

The **Carousel**

News & Trader

April 2013
Vol. 29, No. 4
\$6.95

ANNUAL BUYER'S GUIDE

**SPECIAL FEATURE:
HISTORY OF PTC #44**





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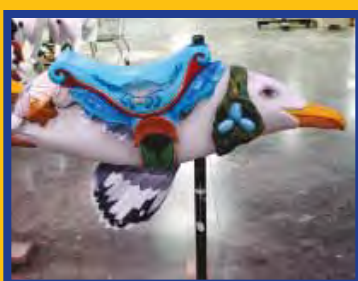
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The Carousel News & Trader

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ON THE COVER:



April, 2013
Vol. 29, No. 4

One of the distinctive and rare horses on PTC #44 is this 2nd row jumper with the early US flag and banners. The blue banner appears to be a variation of the Silver Star veterans banner honoring wounded soldiers. The Silver Star banner first appeared in 1917, the year the carousel was manufactured.

Richard Gardner photo

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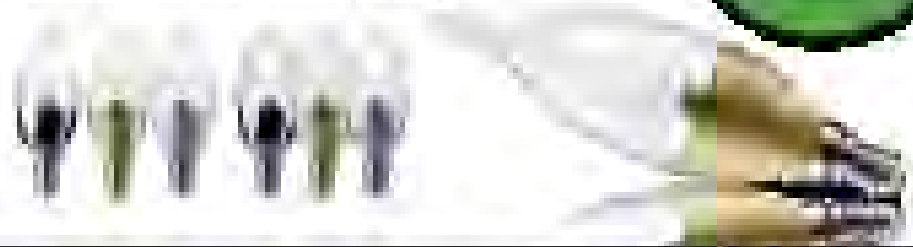


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From Dan's Desk

Message from the publisher,
Dan Horenberger

This is the 7th *Annual Buyer's Guide Issue* we have put out since we bought the magazine. It will be 8 years in June. As cliché as it sounds, "Where does the time go?" That's almost a decade since we bought the magazine from Walter. It sure doesn't seem that long, but then when you think about it. **Walter Loucks, Marianne Stevens, John Daniel, Dave Norton** and many other friends who were active as ever when we took over the *CN&T* are gone now. When you start to think about that it starts to feel more like a decade.

We have seen the end of big carousel figure auctions. There have been a couple of small ones here and there, and some nice carousel figures scattered in other auctions, but nothing remotely near the scale of the carousel figure auctions during the two decades before we took over the magazine. And in addition to not having any long auction laundry lists of prices to print, we are very pleased to not have to have reported any carousels being broken up.

It could have happened a couple of times. A few years



ago on a chilly December day, the Kiddieland Carousel, PTC #72 was auctioned off horse by horse, the old fashioned Norton way by Dave himself. But the tides had turned, and with so many great carousel figures already out there, and so few full carousels left intact, we have been lucky in our eight years to see the tide turn and now full carousels are again worth more than their parts.

We have lost a few carousels to storage, though at least still together. They might all be up and spinning full of happy children if the economy had not tanked three years ago... or was it four? Time sure does fly, and always faster it seems.

We've added a few hundred new readers in our eight years, and we've lost a few hundred old ones. That's just how it goes. The important thing is we are always adding new ones. If you add the over 6 million hits to our website, I think it's safe to say we have come out ahead in readers.

We will see a couple of carousels we have not seen in a long time soon as you can see on page 8 of this issue, the buildings to house the **B&B Carousel in Coney Island** and the **Euclid Beach PTC #19** Carousel in Cleveland, OH, are coming along. The last we heard, the B&B hopes to be running this fall, while PTC #19 is aiming for early 2014.

We are constantly working on placing our few remaining antique machines so all can ride and enjoy them again. Few will ever know just how close some of these deals come to being done, but we promise, our readers will be the first to know when they are done. We'll find homes for the few antique machines left eventually and hopefully soon. None of us are getting any younger, and with all due respect, we might not want to count on the next generation to get it done.

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IN MEMORIAM

Sue McMeans



Kate Murphy photo

Andy and Sue McMeans at Carousel West at Asilomar 2012.

"This was when they stopped by and spent that Saturday with us. What a great surprise that was. They have always been dear, selfless, gentle people. I'm really going to miss Sue... Love, Kate Murphy"

Shortly after the February Issue went out, I got a very sobering "Thank You" note from Andy McMeans.

Roland - Thank you for publishing Sue's article about our Kiddie Mangels-Illions Carousel. It came out looking really great, and we have received several phone calls from carousel friends who were very happy to see it in print.

Sadly, Sue is in her last days after a two-year struggle with cancer. She has been bed-ridden for the last month, and needs help to even sit up. When I saw the article, I described it to her and held the magazine up near her in bed. She opened her eyes and looked at it as best she could, then got a hint of a smile on her face. It was good to see her realize the completion of one of her lifetime dreams.

Thanks again, Andy McMeans

And just four days after Andy's first email, this was passed on to us, by Kate.

"Sue passed away this morning here at home after a two-year battle with cancer. We will all miss her in many ways."

- Andy

I didn't know Sue personally, but know many who did. Enough to know how much she will be missed. I think she had told me about her kiddie carousel when she called to renew her subscription. I told her it would be great if she did a story on it. So she did. But then the story got moved back from the Band Organ issue, then IAAPA and Marianne and NCA Convention, and I would get emails on occasion from Sue asking when I could run her story. She never once mentioned her illness. I had no idea that February would be the last issue she would see. I only wish I had known and got the story in earlier so she could see it better.

I have a number of stories from folks that did not fit into the Carver's Issue, or in this one. I will do my best to get all of the stories in soon. - Roland

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Buildings Near Completion for 2013 Grand Openings Coney Island's B&B Carousel and Cleveland's Euclid Beach Carousel



The above photos show the B&B Carousel building in Coney Island getting closer to completion. We have not heard of a proposed opening date, but we're pretty confident that John Caruso, who sent these pictures, will not let us miss it.

Shown right is the carousel building addition at the Western Reserve Historical Society Museum in Cleveland, OH. This will be the new home for the Euclid Beach PTC #19 carousel. A ribbon cutting for the building will be held April 25. The carousel should be open in early 2014.





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CAROUSEL NEWS BRIEFS

Bonhams Los Angeles Spring Art & Design Auction, April 21

Los Angeles, CA – Bonhams has announced its April 21, 2013 *Period Art & Design Auction* which will also feature a selection of carousel and circus memorabilia. Works of note from the sale include carved carousel animals, horses and other quadrupeds as well as French automatons dating from the turn of the last century. There will also be a variety of mechanical musical instruments in the sale.

Highlights from the April sale include a coin operated Mills Violano-Virtuoso, single violin model, circa 1915 (est. \$12,000-18,000); a Universal Piano Co. Nickelodeon, early 20th century (est. \$4,000-6,000); a carved and paint decorated carousel horse by Charles Carmel, Brooklyn, New York, early 20th century (est. \$5,000-7,000); a wizard magician automaton "Some Day my Prince will Come," 20th century (est. \$800-1,200) and a selection of carved and painted carousel horses by Charles Parker, Leavenworth, Kansas, (estimates range from \$1,200-3,000), among other figures.

The illustrated auction catalog is available online now at www.bonhams.com/20938. Previews: April 19-21, Los Angeles, Auction: April 21, 2013 at 10:00 am, Los Angeles.



Among the items going to auction on April 21 in Los Angeles, a coin operated Mills Violano-Virtuoso, circa 1915 (est. \$12,000-18,000); and a Charles Carmel stander, early 20th century (est. \$5,000-7,000).



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Safety And Preventive Maintenance Tips For Your Carousel Before You Start Spinning Again



John Shook inspecting the carousel at Tilden Park in CA.

By John Shook

Special to The Carousel News & Trader

Now is the time to do some preventive maintenance on your carousel. Don't wait for an accident to happen or an inspector to tell you what you need to do. Here are just a few things you need to check before you open up your carousel for the year.

MAINTENANCE:

Remove debris which mysteriously gathers under the carousel during the winter months.

Check the lighting for outages or broken glass or loose glass and sockets.

Make sure all **straps and belts** are in proper working order.

Give a good **pull on all buckles** to see if they hold.

Has there been any **wind damage** that needs repair?

Check tension rods and give them a good pull.

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- Check all ropes and cables which may have loosened.
- Check cable clamps. Grab clamp by the saddle and twist the journal across the cable. If movement occurs tighten clamp and then test until no movement occurs with a good twist. Remember, be careful not to Saddle a dead horse.
- Check the leading edge of the outside floor of the Carousel for anything that might catch a shoestring or snag on clothing.
- Is your E-stop working? Check E-stops, wireless remote E-stops, foot switches, power disconnects, operator present switches and ride stops.
- Are the foot switches, operators' consoles, drive motors and carousel grounded?
- Remove old or dirty grease that would contaminate equipment and apply new grease.
- Grease and oil all equipment before the first start-up.
- Check queue line for rough spots, nails, screws, gaps, trip hazards, fence supports, fence posts, gates and overhead objects.
- Check flooring, ramps and mismatched edges - over 3/4" need to be repaired or ground down.
- Enclose all wiring of 110 volt and up unless installed by the manufacturer.
- Check brakes. Brakes should stop carousel in two revolutions if adjusted correctly. (thumb rule).

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FOR EMERGENCIES:

Check and test emergency lighting in case of loss of power. Check batteries and charging systems.

Emergency power should last **30 minutes** or at least until a complicated evacuation can be accomplished.

Check emergency evacuation procedures and equipment for all types of emergencies, loss of power, fire, earthquake, sickness, accident, etc.

Make a list of **phone numbers of all emergency responders** and where they are located and the response times. If you don't know, ask them.

Train and keep a current list of **CPR rated employees**.

Check speed, RPM against manufacturer's recommendations.

Check wheelchair ramp and test home limit switch by pulling out ramp a little and trying to start.

Clean and adjust parabolic mirrors and mounting hardware.

Check all signage (height signage, exit, warnings, etc.) Make extra sure they are legible, secured and in the right place.

Check PA for clarity and volume control and check for loose speaker wiring, etc.

Test starting bell, lighting control and photo cells. When lights go off the work lights should come on automatically and visa versa.

Run carousel and **check for jerking** motion and listen for unusual sounds.

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DOCUMENTATION:

Have a log identifying any motor removed and replaced, by whom, and **verifying that grounds were bonded back to ground.**

Review and make ready all documentation for each emergency with witness statements and injury statements police and fire statements. **Train operators in the gathering of emergency information.**

Review all training and training manuals. Train operators and maintenance employees in procedures.

Don't forget to log or **document all repairs** and maintenance and performed by whom as you go along.

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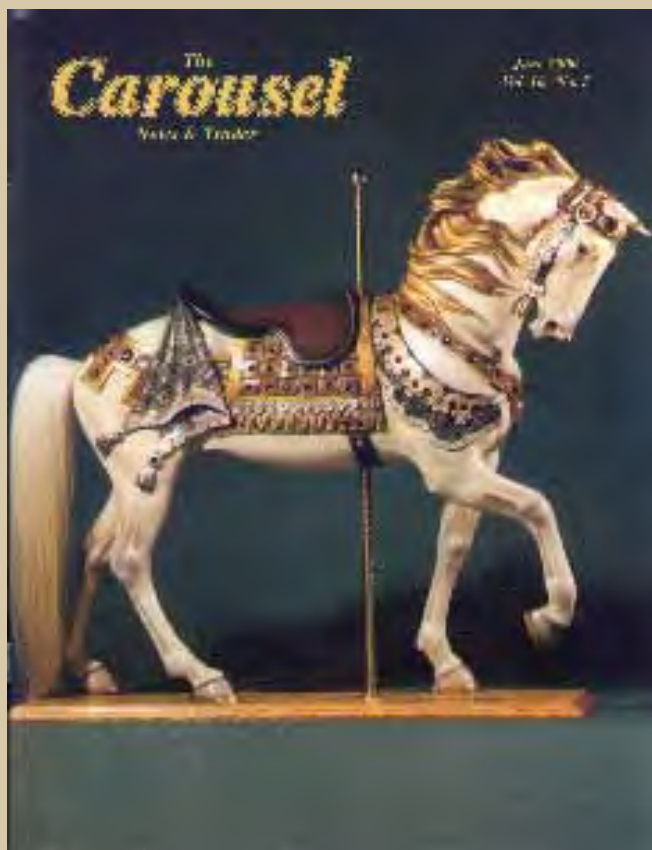
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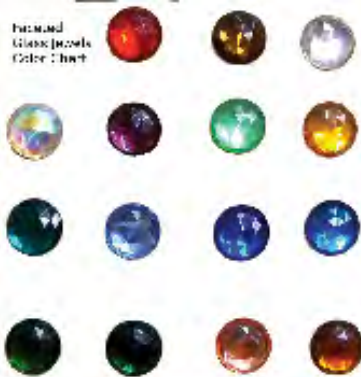
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Philadelphia Toboggan Co. PTC #44

A Masterpiece of Joy and Regret



PTC #44, circa 1927. John Guglielmetti is on the right side. The men shown at center and left are unknown.

By Richard Gardner

Special to The Carousel News & Trader

Like all Philadelphia Toboggan Company's classic carousels, PTC #44, the forty-fourth carousel built by the company, has provided joy and pleasure to hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of riders over its lifetime. From its earliest tenure at Riverside Park in Agawam, Massachusetts (now Six Flags New England), through the greatest part of its life at Roger Williams Park in Providence, Rhode Island, to its current home in Kings Dominion Park in Doswell, Virginia, the carousel has delighted its riders, engendered community pride, and instilled a pride of ownership for its owners and operators for nearly a century of operation. And as with many of these classic carousels, there has been a sense of loss and regret when circumstances forced a change of ownership.

PTC #44 is 4-row park carousel with a 56-foot diameter platform. It carries a contingent of 66 horses, including 16 outer-row standers and 50 inner-row jumpers. The carousel



This month's cover horse, shown in full on the carousel.
Richard Gardner photo

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Photo courtesy of Tom Rebbie and PTC Archives

PTC Factory Archive photo of the 44th carousel built by the Philadelphia Toboggan Co. in 1917. (Photo repeats larger in center).



#44

45 ft heavy single belt
 30 ft 2 inch canvas belt
 1 wood pulley 2" face 3" diam 1 7/16" bore
 1 " " " " 10" " 1 3/16" "
 1 " " " " 2" " 2 4" " 1 3/16" "
 2 1 3/16 12"
 2 Safety collar 1 3/16
 1 pc 1 3/16 shaft 3'0"
 Building Cost \$8167.30 Labor \$2280. lumber 38000
 Length of outside floor board 8' 10 3/16 on outside
 No. of horses 68

A copy of the PTC entry for #44 on an index card reveals details of the carousel build, including the manufacturing cost of "building" the carousel or that could be possibly be the cost of the carousel enclosure "building".

was built in 1917, was first sold by the Philadelphia Toboggan Company to Joseph Aroldi, and it was first installed at Riverside Park. A company record (letter from PTC Chief Engineer H. P. Schmeck dated March 21, 1934 to Insurance and Real Estate Agent Clarence A. Burt) indicates that the original sales price of the carousel was \$12,000 plus \$1,710.37 for the 87-key band organ, plus \$303.45 for the electric motor from the Robbins and Meyers Company in Springfield, Ohio. The original band organ was made by the Berni Organ Company, owned by Louis Berni, "The Band Organ King". The Berni band organ was later sold by John Guglielmetti back to Louis Berni and replaced with a used Artizan band organ.

According to the index card, (above right), PTC #44 was built with 68 horses, yet the carousel has been known to carry 66 horses most, if not all, its life.



A copy of the PTC entry for #44 on an index card (page 17) reveals some details of the carousel build, including, apparently, either the manufacturing cost of the carousel or the cost of the carousel building. A photo of the carousel (circa 1917) in its original configuration and all its original glory is shown on pages 24-25 in the magazine's center.

The carousel was originally sold with 68 horses, although the carousel carried only 66 horses throughout most, if not all, of its life. The identity and fate of the extra two horses is not known (more about this later).

Riverside Park, located on the western bank of the Connecticut River in Agawam, Massachusetts, just across the river from Springfield, had its beginnings as a picnic grove, and it evolved into a major summer attraction for thousands

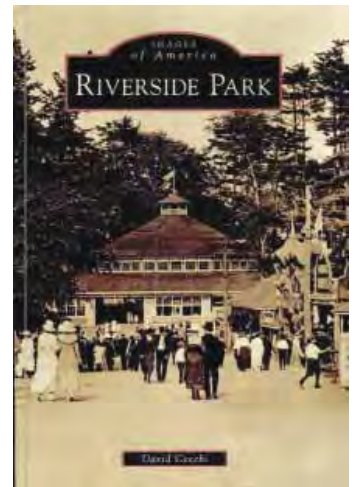
PTC #44 and the Carousel Pavilion at Riverside Park in Agawam, MA, circa 1927.

of New Englanders. The park is located only a mile or so from the Massachusetts-Connecticut border, and its location provided easy access to the park from most of central New England. A book on the history of Riverside Park by David Cecchi (1) provides a fascinating glimpse into the evolution of the park from its beginnings in the shadow of an early cotton mill as Gallup's Grove in 1870, to Riverside Grove in 1887, to Riverside Park in 1912, and to its rebranding as Six Flags New England in 2000.

The park's location on the bank of the Connecticut River was not a co-

incidence. The early developer of the Grove was John Gallup, who operated freighters on the Hudson River. According to Cecchi, Gallup launched the steamboats "Mayflower" and "Riv-

"Images of America, Riverside Park" by David Cecchi, right. The carousel pavilion dominates the cover of the book. It is available at www.arcadiapublishing.com and major retailers.



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Another of the beautiful horses on \$44 is this second-row jumper with the rampant royal lion medallion. The carving of the horse and lion are exquisitely done, marking Zalar as one of the masters of his craft. The lion horse is similar to another of Zalar's masterpieces on PTC #45, the second-row sphinx horse at Seattle's Woodland Park, shown below.

er Belle" in the 1870s to carry guests to the Grove.

Although the park was not a true trolley park (it was never owned by a railroad or trolley company, as were many amusement parks during the era), Agawam was served by a trolley line, starting about 1900 operated by the Springfield Railway Company. The trolley line carried hundreds of passengers on hot summer days as they headed to Riverside.

Riverside, like most amusement parks, expanded its offerings to attract as many customers as possible. New England Clambakes were a favorite early attraction, as was the man-made lake, "Lake Takadip". Bandstands, roller coasters, bumper cars, and the other standard fare at amusements parks made Riverside a favorite destination on summer nights and weekends. One attraction that drew thousands of spectators was the weekly stock car races.



The Zalar carved PTC #45 jumper referenced above.

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This stargazer outside-row Indian pony with pelt blanket is one of the more unusual and distinctive horses on the carousel. This is the same horse that appears on the cover of the book "A Horse for Matthew Allen" cited in this article.

As a teenager growing up in Massachusetts, the stock car races were a regular attraction for the author. Unfortunately, the adrenalin in the spectators often carried over to the roads outside the park, and racing sometimes continued in town and city streets. It wasn't mine, but I believe the record in getting home after the races from Agawam to Chicopee, about 10 miles away, was about 11 minutes, before Interstate 91 opened.

Riverside in 1906 had a merry-go round. Cecchi (pg. 16) shows a photo of the 1906 merry-go-round in his book, but the identity or manufacturer of the carousel is not known. It was not until 1917 that the park obtained the new carousel, #44, from the Philadelphia Toboggan Company. That carousel, owned by Joseph Aroldi and later by the Guglielmetti family, stayed at the park until 1936.

Not much is known regarding PTC #44 from 1917 to 1925, when the ownership of the carousel transferred from Aroldi to the Guglielmetti family. Oral history in the Guglielmetti family had always indicated that John Guglielmetti had purchased the carousel from Aroldi in 1925. The price John had recounted paying for the carousel was \$13,000.

The period from 1925 to 1929 was a good one for John Guglielmetti. He was operating the carousel at Riverside Park while the park was doing well and drawing large crowds. Even with the death of the person with a controlling interest in the park, Henry J. Perkins, in 1927, and a change in ownership at auction to Perkins' brother, Frank B. Perkins, the park continued to do well and expand with new attractions and features. Then came 1929, the stock market collapse, and the ensuing great depression. Financial difficulties hit the park hard throughout the 1930's. The park went into foreclosure in September, 1931 and re-organized in April, 1932. It operated only on Wednesday through Sunday for the 1932 season and only on three Mondays that year – Memorial Day, July Fourth, and Labor Day (1). The park's tax bill was protested in 1934 with the claim that the park had not operated since 1932 and that the park's infrastructure was in poor condition. The park sat idle in 1935



This magnificent cavalry horse by John Zalar is one of the few existing Zalar cavalry horses. Another is on PTC #47 at Hersheypark. Two of the outer row horses on #44, including the cavalry horse, have knotted tails, a relatively unusual feature. The knotted tails were more commonly seen on PTC carousels when the master carver was Leo Zoller in the period before Zalar's style became dominant at PTC.

while negotiations between the park and assessor's office continued. Changes in ownership were again in the wind and charges of larceny were leveled when would-be owners were accused of engaging workmen and not paying them and taking money from concessionaires. By 1936, the park was considered a "white elephant", with little hope of immediate recovery.

It was in these troubled times that the Guglielmetti family tried vainly to keep the carousel operating. John Guglielmetti told the author that although the park was not operating, he still had to maintain the carousel, making sure that it was in good operating condition, as well as keeping all the brass polished. Anyone who has had to polish the brass on these old carousels knows how much work this can be. By 1936, his position was no longer tenable and the family was forced to sell the carousel.



A detail of two of the inner-row ponies is shown above including the only other horse on the carousel with a closed mouth. Richard Gardner photos



Another outer-row Indian pony aboard PTC #44.

Richard Garnder photos

Giuseppe Guglielmetti (also known as George Williams), was active in the amusement industry at the time, and owned, in partnership with Joseph Michela, both of Haverhill, Massachusetts, a Murphy carousel that was operating at Roger Williams Park in Providence, RI. (2)

George Williams, son of Giuseppe was once quoted as saying regarding the older carousel "The original owner of the carousel was John Walker, who started the operation in 1897. My father tuned

John Guglielmetti and his family decided in 1936, despite the emotional attachment and the financial loss they would suffer, that the carousel had to be sold. John's uncle,



One of PTC #44's many active jumpers. Richard Gardner photo

organs and serviced the carousel's calliope. He got along great with Walker, who respected my father's work. Both shared a love for old carved horses. When Walker died, he left in his will that if the merry-go-round was sold, my father should have the first shot at it." (3) Rosemarie Michela Tomasso, daughter of Joseph Michela, also reported that, "her father and a partner bought the old Murphy carousel that John H. Walker had operated in the park since the late 1800s" and further indicated that, "the horses, dogs, lions, zebras, and chariots were heaped outside for anyone who wanted an ornament". (3,4)

John Guglielmetti and his family decided to sell the carousel to his uncle and Joseph Michela and they agreed on a price of \$3000. John recounted the story that when they had reached the conclusion that the carousel had to be sold, his mother told him that they should burn the carousel rather than giving it up for such a low price. This story is reminiscent of the story, true or not, about PTC #6 in Colorado when, faced with similar economic conditions, townspeople in Burlington, CO, angered about the purchase of the carousel from Elitch's Gardens in Denver for \$1200, suggested that they might at least get some benefit from the carousel by burning it as firewood. Fortunately, neither carousel was harmed, and both survive to please thousands more riders.

One aspect of the purchase of PTC #44 in 1925 that has always bothered the author, was that the carousel was reported to have been purchased for such a princely sum at the time, \$13,000, by John Guglielmetti, who was only 22 years. I always wondered how the young son of Italian immigrant parents came up with that amount of money, comparable at the time to roughly \$250,000 - \$300,000 in today's dollars. Recently, through the good offices of Ray-

mond A. Tomasso, husband of the late Rosemarie Michela Tomasso, I came to be in possession of a copy of the original sales contract for PTC #44, dated January 17, 1936 between the Gugliemetti family, the sellers, and Joseph Michela and George Williams, the buyers.

The sales contract describes the sellers as "Michael DeBonis, of Worcester, Worcester County Massachusetts, Mary Gugliemetti, wife of Battista Gugliemetti, deceased and John Gugliemetti, Theodore Gugliemetti, and Joseph Gugliemetti, all of said Worcester, sole heirs of the estate of said Battista Gugliemetti". Michael DeBonis was the husband of Mary Gugliemetti Debonis, daughter of Battista Gugliemetti. John, Theodore and Joseph were Battista's only surviving sons. Thus, it appears that Battista Gugliemetti, (The spelling of the family name with one "l" instead of two was apparently a convenience. The name was spelled "Gugliemetti" on both his birth and death records), had been the owner of the carousel after Joseph Aroldi, and the carousel passed to his heirs after his death in August, 1933. The carousel essentially passed to the eldest son, John, who maintained and operated the carousel, but legal ownership was in the hands of the family. This helps to explain at least one of the questions. John did not have to amass the full purchase price of the carousel since it appears that his father, Battista Gugliemetti, provided some, if not all, of the funds for the purchase.

The regret that the Gugliemetti family felt at losing the carousel never left them. The loss was particularly hard for

**Battista Gugliemetti,
circa 1925.**

John. Even when he had reached the ripe old age of 103+ years, he was still embarrassed to speak of the loss and was reluctant to have the story related.

The loss of a carousel to a family or a community is often accompanied by sadness and regret.

Some communities have come together to save a beloved machine, but often a change in ownership is accompanied by a loss to the community. At least one community, as in the case of PTC #67, tried vainly through legal means to keep "their" carousel in their community in Evansville, IN, only to have the carousel relocated to Carowinds Park in Charlotte, NC. Other communities have successfully kept a favorite carousel in their communities after the carousel had been sold, as in the cases of PTC carousels #80, and #85 in Holyoke, and Hull, Massachusetts, respectively. PTC #44 was not as lucky for its owners or communities. Riverside Park in Agawam was lucky enough to bring in a classic carousel by M.C Illions in 1940 to replace the PTC carousel it lost in 1936.



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1917 PTC #44

4-Rows, 66 horses. Currently at Kings Dominion, Doswell, VA

Photo courtesy of Tom Rebbie and the PTC Archives
Scan and Photoshop courtesy of Richard Gardner

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1900s Loeff Menagerie Carousel

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“PTC #44 - Masterpiece of Joy and Regret” continued...



A closer look at the feathered Indian pony “stargazers” shown on pages 21 and 22. Right is a full shot of the lead horse on PTC #44, also adorning the Buyer’s Guide cover this year with a detailed look at its helmet cantle. Richard Gardner photos

When PTC #44 was sold to George Williams and Joseph Michela in January, 1936, the sales agreement called for the carousel to be moved to Roger Williams Park in Providence no later than 30 days after the sale. The carousel was in fact moved to Roger Williams Park in the winter of 1936, along with all accessories from the carousel, including extra parts, motors, ticket booth, fences, railings, tools, etc. There was, as mentioned earlier, another carousel already at Roger Williams Park. That carousel was a Murphy carousel. The quickness of the transaction and move required that the Murphy carousel also had to be moved quickly from its location at the park. As a result, the Murphy carousel was abandoned and the horses left outside free for any takers. (2, 4)

The report of the Murphy carousel at Roger Williams Park is at odds with some reports in the press and internet literature (*Wikipedia*, for example) that suggest the carousel that had been at park before PTC #44 arrived in 1936 was a Loeff carousel. There was, in fact, a Loeff carousel at Roger Williams Park until 1910, but that carousel was removed and installed at Slater Park, Pawtucket, RI. According to Roland



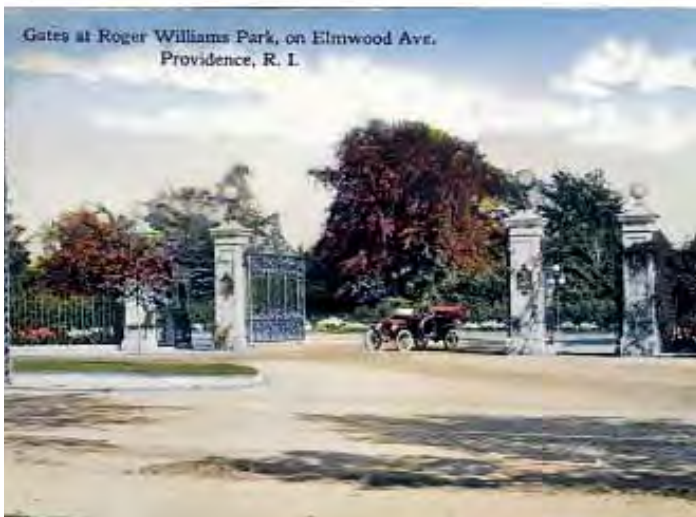
Hopkins (5) “... as some historians tell it, Thomas Walker, a middleman for Loeff, placed a machine in Roger Williams Park in Providence. Built in 1895, it was a very successful operation until Walker became unhappy with the city and moved this carousel to Slater Park in Pawtucket in 1910.” (The National Carousel Association carousel census, however, indicates that the Slater Park carousel operated at

Funland in upper state New York from 1895 to 1910. (6)). Statements by the owners of the carousels at Roger Williams Park, as mentioned earlier, indicate that it was not a Loeff carousel that was displaced in 1936 by PTC #44, but rather a Murphy carousel.

The stories about the abandonment of the Murphy carousel and removal of the Loeff carousel from Roger Williams Park due to problems with the city of Providence foreshadow later events in the city and at the park.

Roger Williams Park is a 427 acre city park that was developed on a tract of property willed to the city of Providence in 1871 by Betsy Williams, the last descendant and great-great-granddaughter of Roger Williams, one





Anna M. Mann Gates at Roger Williams Park.

of the founders of Rhode Island, after whom the park was named. The park land was originally a grant to Roger Williams from the Narragansett tribe. The park opened in the 1880s. It is an open city park with no admission fee and consists of amusements, seven lakes, historic bandstand, boat house, natural history museum, planetarium, Japanese garden, rose gardens, and a zoo. After years of decline, the park recently has undergone many restorations and modernization, bringing it back as a place of which the city can be proud.

Reproduction of the postcards on this page shows some early features of the park, including the Anna M. Mann Victorian style gates and a floral sculpture on one of the lawns. The gardens and sculptures were once planted and maintained by Italian immigrants in Providence, but the practice was discontinued due to the higher costs of maintenance compared to simply mowing the grass.

The men who purchased PTC #44 from the Guglielmetti family in 1936 were already part of the amusement industry. George Williams (also known as Giuseppe, or Joseph, or George Guglielmetti) and Joseph Michela were neighbors in Haverhill, Massachusetts and they, along with their wives Domenica Guglielmetti and Rosa Michela, had all migrated from Italy to the United States in the late 19th century. George and Joseph were already partners since about

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The old carousel pavilion, built around 1895, at Roger Williams Park, near the Dalrymple Boathouse.

1928 in the ownership of the Murphy carousel which was then at Roger Williams Park.

George and his sons were active in other aspects of park operations as well. The Williams family ran some of the concessions at Whalom Park in Lunenburg, Massachusetts. Son Silvio Williams, a Harvard University graduate, owned a drive-in theatre in Haverhill and he and his brothers owned the food concessions, penny arcade, and miniature golf course at Whalom Park, and sons George and Christopher Williams ran the boat ride concession at Roger Williams Park.

A personal letter from Seth Williams, a great grandson of George Williams-Guglielmetti, to the author, indicated that George originally made a living repairing organs, including the portable type of band-organ often referred to as a "herty-gerty". Early census records, which at times included people's professions, sometimes named the occupation of some of the immigrant Guglielmettis as "musicians", referring to their occasional trade as band organ players. Seth indicated that George's talents were so much in demand that at one time, movie mogul Leo B. Mayer had offered him a job in Hollywood, but George refused to make the move to California. Seth also recalled that family discussions often



Floral Sculpture at Roger Williams Park.



George and Domenica Williams (Gugliemetti) and their sons Barney, Johnny, George, Louie, Silvio, and Christopher, circa 1950.

referred to a carousel that George and Domenica Williams had owned at Whalom Park in Massachusetts. No details could be recalled about that carousel except that it was not



Joseph Michela, circa 1930.

the PTC carousel, and that some of the horses from the carousel had gone to the New England Carousel Museum in Bristol, Connecticut. The Whalom Park carousel was a Mangels machine with Loeff menagerie figures as well as horses.

Joseph Michela's brother, Sebastian Michela, another neighbor in Haverhill, also owned a PTC carousel, PTC #72, while it operated at Lakewood Park in Waterbury, CT, from 1929-1945. Sebastian sold PTC #72

back to PTC in 1945 for only \$5,000.

PTC #44 operated successfully at Roger Williams Park from 1936 to 1973, most of that time under the ownership of the Michela family. Problems may have arisen in the Williams/Michela partnership and George Williams sold his interest in the carousel to Joseph Michela for \$12,000 on January 4, 1944. On that sales contract, this time George was named as "George Williams, alias Giuseppe Guglielmo". The sale included "The Carrousel, and all buildings housing the same, and all accessories, machinery, and other appurtenances thereto", indicating that the carousel building at Roger Williams Park was also part of their holdings. Joseph Michela held title to the carousel until January, 1953 when he transferred title to his wife, Rosa Michela, his daughter Rosemarie Michela, and his son John Michela for the sum of \$10.00. The transfer included the lease permitting the operation of the carousel at Roger Williams Park.

Carousel Calendar

AUCTION

April 18, 1013 11 AM

St. Joseph, MI. Schoenbach Carousel Collection Auction. The collection of Al and his late wife, Dagne, includes a number of great horses. Among them is an armored S&G lead horse, a partially armored Muller, a roached mane Dentzel and some nice PTCs, Carmels and others. There will also be chariots, shields, rounding boards, panels and more collectibles at the public auction. To be held at the The Silver Beach Center, 333 Broad Street, St. Joseph, MI. Preview on April 17 from 3-6 pm. For more information visit www.belchermcpherson.com.

SPECIAL EVENTS

April 18-21, 2013

Puyallup, WA. The Annual Puyallup Spring Fair. Home to historic 1917 PTC #43 carousel and this is one of just two opportunities each year to ride it. At the Spring Fair, there is a classic auto show, a Truck Show, rides, exhibits and lots of food and fun for kids. For further information visit www.thefair.com/spring-fair.

June 7-9, 2013

Bickleton, WA. 103rd Annual Alder Creek Pioneer Picnic and Rodeo. Washington State's Oldest Rodeo will be held June 7-9, 2013 at the Cleveland Park. This is your one chance a year to ride their 1905 Herschell-Spillman. The steam powered track carousel came to Bickleton from Portland's Oaks Park in 1929. For more information visit www.aldercreekpioneerpicnicrodeo.weebly.com.

June 21-23, 2013

Asilomar, CA. Carousel West at Asilomar 2013 will be held the weekend of June 21-23. Please note that this is not Father's Day weekend. Deposits are being accepted now, so reserve your space. For reservations and information, contact: Jean Bennett at carouselwest@gmail.com.

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April 27-28, 2013

Holland, MI. COAA Spring Rally at Dutch Village. The first organ rally of the 2013 season, hosted by Jim and Donna Partrick. For information, www.dutchvillage.weebly.com, or email: jpartrick@juno.com.

May 25-27, 2013

Rossville, GA. Lake Winnie COAA Rally. Hosted by Ted Guillaum & Jonathan Bopp at Lake Winnepesaukee Amusement Park. For information, (706) 266-4061, Email: jbopp@berry.edu, or visit lakewinnie.weebly.com.

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Rosemarie Michela Tomasso as she touches up the paint on the lead horse on PTC #44. Circa 1950

Rosemarie and Rena, Joseph Michela's daughters, fell in love with the carousel at an early age. Rosemarie was only seven years old when her father and George Williams brought the carousel to Providence, and her younger sister, Rena, was only three years old. The operation of the carousel was a family affair, and while her parents, brother John, and sister Rosemarie worked the carousel and ticket booths, Rena often napped in the back of one of the carousel's chariots.

Rosemarie Michela, being the older daughter, was given more responsibility. Being from Haverhill, MA, she spent many weekends as a youngster at the carousel before her family moved to Providence permanently in 1944. When she was only ten or eleven years old, she was able to manage the cash box. One day her father handed her a paint brush and said "Here darling, paint." (4, 7). Painting and retouching the paint on the carousel's horses has always been one of the major tasks in maintaining a carousel, but Rosemarie had found her calling. Her life revolved around #44 as the carousel spun at Roger Williams Park for 37 years. She and her future husband, Raymond A. Tomasso, met at the carousel and spent the next 51 years together until she died in 2006.



Her sister, Rena Michela King, recently expressed the opinion that all the years of working with paints for the carousel may have contributed to her passing, since she was prone to feathering the tips of the paint brushes in her mouth (7). Rosemarie's passion for

Rena Michela King on PTC #44 Horse with a RI School of Design Student. Circa 1953



The photo left shows a side of one of the carousel's chariots. Both chariots on the carousel depict scenes with cherubs, a popular subject for many carousels of the era. Cherubs, along with classic turn-of-the-century paintings, are also part of the theme for the rounding boards (right).

the carousel and her pride as the official carousel artist resulted in an attraction at the park that provided joy to thousands of riders.

Even after an Alan Herschell carousel replaced #44, Roger Williams Park and carousel operations continued to be a big part of Rosemarie's life. She became known as "the merry-go-round lady". Her legacy is not just to her family, but to the countless youngsters whose lives were enriched by the sights and sounds of the carousel, and the joy of spinning around for a time on a masterpiece of American art.

The whole Michela and Tomasso families were a part of the amusement operations at the park. Ray Tomasso, aside from his work as an attorney and a councilman in the city of Providence, also owned the pony cart ride concession at the park. The sons of Rosemarie and Raymond Tomasso, Raymond and John, also worked at the carousel.

John Michela, son of Joseph and Rosa, was one of the carousel owners and managers until #44 left Providence, and was a partner in Family Leisure, the company that ran the carousel operations, until his death in 1977. John, and Raymond Tomasso Sr. were interviewed by a Providence Journal-Bulletin in 1973 (4) during the removal of the PTC carousel from Roger Williams Park. They indicated that one of the reasons for the sale was the difficulty in keeping the carousel running, given the high maintenance costs for the building due to vandalism and the constant repairs that were required. Mr. Tomasso pointed out that a quick check of the windows in the carousel buildings always showed broken panes. At one point there were as many as 38 windows needing repair. The ring machine on the carousel was no doubt a source of some of the projectiles that wound up going through the windows. The ring machine itself will finally find a new home soon. Mr. Tomasso indicated to me this past September that he is donating the ring machine from PTC #44 to Oakland Beach in Warwick, Rhode Island, where a new carousel is being planned.

The PTC carousel was not just a ride owned by the Michela and Tomasso's families, but it was part of the city's pride as well. A quick search of the internet turns up numerous references to the ride when it was in Providence. It was part of childhood memories too numerous to count. Circumstances, however, caused the city to lose sight of the treasure in its midst, and politics, passion, and some legal wrangling led to the loss of the carousel to the city.

Operation of the carousel at Roger Williams Park was not without its issues and problems. Roger Williams was an open park and as such was more prone to vandalism than



parks that charged admission and where gates could be locked during closing hours. Graffiti was a constant problem as was the constant danger from fires. Although there were three serious fires, the carousel was not damaged. The band organ did not fare as well, though not from a fire. It was destroyed by vandals in the 1940s. This was likely the Artizan organ that John Gugliemetti had received in trade for the Berni organ originally on the carousel.

From 1936 until 1972 the Michela and Tomasso families had been able to negotiate extendable 5 year leases with the city of Providence so that they could, with some certainty, continue to operate the carousel concession. Things changed around 1972, when the city decided that they would only grant a one month lease for the carousel operation. The reasons for the change are known for certain only by the city officials at the time. There was a suspicion that the city wanted to take over the carousel and by forcing the owners out of the lease, and by making the carousel non-operational, the price the city would have to pay for the carousel would be very low. Feeling that they were being forced out, the Tomasso's began looking for a buyer for the carousel. One of the inquiries about the carousel came from a company in Japan for use at a new park in Japan. Ray Tomasso responded to the inquiry with a stated price for the carousel. Months went by and there was no response from the Japanese company. In the meantime, the Tomasso's continued to look for a buyer and eventually negotiated a deal for the sale of the carousel to Taft Broadcasting of Cincinnati, Ohio, already the owner of Kings Island amusement park near Cincinnati and later to become the owner of Canada's Wonderland in Toronto and the Carowinds Park in Charlotte, NC. All four parks would eventually be homes to PTC carousels - #44 at Kings Dominion, # 67 at Carowinds, #79 at Kings Island, and #84 at Canada's Wonderland. The sales price for PTC #44, as reported in the *Providence Journal-Bulletin* and recalled by Mr. Tomasso, was \$172,000.

As luck would have it, soon after the deal with Taft was finalized, and six months after Mr. Tomasso's letter responding to the Japanese inquiry, he did receive a follow up response from the Japanese company indicating that they were interested in buying the carousel for the asking price that Mr. Tomasso had quoted, a price significantly higher than the eventual selling price to Taft. Apparently there was a personnel issue with the company in Japan, and the letter from Mr. Tomasso sat on someone's desk unopened for six months.

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BUYING • SELLING • CONSIGNMENTS

In the history of PTC carousels there has only been one PTC carousel that was sold to a company outside of North America. The Philadelphia Toboggan Company sold its carousel #30 to Charles Cozens Spencer of Sydney, Australia in 1913. PTC #30 operated at the White City Amusement Park in Sydney from 1913 to 1923, after which it was moved to Luna Park in Melbourne, where it still operates today.

Another PTC carousel, the portable PTC # 32, was reported to have been confiscated by the Rafael Trujillo regime after the carousel was brought to the Dominican Republic in the 1950s. Its whereabouts and fate is unknown, although it has likely long since been destroyed.

But for a communications snafu, it is possible that PTC #44 could have left the United States for Japan in 1973. That it did not is the good fortune of Kings Dominion Park and future generations of carousel riders here in America.

The loss of the carousel to Providence, however, was just as real as if the carousel had been shipped to another country. As soon as the carousel was gone, officials at the city expressed displeasure that the carousel had been sold, even to the point of accusing the operators of dismantling and packing up the carousel when the park was closed so as to escape notice from park officials, and that they did so without the permission of the city. This was false since a photo in the *Providence Journal-Bulletin* about the carousel being sold clearly showed the preparations for shipment taking place in broad daylight.



PTC #30 in Melbourne. Photo courtesy of the Semaphore Beach Carousel Facebook page where you can find great pictures and information on all of Australia's carousels.

Furthermore, records of the move at Kings Dominion Park indicated that the preparation for the move took place over a period of 7 days from Oct. 9 to Oct. 16, 1973 with the employment of a twenty two-man crew from Part Time Labor Inc of Providence, plus two security agents from All-state Detective Bureau, all under the supervision of Glenn Beavers, the purchasing agent for Kings Dominion. (8)

If the intent of the city by imposing a one month lease was to evict the carousel owners and take over the operation of the carousel, their machinations would seem to have backfired.

In place of #44, the Tomasso's brought in a three-row 1960 Alan Herschell carousel with metal horses and installed it in the same pavilion at Roger Williams Park, still operating the carousel with a one month lease. The Herschell carousel did not carry the same romance as the antique wooden PTC carousel and the city of Providence made it clear that they wanted another carousel of the same quality as the PTC carousel. Joseph R. Paolino, Jr., the mayor of Providence at the time, went so far as to pan the Herschell carousel, calling it no more than a carnival ride. The mayor appeared to have carousel envy when he regarded the fine antique Looff carousels at Slater Park and Crescent Park in Pawtucket and Riverside, Rhode Island respectively. (9)

Later, in 1988, Sharon Griffin of the *Providence Journal-Bulletin* reported that Mayor Paolino instructed the city's Park Commission to find out where the (PTC) carousel was and "Who knows," he said, "We might still own that carousel." (10)

Wishful thinking, I'm afraid, since the carousel had been legally sold to Taft Broadcasting for installation at Kings Dominion Park in Doswell, Virginia near Richmond.

It seems that the city had felt there was some chance that they had rightfully owned the PTC carousel and they had possibly been maneuvering to gain control. A dispute between the city and the Tomasso's again arose in 1989 when the city wanted to raze the old carousel building and erect a new carousel building for another classic carousel or a new "Victorian" carousel. The question of ownership of the old

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carousel pavilion came up, and the city insisted that the old pavilion be removed. The city was unhappy with the aging building and its state of repair (11) and gave the Tomassos 60 days to cease operations and remove the Herschell carousel, even though the Tomassos presented a 4,000-signature petition in an effort to save the building. (12)

So ended the tenure of the Tomasso's as keepers of the carousel tradition at Roger Williams Park. What was a long and profitable relationship that had brought pleasure to hundreds of thousands of people ended in bitterness and legal maneuvering.

In its quest to bring another quality carousel to Providence, the city tried unsuccessfully to acquire PTC #54; outbid by Fall River, Massachusetts. (10)

They also tried to obtain a classic carousel by bidding for a Dentzel machine, but that deal fell through as well. The Dentzel owners had refused a \$1 million dollar bid already for the carousel. The Providence Parks and Recreation Commission tried to get bids from potential carousel operators to purchase a classic or new Victorian-style carousel, erect a new carousel pavilion, and commit to a ten-year contract with possible 5-year extensions. Ownership of the building would transfer to the city after the 10-year lease period. Fares at the carousel were to be held at 75-cents per ride, the same as for the old ride. There were no bidders the first time the city went out for proposals. (13, 14)

The city finally obtained a new carousel from Chance Rides in Wichita, KS, for installation in the new carousel pavilion and Carousel Village at Roger Williams Park in 1990.

When PTC #44 left Providence there was regret on the part of the city in that they had lost a valuable resource that would possibly cost them nearly a million dollars to replace, and there was regret from the Michela's and Tomasso's that a cherished piece of art and a large part of their family history was gone.

While PTC #44 was operating at Roger Williams Park, in 1972, Virginia Kester Smiley wrote a short children's book entitled "A Horse for Matthew Allen" about a carousel that was being removed from a park, and some of the horses and fixtures were being discarded. (15)

The hero of the story, a young boy named Matthew, was able to save one of the horses from the scrap heap and retain a horse as his own. Interestingly, the story was illustrated with some of the horses and fixtures from PTC #44. The object of Matthew Allen's fascination was a horse he called "Jet". Photos of the horse in the book showed it to be the second row Silver Star USA flag horse currently on the carousel, and on the cover of this month's issue. The cover of the book shows the stargazer Indian pony that is still on the carousel.

The book was written circa 1971-1972, at least a year before the carousel was dismantled and sold to Taft Broadcasting. So how did parts of the carousel wind up in a pile? The answer may be from a statement to the author recently from Ray Tomasso that when the carousel originally arrived at Roger Williams Park from Massachusetts, there were some extra pieces and that came with the carousel and that not everything fit into the carousel building at Roger Wil-

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The cover of “A Horse for Matthew Allen” by Virginia Kester Smiley.

Photo by
Bryan Hopkins



liams Park. This may also explain the fact that PTC originally sold 68 horses with the carousel while only 66 horses were mounted on the carousel. Tommaso recounted that, to his memory, the carousel

was sold to Taft Broadcasting with only 66 horses. Records at Kings Dominion Park however, suggest that the carousel came with 68 horses.

Although the carousel came to Kings Dominion in working order, including the original Auchy friction drive, the horses were in need of thorough restoration. Park employees first stripped years of paint from the horses and found that many of the horses were being held together by as many as 16-20 layers of paint. The first job was to stabilize the integrity of the horses with new dowels and glue, followed by the typical restorer’s art, including sanding, painting, etc. The result was a masterpiece that would make the original PTC artists and Rosemarie Michela proud.

PTC #44 arrived at Kings Dominion Park in December, 1973 and work on the carousel began immediately in preparation for the park’s opening in 1975. Work continued for fourteen months to restore and prepare the carousel for its new debut. The total cost to bring the carousel to Kings Dominion, including the restoration, was \$483,667. (10)

PTC #44 is one of the masterpieces of carousel art. John Zalar, often called the Michelangelo of carousel carvers, is said to have carved the horses for the carousel and #44 is one of only a few carousels to carry mostly, if not exclusively, John Zalar horses. PTC #45 at the Woodside Park Zoo in Seattle, Washington, and #46 at Disney World in Buena Vista, Florida are others. Other PTC carousels also carry many Zalar horses, including #47 at Hersheypark in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Zalar’s distinctive style is evident here in his carvings – the expressive eyes, the flowing manes, the detailed flared nostrils, the aggressive open mouths, and the defined musculature are all characteristic of Zalar. In addition to enjoying a ride on the carousel, viewing the horses is akin to a museum visit to see the works of a master.

There are currently 66 horses on the carousel, as there had been at Riverside and Roger Williams Park. Articles by Dale Brumfield who had access to files at Kings Dominion, have indicated that two of the horses from the carousel were given away. One horse, suspected by Brumfield to be the



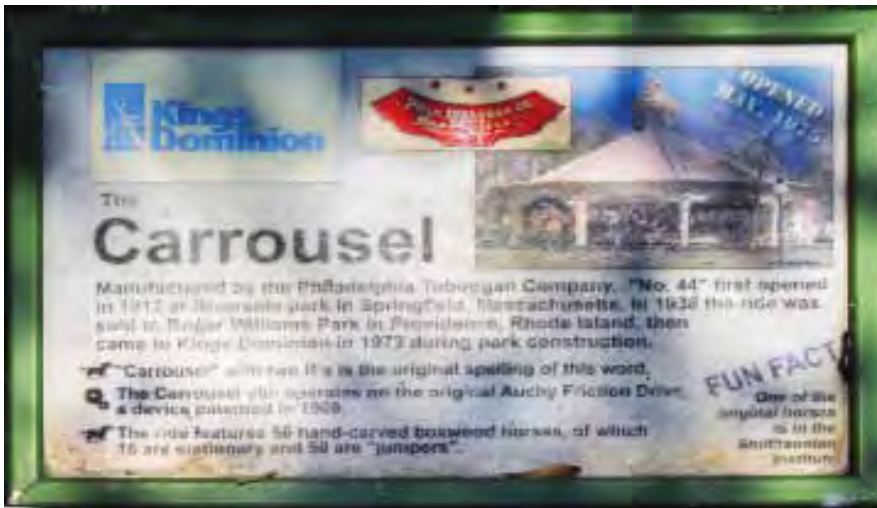
The photo shown right, taken by Bryan Hopkins, is from “A Horse for Matthew Allen”. It appears to show a PTC horse on a scrap heap along with other decorations from the carousel. The photo above left shows one of the rounding board figures on PTC #44 now in Virginia. The figure on the scrap heap partially shown at the top of the Hopkins photo appears to be the same as the rounding board figure on PTC #44. The story of Matthew Allen’s treasure came roughly 36 years after the Murphy carousel at Roger Williams Park was discarded in a similar way. The story almost seemed like an omen foretelling the loss of PTC #44 to Rhode Island.

lead horse of the carousel, was reportedly donated to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC. The other horse was given to Thomas L. “Lew” Hooper on his retirement. Mr. Hooper was an executive at the park and president of Kings Entertainment, the parent corporation of Kings Dominion, Kings Island, and Carowinds parks. Kings Entertainment (KECO) is the company formed by senior executives at Taft Broadcasting in 1984 that purchased the theme park division from Taft Broadcasting.

The author has spent hours of searching the records at the Smithsonian for any indication of a PTC horse in their collection. I have found no record suggesting that a carousel horse from PTC, let alone from PTC #44, is in their collection. A record was found for a Dentzel horse and references to three Muller figures, but nothing was found about a PTC horse. The matter bears further research to determine the truth about the donation of the PTC horse to the Smithsonian.

The Michela and Tommaso families were committed to keeping all the horses from the carousel together, and it was for that reason they decided to sell the carousel as a unit, rather than selling the horses individually. Selling the horses from a carousel individually has generally brought higher prices than selling a carousel as one entity. The prior owners accepted that they would get a lower price for the carousel in order to keep the carousel together. Recently, when I pointed out that there were possibly two horses from the carousel that had been given away, Mr. Tommaso was rather upset and indicated that his wife, Rosemarie, would have been extremely upset had she known the donations would happen. It remains to be seen however, if in fact, two horses were lost.

The carousel still carries 66 horses, the same number as was on the carousel in Providence. From where did the extra two horses come? Dale Brumfield indicated that the carousel came to Kings Dominion with 68 horses and that files at Kings Dominion indicated one of the horses had been



This is a sign currently near PTC #44 at Kings Dominion Park which indicates that one of the original horses from the carousel is now in the Smithsonian. As of this publishing, there is no sighting of a PTC #44 carousel horse at the Smithsonian Institute. Investigation is still underway.

regret. We can hope that the future joys will far outweigh the few doses of regret.

Richard Gardner is a carousel enthusiast, historian and author of "PTC Carousels: The History of Philadelphia Toboggan Company Carousels". See page 47 for more information on his book on the history of all of the 93 documented PTC carousels.

donated to the Smithsonian and one to Lew Hooper. (16) Were the two donated horses the original two extra ones that PTC shipped with the carousel? Were there any photos taken of the horses given to the Smithsonian and to Mr. Hooper? Is one of the horses the same one from the book "A Horse for Matthew Allen" that appeared to be in a scrap pile? These are questions I have not been able to answer.

The speculation that the horse given to the Smithsonian was the carousel's lead horse is incorrect. The lead horse on the carousel is the horse identified as "Torch" that carries a torch in its trappings and has the likeness of a lion carved on a medallion on its shoulder (See the cover of the Buyer's Guide listings in this issue and page 27 for a better look at "Torch". (This is also the horse that Rosemarie Tomasso is seen painting in the photo from 1950 on page 30). This same horse was shown on the cover of *The Carousel News & Trader* in their article on PTC #44 in February 1992.

A feature of this beautiful carousel is that all the horses are different and all are exquisitely crafted. From the majestic outside-row standers to the smaller inner-row jumpers, all show the detailed workmanship and artistry of a master carver. The restoration of the horses has been thorough and beautifully done. The paintings alone ask for a showing, as do the attractive and detailed rounding boards. A volume could be written about the carousel, showing each of the horses, the chariots, the paintings and carvings in detail. Such a work is beyond this article. Here we have tried to bring the history of the carousel up to date, to correct some of the stories about the carousel, and to tell a bit of the history that has not been shared before.

Carousel #44 from the Philadelphia Toboggan Company continues to bring joy to new generations of riders and carousel enthusiasts. The carousel provides a pallet to showcase the fine work of a great carver, John Zalar, and is a great example of the skill and artistry of the PTC Company. The fact that the Auchy friction drive still runs after nearly a century of operation is a great testament to PTC. Kings Dominion is aware of the carousel's history, its importance as a piece of unique American art and its place in the history of American carousels. The history of #44, as with most classic American carousels, has been one of both joy and

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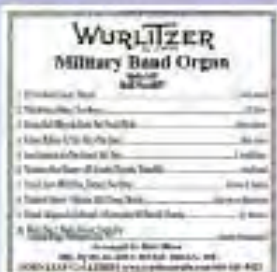
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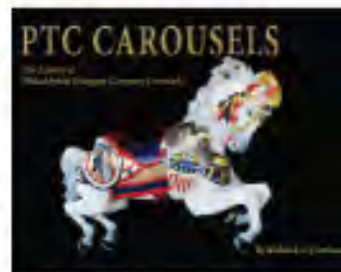
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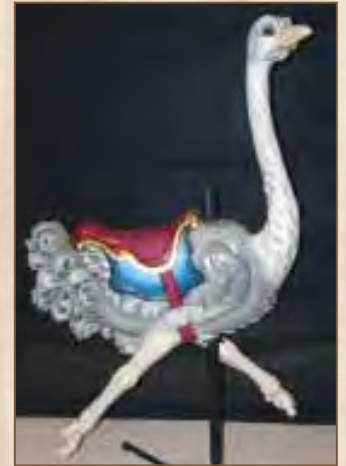
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Dentzel Ostrich



1924 Dentzel Ostrich. Lise Liepman paint. John Hughes restoration. The model for John's bronze ostrich. \$22,500

Dentzel Goat



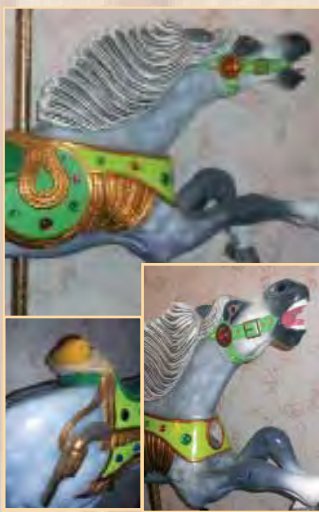
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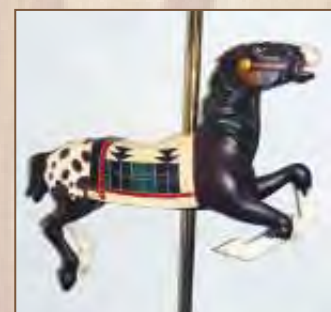
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