim in 't Hol stopped traveling. He hired out the Mortier to café 't Haasje (the hare) in the little village Egmond-Binnen. At that time he had made many new music books by both Gerard Razenberg and Arthur Prinsen. Some of these were recorded by the Telstar label in 1966, on an LP with the title "Orgelfeest".

In 1968, Wim in 't Hol bought café-restaurant 'De Fortuin' in Barsingerhorn (Northern Holland, see photo 3 above). The Minerva was placed there on a turn-table shaped platform, together with the 121-key Decap dance organ De Kempenaer (now in Japan). Both organs were shown and played in alternation. The maintenance of the instruments was carried out by father and son Verbeeck (photo 4).

Around 1974, the Minerva was sold to someone in the USA. It is not known if it was played here for long. The magnificent carved front was separated from the organ. It was painted black and mounted as decoration in 'House on the Rock', where it still can be seen in the background of their spooky exhibition.

The organ chest with all the pipes and mechanisms was stored as useless items until it was discovered by Johnny Verbeeck during a business-trip. Then, John Daniel from Pasadena became the new owner of The Minerva. He decided to have the organ playing again. And, of course, it needed a new front, too. Both activities were done first-rate by the firm of Johnny Verbeeck in Sint-Job-in-'t-Goor, Belgium. Luckily most of the original Mortier organ pipes were preserved very well, and could be restored to factory condition. A few new registers were added: flûte harmonique, carillon, flûte 8' and cello-grave. The organ needed also new made side chests. A new 101-key mechanism was mounted in the restored main chest, where the Mortier serial number 1018 can still be seen.

**4. Ferre Verbeeck, (father of Johnny),
in De Fortuin repairing "The Minerva."**

Photo 1970



6. Part of the new organ façade, built in the workshop of Johnny Verbeeck in 1998.

For many years 'The Minerva' was a well-known Mortier organ in The Netherlands. The instrument was imported from Belgium by the Monjé family in Breskens (Zeeland) in 1930.

They had it playing in their café until 1963, when it was sold to Wim in 't Hol. But in the 1970s the interest in dance organs declined and 'The Minerva' was shipped to the USA. There it did not play for long, only the front was used. The organ itself was stored, until Johnny Verbeeck discovered this magnificent Mortier during a business-trip. The new owner, John Daniel in Pasadena, CA, had it restored by Verbeeck in 1998. With a new façade – but retaining most of the original pipes – 'The Minerva' keeps alive the memory of the golden age of Belgian dance organs.

Right - John and Cathy Daniel in front of Minerva.





The Scale of the Jazz Band Organ

Mortier #1018 originally had a unique, not-standard scale. Usually the Mortier factory in Antwerp equipped their 92/101-key organs with a disposition of 12 bass notes, 12 accompaniment notes, 23 notes on melody and 20 on counter-melody. Although the lay-out of the scales could

vary, this was the standard for most Mortier organs built in the 1920s period.

But in 1927, the designers wanted to experiment with something new. Both Mortier #1014 and # 1018 (it is said that there was a third organ) got the following 92-key scale:

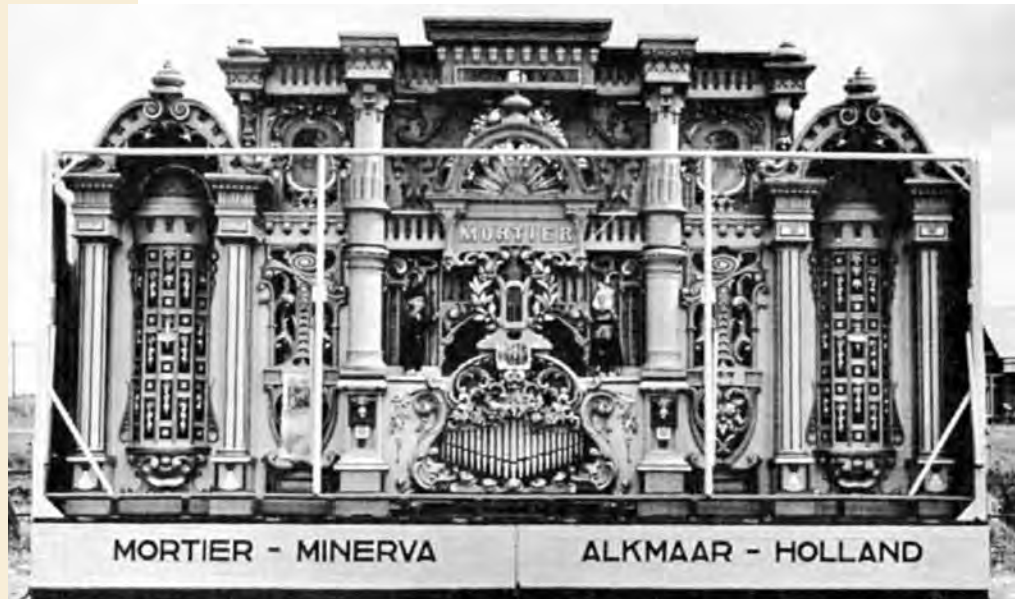
1. declanche
2. unda maris melody
3. wood-block
- 4-15. bass notes (G - f#)
- 16-20. accompaniment (g - b)
- 21-39. counter-melody (c1 - f#2)
- 40-62. melody (g1 - f3)
63. bass drum
64. jazz-flûte
65. cymbal (hi-hat)
66. violin-forte
67. cello
68. wood-block
69. bassoon
70. triangle (reiterating)
71. maracas
72. celeste
73. wood-block
74. trombone
75. cowbell
76. snare (single stroke)
77. snare (reiterating)
78. snare (single stroke)
79. cowbell
80. trumpet melody
81. cowbell
82. xylophone (wood)
83. cymbal (large)
84. tremolo general
85. tremolo jazz
86. flûte quint
87. baxophone
88. swell shutters
89. baritone (saxophone)
90. violin-piano
91. accompaniment forte
92. wind shut off

As you can see, there is a continuous rank of 59 chromatic notes, formed by the groups of 12 bass, 5 accompaniments, 19 counter-melody and 23 melody (keys #4 - #62). This looks like the lay-out of a piano orchestrion, which has a continuous rank of notes too. In 1927 – the year in which # 1018 was built – the Mortier factory also started the production of piano-orchestrions. The scale of these (paper roll operated) instruments can be found in the book *Treasures of Mechanical Music* by Reblitz and Bowers (page 538). These orchestrions also had a continuous rank of 56 notes (C – g3). Although the lay-out of the roll is different from that on the book-operated organs, it is clear that Mortier wanted to launch something new.

From the archives it is known that in September 1927, Mortier announced a whole new type of dance organ: the ‘jazz band organ’. Jazz – or at least rhythmic and syncopated dance music based on ragtime and jazz – was very popular in the 1920s, also in Europe.

For sure, Mortier #1014 and # 1018 were built as jazz band organs. These instruments were equipped with extensive percussion to support the syncopated rhythms, just like the jazz bands of that time. Besides the standard base drum and snare, these organs got three wood-blocks (in different pitch), three cowbells, a reiterating snare drum and triangle, two cymbals and maracas.

From the minute-book of the Mortier management we learn that one expected the jazz band organ to be a great success. But as with most renovations, the clients followed a wait-and-see policy. Very soon Mortier returned to the old-style scale, enlarged with some of the jazz elements. This we can see in for example organ #1020 (now in the Utrecht organ museum) and #1023 (The Kluisberg, now in England). Remarkable is that also organ #1015 (the Crab) was still built with the traditional 97-key scale. Perhaps this was the wish of the client, we don’t know.



2. “The Minerva” in 1964, then owned by Wim in ‘t Hol, address Verdrunkenoord 85 in Alkmaar. The organ was mounted on a large truck which toured several cities in the Netherlands and Germany.

**7. Mortier organ
with serial no. 1018
(sister-organ
of the Minerva)
still has the original
'jazz band' scale.**

Restoration

When Johnny Verbeeck discovered the organ, he found out that unfortunately only a few of the original music books were preserved. As the jazz band scale had some limitations, he decided to rebuild the organ on the traditional 101-key scale. This also gave him the possibility to make some improvements.

In the original scale, the wooden xylophone had only 13 tones (g1 – g2). Besides that, Wim in 't Hol had replaced the wooden sticks for metal bars to give the organ more volume. With the restoration, The Minerva got back its wooden xylophone, now on all 23 notes of the melody.

The original group of only five accompaniment notes seems rather limited. Although on the scale-book there was a remark that the highest seven notes on the counter-melody could be used for accompaniment, too. But all registers on counter-melody consisted of series of 19 pipes. Also, the accompaniment had ranks of 12 pipes.

Most unusual was further that the organ had 17 trombones which played in forte on the 12 bass and the 5 accompaniment notes.

The music arrangers had to comply with this deviating concept. But it seems that they did a good job. On the elder recordings of The Minerva, we hear The Minerva play like a traditional Mortier organ. Also, organ #1018 (photo 7, this organ still exists in England, with the original scale) sounds like a normal 101-key. It is mysterious what the builders exactly had intended with their design.

After the rebuilding the Minerva has now the following disposition:

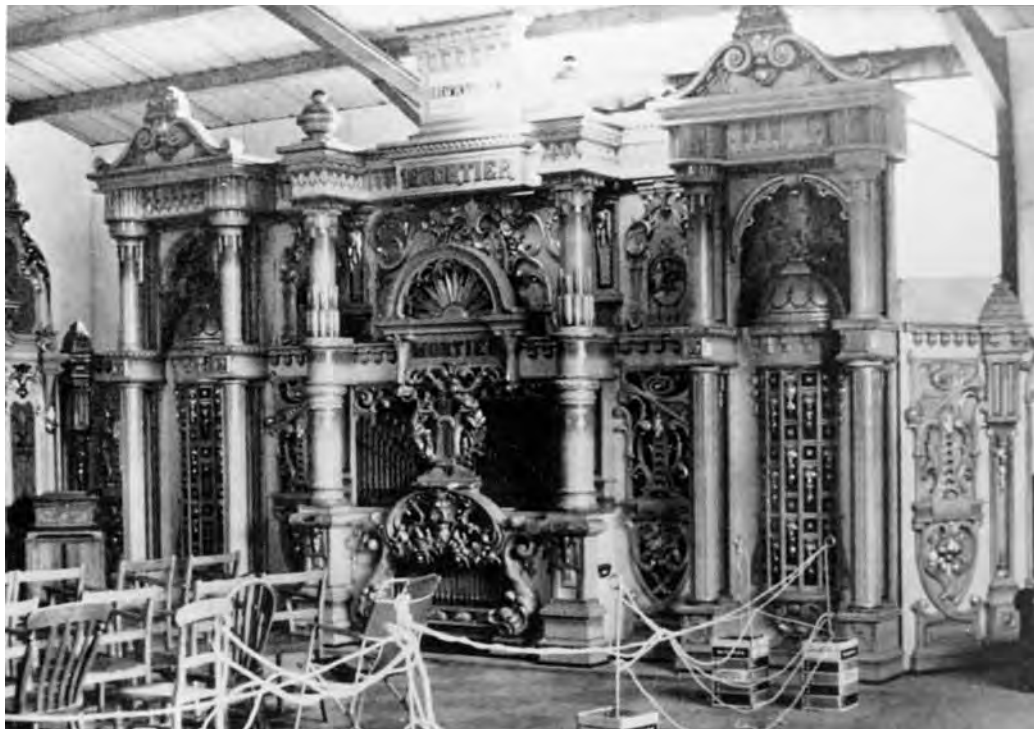
23 melody, with registers violin-piano, violin-forte, unda maris, jazz-flûte (no vibraton!), trumpet, baxophone, flûte harmonique, carillon, xylophone, tremolo general and tremolo jazz.

20 counter melody: cello, celeste, flûte 8, baritone (saxophone), trumpet, cello-grave and bassoon.

12 accompaniments, with additional forte pipes.

12 bass, with additional trombones.

8 percussion: bass drum, cymbal, snare drums (2), triangle, wood-blocks (2) and maracas.



The swell shutters in the front (operated by a separate key) can give some nuance to the music.

The music repertoire has been made completely new. The organ can play on cardboard books and on a midi system as well.

**This article is reprinted with permission from "Het Pierement", January 1999. Translated by Tom Meijer. This translated version is reprinted courtesy of the MBSI Journal, "Mechanical Music", May/June 2008.*

With thanks to Jack Jacobs and Johnny Verbeeck for their information.



7. De Kluisberg #1023 at the Great Dorset Stean Fair in England. Photo by Matthew Lawrence

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Several Lavish 104-Key Organs Were Sent to Odessa, Russia Prior to the 1917 Revolution

Rare Marenghi Dance Organ The Thursford Collection, England



Greek goddess of the dawn, Eos, bursts across the clouds in a chariot drawn by two white stallions. She has her right arm outstretched, with a crown of sacred laurel leaves – the symbol of victory – clutched in her hand. Photo Credits: Shane Seagrave

By Shane Seagrave

*Reprinted courtesy of the MOOS journal, "Vox Humana" and the MBSI Journal, "Mechanical Music".**

Norfolk (England) farming contractor, George Cushing, wanted to buy a fairground band organ and unwittingly saved the largest known example of the marque.

Although Charles Marenghi's enterprise was a junior student compared to the 'old school' of Gavioli, Foucher-Gasparini and Limonaire, he quickly established a reputation for high quality workmanship and his agents soon won many prestigious orders to supply large instruments both for travelling and permanent attractions.

According to the memoirs of the late Léon Honorez, an organ technician who worked for Marenghi from 1905-10, many large dancehall organs were sold to venues in France, Belgium and even pre-revolutionary Russia.



An original factory label affirms Marenghi's international patent rights and guarantees of quality workmanship.

In 1910, while for Britain the cinema was still, largely, an attraction found at travelling fairs, the Hippodrome at Les Halles, Paris boasted the World's largest permanent installation. Mechanical organs and orchestrions were commonly used to supply music in cinemas at a time when movies were silent, so it is quite possible the Thursford Marengi was installed there.



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Several 104-key organs with lavishly-carved façades were sold to halls in the fashionable Russian Black Sea resort of Odessa. When interviewed before his death in the early 1970s, Honorez recalled visiting the town on several occasions to oversee new installations or service existing organs. Eventually, following the Communist-led revolution of 1917, the dance halls, along with their French organs,

Three of the earliest adverts for Charles Marengi & Cie., placed in 1904 editions of French trade directories and designed to get potential customers banging on the old doors of the new firm. A small ad., from a fairs and markets guide, has a rare reference to the founder's full name 'Charles' as opposed to the more often seen abbreviation, 'Ch.'

TOP LEFT - Although a business primarily established to manufacture mechanical organs, automatic book-playing pianos feature prominently in Marengi's sales literature. Reproduced below is an advert which includes an artist's illustration of their pianos and is described:

BOTTOM LEFT - "Electric pianos, patented new system. The only ones permitting mechanical performance with expression in all pieces; Operas, Fantasies, Dances, etc. Perfect imitation of Grand or Symphony orchestras. For Mansions, Villas, fair-grounds, ballrooms, etc. Designed to replace from 6 to 80 musicians. Quality made and guaranteed. Trade mark: Ideal Orchestra."

BELOW - Although there was a high demand for automatic pianos in both the commercial and home markets, we can assume that, in reality, Marengi produced very limited numbers of these orchestrions as few are known to exist today. They were not actually manufactured by the firm but re-badged instruments constructed by a contractor elsewhere in Paris.

ORGUES A CARTONS
 Nouveau système Breveté S. G. D. G.

CHARLES MARENGHI
 2 bis, Avenue de Taillebourg, PARIS



After the Brussels Expo closed, the medal-winner Marenghi became the star attraction of the Neptune Palace dance hall in the Belgian port of Antwerp and was featured on this souvenir postcard. Photo courtesy of The Jan Kees de Ruijter Collection

were regarded as mere capitalist toys by the new regime. Many of these fine instruments were destroyed as the Bolsheviks tightened their ideological grip on Russia during the 1920s.

Only one large Marenghi dancehall organ is known to have survived and it is now at The Thursford Collection in Norfolk, England, although not in the state it left the factory. As often with itinerant mechanical organs, this impressive Marenghi's early history is somewhat foggy. Its wonderful 'art nouveau-style' façade dates from around 1905 but it was later 'married' to a 104-key, younger instrument built in 1911. This fact was established when, in 1982, the museum's resident organ conservator, Bob Ince, dismantled the instrument for a much-needed overhaul. When the air reservoir was opened for re-leathering a signature was revealed inside which confirmed the organ's birth date as April 12, 1911. It is not known when or why the original organ was removed but it was common practice for dance instruments to be 'refreshed' by the simple alteration of the façade. Anecdotal evidence suggests Thursford's Marenghi may have been installed in the huge cinema/dance-hall Hippodrome at Les Halles, in Paris. What is certain is that by the early 1920s, as the 'three-case' instrument that it is now, this Marenghi was part of the inventory of a dance-organ rental business in Hamel, eastern Belgium.



Opening the air reservoir for repair in 1982 revealed the true age of the organ behind the façade.



PARIS CH. MA

THE HISTORY OF THE GREAT BRITAIN MUSEUM



MARENGHI & C. PARIS

104-Key Marengi Dance Organ
The Thursford Collection, England



A close view of the medal-winning organ with its handsome bullfighter conductor in charge. He stands between Marenghi's trademark feature of the prominent baritones register.

From that country, around 1926, an agent of the London-based organ dealers Chiappa Ltd. sent a telegram simply addressed to their international telegraphic address - "CHIAREZZA LONDON" - informing them that the Marenghi was for sale. At the same time, co-incidentally, Ernest Barry, a travelling showman based in Northern Ireland, sent a telegram to Chiappa asking if they could supply a large organ for his fairground at Portrush, County Antrim. As a result, a deal was struck and soon the big Marenghi was heading for Ireland via a short stopover in London. Before it could be despatched to its new owner, a library of music more familiar to British ears would need to be arranged and cut. Chiappa, to keep the costs of this new repertoire down, reduced the organ to Marenghi's 98-key Violin-Baritone scale. In doing this no pipes were removed but instead, as was often the practice, were only blanked off from the air supply.

The 98-key system was another of Marenghi's clever innovations and an enlargement of Gavioli's universally popular 89-key scale. Nine more keys were added to the key-frame to operate extra registers, giving these instruments much more expression and volume. No additional notes were added to the compass, so it is possible to play 89-key books on a 98-key organ with a bit of judicious, temporary modification to the register relay. Incidentally, of those organs that, historically, it has been claimed are "98-key," few



Now in preservation, the Marenghi is owned by collector Frank Lythgoe and is seen being enjoyed by visitors to an band organ rally in the north of England.

actually use all the keys fitted in the frame – most using only 92 or 94. To give Ernest Barry's new organ a stronger voice for outdoor use, the wind-pressure was increased and the swell-shutters removed. Once the overhaul was complete, the Marenghi was packed off to its new job in Northern Ireland. There, where big band organs were still a rare novelty, it proved something of a sensation.

A reporter writing for the showland weekly newspaper *The World's Fair*, in March 1927, commented:

"Barry's machines and side-stuff have just finished three weeks at Portadown and open at Lurgan on Wednesday, March 30th. Their big organ is the talk of every town and a special programme is being put forward for the people in Lurgan. Mr Barry's organ, which I think is one of the finest

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Exhibited at Brussels (on the French Section).

This Exhibited Model is reproduced.

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Marenghi's success at the 1910 Brussels World Trade Expo was brought to the attention of potential British customers that year in an advert printed in the rather aptly titled *World's Fair* newspaper. Happily, although somewhat altered, the organ is still in existence today.



Impressive sounds emanate from the Marenghi and complement its magnificent mantle, which is as fine an example of French belle époque woodcarving as could be found anywhere in the World. It is an unconventional and imaginative mixture of rococo and neoclassical motifs blended with hints of art-nouveau! Set into recessed panels on either side of the metal cellograve 'sound windows' are four paintings on canvas, representing allegories of the four seasons. They are in the style of, and possibly executed by, Alphonse Mucha (1860-1939), who was an influential artist in the Late 19th - early 20th Century art-nouveau era.

An allegorical representation of Light (in the form of Eos, the Greek goddess of the dawn) - triumphing over Darkness forms the upper façade. Eos bursts across the clouds in a chariot drawn by two white stallions and has her right arm outstretched, with the symbol of victory (a crown of sacred laurel leaves) clutched in her hand. Incidentally, behind the mesh grill, immediately below this superbly carved centerpiece, is a xylophone register which can faintly be heard in the Decca disc vinyl LP recordings of the organ made in the late 1960s. Close inspection of its fittings point to the xylophone being an original part of the instrument which now sits behind this earlier façade. How do we know the front and organ are a 'marriage'? Look above the tall, cello-grave pipes on either side of the central sound-window and you will see that the carving has un-edged panels of wood set in to the frames. These were fitted to cover the gap between the façade and the casework behind.





A rare photo taken inside Marenghi's factory around the mid-1900s shows an organ of around 70-keys in the height-of-fashion art-nouveau style with the hall-mark baritone register in the upper façade.

in the World will, on Wednesday evening for the first time in the above town, give its volume in a great musical recital of the latest airs, Irish melodies and opera pieces of the very best."

Ernest Barry died in 1935 and the organ eventually went into storage along with its stablemate, the 89-key Marenghi (shown right) which is today owned by the British steam and organ enthusiast Frank Lythgoe of Lymm, Cheshire and father of TV celebrity Nigel. In the early 1950s the big Marenghi was revived by Ernest Barry's daughter, Pauline, who used it for several years to entertain patrons who came to Bellevue, her permanent amusement park in the city of Belfast. When "Rock 'n' Roll" burst onto the popular music milieu, it was decided that the organ was a relic of an era long gone. Pauline Barry sent a telegram to Victor Chiappa in London saying they wanted to sell it, if he could find them a buyer. And, coincidentally, one was waiting in the wings!

In 1959, steam traction engine enthusiast and pioneer preservationist George Cushing (1904-2003) decided to buy a

The 89-key Marenghi is owned by the British steam and organ enthusiast Frank Lythgoe of Lymm, Cheshire, England

large band organ to form the centerpiece of his burgeoning collection of fairground equipment and steam engines. In 1959, he contacted Victor Chiappa in London who put him in touch with Miss Barry and it was not long before the Marenghi was entertaining visitors to George's home



A sensation for visitors to the 1900 Paris International Exposition was the colossal Palace Of Electricity building from which the designer of the Thursford Marengi must surely have drawn inspiration; if not, then it was an amazing coincidence!



at Laurel Farm, Thursford, Norfolk, England. There, this unique organ has remained ever since and, during that time, it has been broadcast on national radio and TV and featured on several vinyl disc recordings. The “Mammoth Marengi” - as it became popularly known - soon garnered

legions of new fans, thrilled by its distinctive tones and truly awesome façade.

Over the copious ranks of pipes on view in the main sound-window (they were hidden by swell-shutters when the front was new) is the benign face of Marsyas, a mytho-

BARITONE PROMOTION

A masterstroke of design which quickly set Marengi organs apart from their contemporaries was the promotion of the baritone register from ‘chorus-line’ to center-stage. It had been the practice on other marques to locate this reed/flue mixture, if installed, on the main windchest inside the case. He re-positioned the baritones by setting the two ranks on an off-note windchest mounted on top of the organ’s main case. They spoke through a sound-window created in the upper façade. Marengi’s largest instruments used his 105-key scale and were made for his most demanding single market - the British travelling cinema show proprietors.

On the most expensive models, impressive baritone and trumpet combinations, mounted in the upper facade, were his eye-catching hallmark. It was the same position adopted later by the Belgian dance organ maker Theofil Mortier for his feature ‘baxophones’ register and it wasn’t long before other organ builders copied the idea. For instruments designed for use in fairground rides, such as carousels, where space constricted the height of the upper façade, Marengi introduced an open ‘V’-shaped cabinet in the ‘belly’ of the front for the baritone register. Most have the lowest notes at the sides, descending in size to the highest pitch notes in the centre but there are also a few examples of organs displaying the reverse of this layout.

This was not just a case of simple aesthetics, however, it was also intended to attract customers and the attention of the public. Out in front the baritones would be both prominent in both sound and vision, and just the sight of this handsome register would give the impression, to the casual observer, that the organ was louder than the competition’s offerings.

Shipping companies had also used the same conceit after discovering that the more funnels their passenger liners sported the

faster they were conceived to be by the ticket-buying public! For example, the fourth funnel on Cunard’s record-smashing trans-Atlantic ship Mauretania was just a dummy added for effect. The fourth stacks on her sister vessels, Aquitania and Lusitania were false too, as was that on the ill-fated Titanic. Marengi’s baritone brainwave was a small detail but undoubtedly helped sway many showmen into favoring his products over other makes available to buy. In the hustle and bustle of fairgrounds it was the organ with the loudest voice which would, indubitably, attract the most custom!

Improving on Gavioli’s 89-key ‘G4’ format of three-register (piano, mezzo-forte and forte) instruments, Marengi introduced his VB or ‘violinbaritone’ system whereby the main components of the organ were separated into violin, clarinet, baritone, saxophone and metallophone (glockenspiel), each one having its own register. Marengi’s register innovation provided music arrangers with greater liberty to use their creativity when transposing music from the written score onto cardboard. Perhaps surprisingly, there no changes were made in the musical scale from Gavioli’s 89-key G4 to the Marengi 89-key VB system. Two ‘spare’ keys were taken from those used on the 87-key scale for animating the conductor and bellringer automatons, independently of the music. On the VB system these ‘wasted keys’ were re-assigned and the automatons were coupled to operate with the bass drum action. If VB books are played on G4 the bandmaster stops working but G4 played on VB results in the baritone register being constantly set to ‘on’. In Britain, as Chiappa Ltd. became the major player in band organ sales and servicing, so gradually most Gavioli G4 instruments were converted by them to Marengi VB. This kept music costs down, as separate arrangements for each system were now no longer necessary. Today there are few 89-key Gavioli organs in Britain playing on their original scale and nearly all those which are have been imported from Europe by collectors.



Forty years after it won a medal, the organ was drawing English fair-goers to showman Tom Norman's travelling "Palladium" variety theater. This photo, showing it typically plastered in 'gag cards' promoting the highlights of the show behind, was taken in 1953 when the star attraction was an amazing armless pianist - Tommy 'Toes' Jacobson!



The Marengi viewed from the rear showing the 'three-case' instrument as it is now.

logical Greco-Roman satyr who, so the legend says, was the first composer of music for the flute. He stares down impassively on anyone who cares to bid the organ discourse but his benign visage sits amid a curious pierced panel of quasi-Renaissance brackets and scrolls, contrasting almost totally with the overall leitmotif of the façade.

One cannot help but speculate as to the state of mind of Marengi's designer when he conceived this thoroughly fanciful frivolity. Did he obtain inspiration for the façade from some opiate-induced reverie? Maybe we will never know! Sitting rather uneasily below the gaze of Marsyas are a pair of mythological creatures called gryphons or 'griffons'. Out of character with the rest of the color scheme they are solidly gilded but are Marengi-style and possibly contemporary with the façade. They have been drafted in from their original duties to form an eye-catching but slightly incongruous guard to the baritone register which was hastily repositioned during its 1926 re-build.

**This article was reprint with permission from "Vox Humana" the journal of the Mechanical Organ Owners Society, Spring/Summer 2010 and "Mechanical Music" the journal of the Musical Box Society International, May/June 2011, Volume 57, No. 3.*

(The author has changed and/or added text to his copy).

Photo Credits: Shane Seagrave

(Note: An accompanying article, 'Medal Winner Marengi,' on the subject of Marengi organs can be found in "Mechanical Music" Volume 57, No. 2, March/April 2011 pages 30 - 32.)

Restoration Done by Duward Center in Baltimore along with Expert Artist, Rosa Patton

Restoring a Travelling Band Organ for James H. Drew Exposition



There is some uncertainty whether the Drew organ is a Style 36 Ruth or a Gebrüder Bruder.

By Matthew Caulfield

with additions from Durward Center and Rosa Patton

Reprinted courtesy of "Mechanical Music", Vol. 58, No. 4.

Baltimore restorer, Durward Center, spent part of their winter in 2012 refurbishing the mammoth band organ owned by Augusta, GA, showman James "Jimmy" Drew III, bringing it up to snuff and ready to travel with the Drew Exposition seasonal carnival route. Durward took the organ parts needing work to his shop in Baltimore in the fall. When they were finished and ready to be re-installed, he had to do the as-

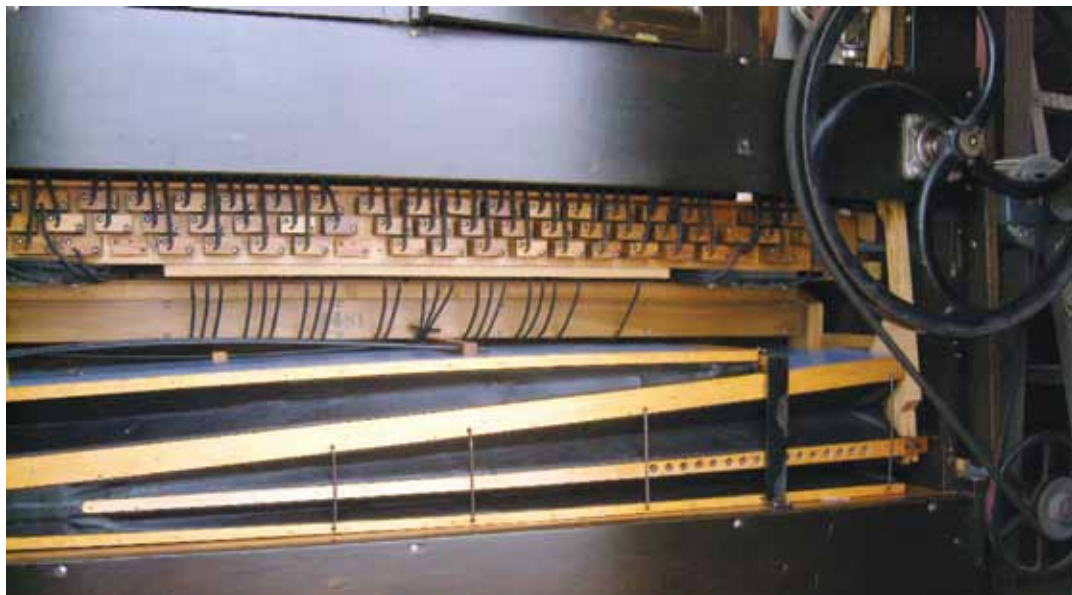


sembly work at a truck stop south of Baltimore, because the organ trailer (fig. 1), called by Jimmy Drew "the grandest organ trailer ever built," was too huge to negotiate the streets of Baltimore. Luck was with Durward, because when he tuned the organ there on Easter Sunday, the day was beautiful and the temperature was 70 degrees. Fig. 2 shows the pressure pumps and valve chest after Durward's releathering of the pumps

There is some uncertainty whether the Drew organ is a Style 36 Ruth or a Gebrüder Bruder. The late Mike Kitner, who restored the organ in the 1990s, believed it to be a Ruth,

**Figure 2 Rebuilt
valve chest and
pressure pumps.**

while Fred Dahlinger, in an extensive article on the provenance of the Drew organ published in Issue #30 of the COAA's *Carousel Organ*, makes a convincing argument that it is a Bruder. The organ was originally a book-playing organ, probably dating to circa 1895 or the turn of the century. It was taken in by the Rudolph Wurlitzer Company and refitted to play Wurlitzer style



165 rolls on a duplex roll frame. Wurlitzer Shipping Dock records show it as serial #4481, shipped back to its then-owner Louis J. Nieberle on July 2, 1923. That entry shows the organ as a "165 band organ," with the notation "Rebuilt Gebr." The meaningless use of "Gebr.," plus the modifications needed to make the organ 165-roll capable, only help to obscure the true origin of the Drew organ. Organ # 4481 shows up again in Wurlitzer repair records as a "Style # 165 repaired," shipped to L.J. Nieberle on June 25, 1933.

But regardless of its parentage, the organ is a magnificent beauty (fig. 3), and its beauty has been fully revealed in the façade restoration done for Jimmy Drew by carousel and organ restoration artist Rosa Patton, then known in the art world as Rosa Ragan.

I will not go into the history of the Drew organ, because Fred Dahlinger did such a thorough job in his COAA article. But Jimmy Drew's father, James H. Drew, Jr., bought the organ in 1957 from Mabel Reid, a fellow amusement business person who was retiring from the travelling life. Drew then had Erwin Heller prepare the organ for use on the Drew 1958 circuit. In today's world, it seems unusual for a travelling amusement or carnival business to maintain a large band organ of the size and quality of the Drew organ. But in the Drew family band organs and their music held a special place, as Fred Dahlinger's COAA article details. I guess that family traditions such as this one are what gives heart and warmth to enterprises with deep roots, distinguishing them from corporate-style operations like Six Flags.

Starting with Erwin Heller, who eventually became the Drew Organ man, and continu-

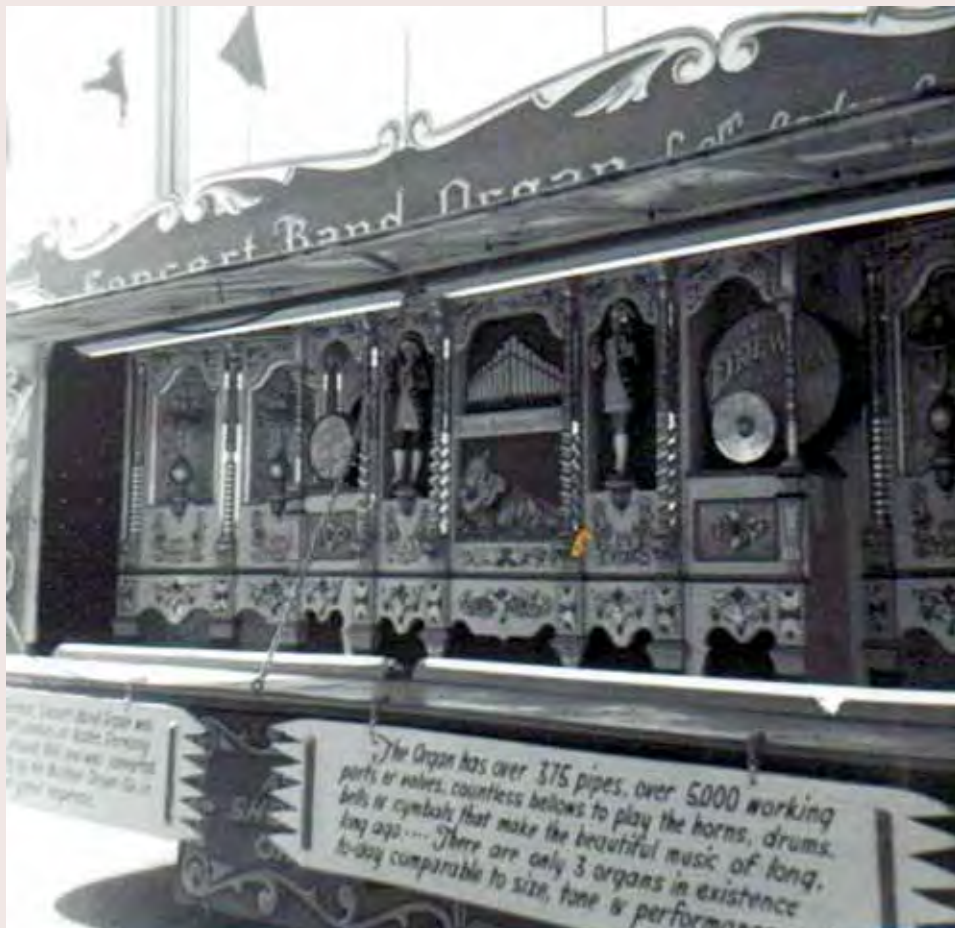
ing with Durward Center and Mike Kitner and artist Rosa Patton, the Drew organ had always had top-drawer maintenance. I became involved when Jimmy Drew contacted me, on Durward's advice, about upgrading, re-boxing, and completing the collection of Wurlitzer 165 rolls that the organ plays. After inventorying all Jimmy's rolls, listing the Wurlitzer rolls that his collection lacked, and hearing Jimmy's wishes for displaying the roll collection in a new roll library in one end of the organ trailer, I arranged to have Valley Forge Music Rolls make copies of all the rolls in the Seabreeze Park collection that were lacking in the Drew Collection. The Seabreeze Park collection is the most complete Wurlitzer 165 roll collection in existence. Then I contracted with H.P. Neun Company, Fairport, NY, to make 200 Wurlitzer-style roll boxes, in a special maroon paper rather

Cont. on page 35

**The 165 rolls in the new maroon
boxes inside the organ trailer.**



Photo taken by Durward Center at the 1966 Kentucky State Fair in Louisville. This was the first time he had seen the organ and he was all of sixteen at the time.



Durward Center Talks About His and Mike Kitner's Restoration Work

By Deward Center

My first work on the organ was in 1987 when Jimmy brought the organ and trailer to my shop. At that time, the trailer was a smaller one which could park on the street just outside my shop. I recovered the pressure pump and a few other control pneumatics and tuned the organ. I recall that one of the large compass springs on the reservoir had broken, so I had all new ones made. Mike Kitner did a fine restoration of the organ a few years later. The organ uses a duplex 165 roll system. However, the conversion from books to rolls left the organ with only three automatic registers – forte, trombones, and bells. Mike added a slider for a fourth register which controls the melody violins.

I serviced the organ a couple of times over the years, the last time being in 2008 in North Carolina at a temperature of 100 degrees. Not the best nor most pleasant time to tune anything.

By 2012, the leather on the pressure pump had gone bad and required replacing. Most other control and percussion pneumatics which had been recovered in rubber cloth had also failed and were recovered again, this time in kangaroo leather. All other components are in fine condition. The current trailer for the organ is too long to negotiate the inner city streets, so assembly and regulation work was done at a truck stop just south of the City. Tuning took place on Easter Sunday, a beautiful 70 degree day. A much happier organ resulted.



The duplex 165 roll system of the organ.



Rosa Patton Talks About Her Façade Painting

I began talking with Jimmy Drew about doing the facade restoration in early 1992, and I can piece together a fairly accurate time line and work summary for the restoration of the James H. Drew Exposition organ front based on letters in my files to and from Jimmy Drew, Mike Kitner and Bob Uhl at Century Industries, a speciality trailer manufacturer. From the beginning, Mr. Drew made it clear that he wanted nothing but the best job of restoration for this organ. It was delivered to my studio, which was at that time in Raleigh, NC, for restoration in late 1992. At that point it was still in its previous trailer and the parts of the facade were removed from the organ case and trailer and transferred into the work space. During the restoration my husband and I built a new studio in a rural community just west of Chapel Hill, NC, and while work was started in Raleigh, it was finished in the new studio.

We began working on the facade in early 1993. It was showing its age by the time it got to me and there were many broken parts and bad repairs. While almost all of the carved scrollwork was on the organ front, some of it was badly broken and/or patched and nailed back on. Areas of rot both large and small were covered in tin. The bell ringer figures were in fair condition but the ballerina figures were badly broken and patched. The restoration required major wood restoration including replacing some of the rotted background supports on the side panels.

Much of the facade molding was attached to the main organ case, so after Mike Kitner finished the mechanical restoration, the organ and case were delivered to my studio.

We received it in the Raleigh studio in 1994 and we moved it into the new studio in early 1995. In 1994 I worked with Mr. Drew and Bob Uhl of Century Industries, Sellersburg, Indiana, to design a trailer which was further designed and engineered by Century.

They built the trailer and the organ was installed by 1997. My original notes about Mr. Drew's preferences for the trailer

design include consideration of sound projection, panels for historic information and provenance, weight and road duty standards, door openings, flooring materials, etc.

My goal for the color and design of the facade was to return it to an historically accurate color scheme. Exploration of the surface paint revealed no original factory paint left intact. Additionally, there was no organ front to my knowledge which was similar to this one which made my goal of a history based paint job difficult. As a solution for painting the Drew facade, I combined colors and decorative techniques found on other European band organ fronts that I found in photos, books, and my own exploration of original paint on other facades.

In choosing materials for the restoration, consideration was given to organ's use, possible exposure to the weather, the fact that it travels, (sometimes many miles at a time), and the fact that it may be operated over the course of a year by several different people. Mr. Drew requested that the final paint and decoration be coated with a durable, exterior varnish. The facade is painted with artist oils (oil base paints), is decorated with gold and glazed aluminum leaf and is sealed with a marine spar varnish.

The painting on canvas on the crown was done in 2010 by David Nance, an artist from Burlington, NC.

Approximately every 2 years I have cleaned and touched up the paint on the organ facade. Until last year the trailer with the organ was delivered down my 1/8 mile wooded driveway to be lavished with attention for a month. Since our trees are getting larger, it became difficult for the Drew Expositions driver to maneuver the trailer in reverse, as required, down our driveway. Last year my husband, Ron Rozzelle, and I met the organ at the Asheville, NC, Mountain State Fair, where each year in September James H. Drew Exposition operate their amusement shows and display and play the organ. We did the routine cleaning and paint touch up there for several week days in the mornings and early afternoons before the show and rides opened for the evening.



Fig. 1 "The Grandest Organ Trailer Ever Built." Direct quote from Jimmy Drew, shown at right with his son, James H. Drew IV.

than the black paper normally used on roll boxes. Jimmy shipped all his rolls to me in Irondequoit, N.Y., where I made necessary repairs, added new fabric leaders, and labeled them using special gold paper that Jimmy picked out to go with the maroon boxes. The same was done with the newly cut rolls coming from Valley Forge Music Rolls.

Today the Drew organ trailer is quite an impressive sight: the organ being the centerpiece, with one end of the trailer housing living quarters and the other end devoted to the roll library. There is complete documentation, in gold lettering, of the organ history and of all the people who had a part in bringing it to its present state of perfection.



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IN MEMORIAM

Anthony "Tony" Orlando – Carousel Figure Artist... 1944-2013

Anthony "Tony" Orlando, carousel restoration artist and good friend of *The Carousel News & Trader* from the start, passed away very suddenly, yet quietly last spring. Tony lived and worked in Dearborn, MI. The garage at his home was his workshop. Tony was very good friends with the original publishers of the CN&T, Nancy and Walter Loucks, and it was Tony who would provide the color for the first color cover of the young magazine in 1988. For nearly two decades, Tony would empty out his entire workshop/garage to build a set for the annual holiday cover. In addition to the countless private carousel figure restorations, Tony handled the ongoing preservation and restoration of the 1913 Herschell-Spillman menagerie at Greenfield Village on the grounds of the Henry Ford Museum complex in Dearborn. Here are some thoughts from a couple of his friends, old and new, along with some of Tony's holiday covers.



DEARBORN, MI. - Tony Orlando, in the Conservation Lab of Greenfield Village and Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan, removes over-paint from a sea dragon during the restoration of the Village's antique carousel. Examination found that the original treatment had silver leaf applied to the body over which a transparent coating was used to simulate the appearance of glistening water on the mythical sea beast.

Archival Museum PR photos from the collection of Lourinda Bray

Tribute to Tony Orlando, Carousel Restorer and Artist

By Robert and Linda Burrows, Sewickly, PA.

Tony Orlando certainly brightened our world as a carousel restoration artist and as a friend. We first met Tony in 1983 after reading about his Carousel Restoration business. The first carousel figure that was restored by Tony for us was an Allan Herschell roach mane jumper. We had purchased the horse from Bob Kissel, who was living near Cincinnati at the time. After experiencing the beautiful artistry of Tony's first restoration, over time we had Tony restore six additional carousel figures. These included an Allan Herschell with a fox head saddle blanket, a PTC 2nd row zebra and a goat from the Crystal Beach, Ontario Carousel, a "Peek-a-Boo" mane Muller carved Dentzel Stander



DEARBORN, MI. - Carl Wesenberg (left), Tony Orlando (kneeling), and Charles Wells (right), of the Conservation Lab, Greenfield Village and Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Mich., are in the process of removing over-paint layers to reveal color and design of the decorative saddle on a giraffe during restoration of the Village's carousel.



Tony takes a look at the Burrows' Fox head saddle Allan Herschell jumper along with one of their sons. Below is the horse again, after Tony's restoration.



from Oakford Park (Jeanette, PA), a "Hunters Pride" Parker jumper and an Illions roach mane jumper. All of Tony's restorations were works of art. He paid so much attention to authentic, original coloring and details that were as close as possible to what the factory originally produced.

We were pleased to have met both his father and mother through the years. Tony and his parents treated us like family the many times we visited him at his home in Dearborn Heights. Tony was always extremely kind to our two sons and always took time to show them, as well as us, his other collectibles and interests.

We always considered Tony a dear friend and a consummate artist. We will sincerely miss Tony in our lives as will many of his friends.



1906 PTC 2nd row jumping zebra from the Crystal Beach Ontario carousel.



Muller carved Dentzel stander with "Peek-a-Boo" mane.

"Very sorry to hear Tony Orlando passed away. It was a shock. I've known him for 30 years... He was one of the very first carousel restoration artists I met. Hard to believe so many have passed in such a short time."

– Bill Manns



1906 PTC jumping goat from Crystal Beach.

Short Ride With Tony Orlando

By Barb Nelson

Hi Roland,

You accomplished the impossible – you brought a smile to my face with your opening statement about Butch crashing in! How true. He was a force of nature. He knew what he wanted and kept charging. Before Butch and I first met, I would walk my dog in the late evening, and I usually walked in the street (very quiet, small neighborhood). One “dark and stormy night” I felt like I was being followed. I looked over my shoulder, and there was Butch shadowing me in the police car. I stopped and went to the car and asked why he was driving so slowly behind me. He said I should be careful walking late at night. Okay...

Then, early the next morning (5:30 am), I received a call. It was Butch saying he would like to talk to me that day. Sleepily, I said all right – at what time? He said how about now? I’m in your backyard sitting on your deck.

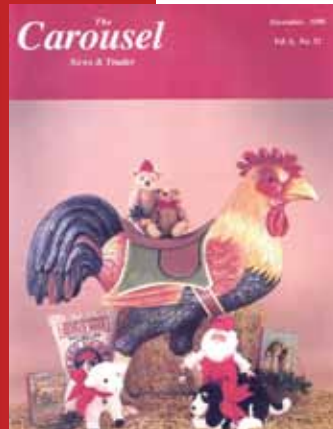
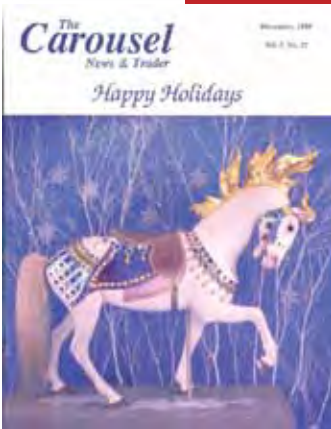
Oh, wow! Just typing that out seems scary! But, he really was a kind soul encased in an ever-vigilant pursuit.

Now, on to Tony Orlando...

I did not have the pleasure of knowing Tony through the years. That seems strange, seeing that we shared similar interests in carousel animals, although his was in restoration and I cannot paint. However, after Butch passed in Florida, Sally Craig (whom I haven’t seen in a couple of years) called. I didn’t realize that she had a home not far from me. She said that Tony was coming down for a visit and maybe we could get together. Coincidence? I think not. She and Tony were sent from heaven.

Being alone in Florida, I needed someone to talk to, and I needed a distraction. We spent many days together. They had me in tow in their travels – a dinner at Sweet Tomato’s followed by a dancers-from-Bali performance where Tony and I hashed over their costumes; a fashion photography gala at the Ringling Museum where we analyzed the exhibits and consumed the refreshments (stuffed my purse with the disposable, unusual-shaped plastic dessert cups because Tony wanted to “make” something with them); and a day at the Big Cat Habitat where trick, tightrope-walking housecats – yes, housecats – mesmerized the audience. We giggled like a couple school kids.

The day before Tony left Florida, he and I had lunch at Marina Jack which overlooks Sarasota Bay. It was a typical Florida day – sun, slight wind, and more sun. He was sad to be leaving – he had even picked out a house he would like to have. He seemed very disheartened and longed for a change. However, the prospect of selling his Michigan home was too much to undertake. He had lived there all his life with his dad and mom. After his dad’s death, Tony cared for his mother, who passed away a couple of years ago.



Tony’s first cover in 1987 was the Burrows’ zebra. Original colors were just black and white back then.

The September 2002 cover featured Tony's restoration of this very old Muller prancer.

A lifetime of collecting not only items, but memories, was a roadblock. He reminisced about his past; about his career in restoration work, about how he turned the garage space into a restoration area which also doubled as a photography studio for his famed December CN&T covers; about his work at a local theatre group, about his interest in Punch and Judy puppets and memorabilia, about the growth of his business through the years, and, most importantly, about the countless friends he made along life's way and how he saved every letter sent to him. And all of the above, revolved around the recurring theme of carousel animals.

I will cherish the few 'moments in time' we spent together sharing that short path. Tony and I talked about getting together next winter for more escapades. Little did we know that our carousel ride together had come full circle to an abrupt halt.

So, Roland, as you can see, I had only a brief glimpse of the complex man. There are others who may provide you with more details for your tribute.

Sincerely,
Barb

I think you got to know him pretty well in a very short time.

Cultural Carousel Benefit for Illinois Seniors

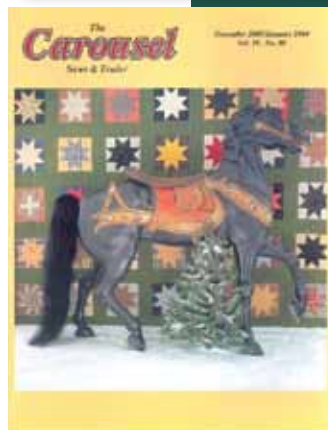
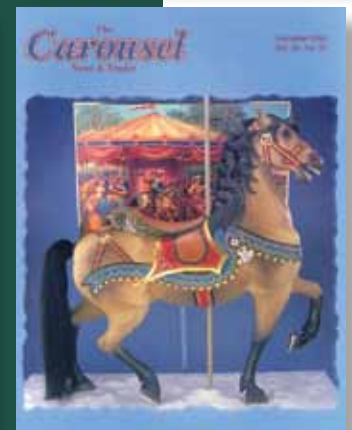
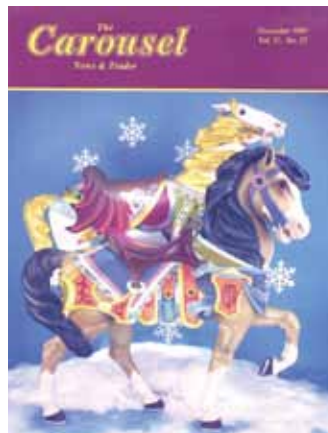


Photo Courtesy of North Shore Senior Centers

Barb Nelson (right) with the hippocampus she donated to The North Shore Senior Centers of Illinois.

The North Shore Senior Centers in Illinois recently auctioned off a wooden carousel horse to raise funds for the Center's Social Services and the House of Welcome.

The figure was donated by collector Barb Nelson of Winnetka. The carving was actually of a hippocampus, a mythical mermaid horse, with a shell-shaped saddle and a fin in the rear. The figure was auctioned at the organization's Cultural Carousel Benefit held in September.



The Continuing Chronicle of Gerry Holzman – A Well-Weathered, and Sometimes Wayward, Woodcarver



“A Favor for A Favor”

By Gerry Holzman

Courtesy of his new
Carving Blog at:

www.soundsofcarving.com



Although I did occasionally run afoul of the law in my pre-carving days—I’ve received my share of traffic tickets and I was arrested at three in the morning for being drunk and disorderly while singing and carrying a park bench to my girl friend’s sorority house—I did not commit any truly dreadful crimes nor did I consort with criminals until I became a professional woodcarver.

As I prepare to enter the octogenarian ranks of white-haired and gray-bearded woodcarvers, my merciless conscience tells me that it’s time to ‘fess up and warn my fellow bildschnitzers about the hidden perils of our profession.

Where do I begin? It’s not easy. My crimes are many and my criminal associations are manifold. So, for no reason other than the fact that it is my most recent involvement in the criminal world, I present the story of a most unusual offer.

Picture

A while back, I received a phone call requesting information about a carousel horse. The caller was about to buy a very expensive antique horse and wanted reassurance before he made the purchase. “Would I provide an opinion before he bought it?” He had taken an elaborate set of photographs of the horse and would bring them over to my workshop if I would be willing to look at them. When I readily agreed to help out, he said he would stop by within the hour.

Shortly thereafter, a luxurious black SUV pulled up in front of my workshop. The driver, a well-built guy in his early thirties, was accompanied by an attractive woman, a young child and a black lab, all of whom he left behind in the car. He introduced himself—we’ll call him Joe—with a very firm handshake and thanked me for taking the time to help him out.

The pictures and the background information that he provided strongly suggested that the horse was a fake—one of those many

imports that flooded the carousel market in the 1980’s and 1990’s when values were skyrocketing. The \$25,000 price, had the horse been authentic, would have been fair and he seemed to have no worries about spending that much money. But as his visit indicated, he wanted to be sure he was not being cheated.



I told him that it was difficult to be absolutely certain from a picture but I felt it was not a genuine antique horse and, if it was offered to me, I definitely would not buy it.

Joe’s face took on a hard look. “It’s not the money so much, I do deals all the time. It’s the disrespect that pisses me off. This guy is supposed to be a friend and he’s trying to take me. But—that’s my problem, not yours. You saved me from being made a fool of and I really, really appreciate it.” With that, he vigorously shook my hand. “What do I owe you?”

“Nothing. I carve new horses and I restore old ones for a living. Carousel horses are beautiful works of art and I do all I can to prevent fakers from screwing around with them. I’m glad I could help you.”

Joe shook my hand again. “Hey, you did me a big favor. So I still owe you. Tell you what, you won’t take any money but maybe I can do something for you like you did something for me—another kinda payback.” Here his face took on that hard look again. “If someday, somebody bothers you, gives you a hard time, you know, that sort of thing, call me. I’ll take care of it.” He solemnly handed me a business card. “It’s the way the world works—a favor for a favor.”

He picked up his pictures, got back into his big SUV and drove out of my life.

But, I still have his business card.

If you enjoy my blog, please forward it to some friends.

And, if you don’t, just remember, Joe owes me a favor.

– See you next month, GH.

Visit www.soundsofcarving.com for Gerry’s further musings, or look for his next column here in *The CN&T* next month.

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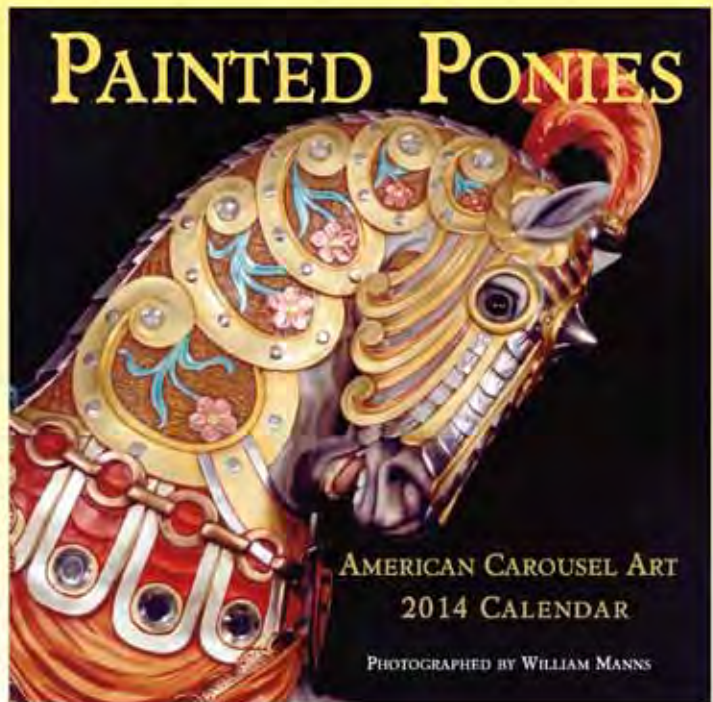
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