



The
Carousel

News & Trader

February 2009

Vol. 25, No. 2

\$5.95

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

1906 Loeff Spins Into Its Second Century in San Francisco

The Great Carousels of Philly's Willow Grove Amusement Park

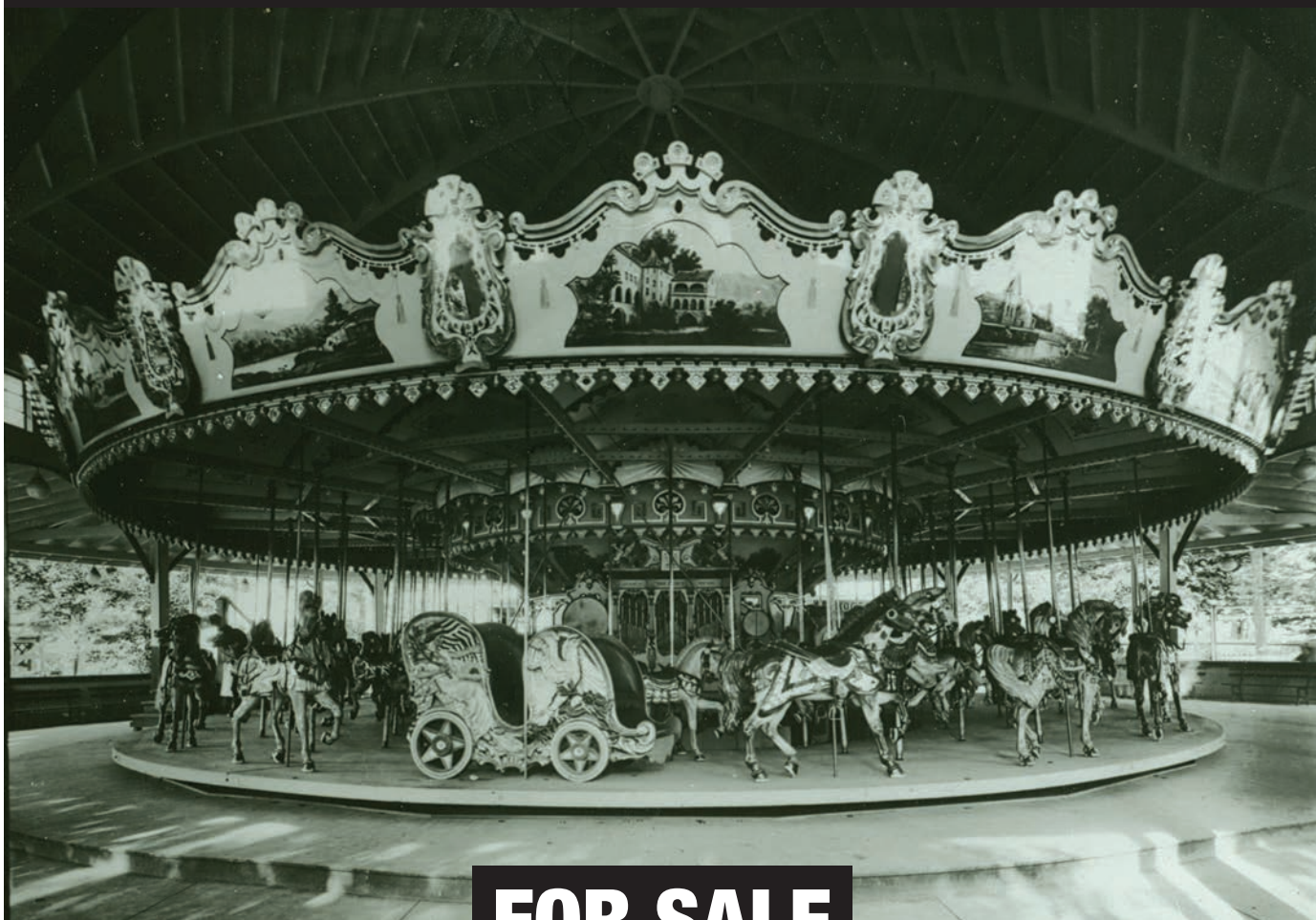
Historic Strates Shows Puts Rare PTC Portable #28 Up For Auction

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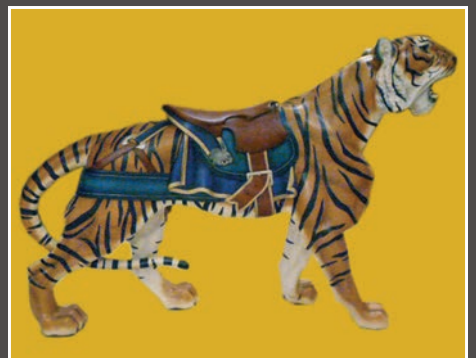
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ON THE COVER



February 2009
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Looff was said to have originally carved this carousel for Steeplechase Park in San Francisco, but when the earthquake destroyed the park it went to Seattle. It would find a home at Playland until the park closed in 1972.

Photo by Emily Bush

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From Dan's Desk

Message from the publisher,
Dan Horenberger

These are little bits of information that come across my desk. Some will become bigger stories in future issues of the CN&T, others are just passed-along information.



More than 1,000 people have signed a petition to keep the historic **Chavis Park** Allan Herschell Carousel in Raleigh, NC, in its original location, rather than move it closer to Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard inside a new building.

About 40 southeast Raleigh residents attended a city council hearing to present the petition and ask that Chavis Park be restored to the condition of its glory days decades ago, when it boasted a kiddie train, Olympic-size pool and replica of a Tuskegee Airman-style plane.

Lonnette Williams, who chairs the Central Citizens Advisory Council, asked for a new train, plane and a year-round aquatic center comparable to the one in Pullen Park, a few miles to the west.

Chavis Park was built by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930's and was the only park that African Americans could use in the then-segregated city of Raleigh, NC.

City Manager Russell Allen said the new carousel location is very far along and many dollars have been spent on its design. But, the council agreed to consider Chavis' issues in its Comprehensive Planning Committee.

Summit Township's planned sale of a \$152,000 debt it's owed by **Conneaut Lake Park** may end up forcing the amusement park to sell some of its assets — including land that could then be cleared for development.

"We're not happy about it," said Jack Moyers, chairman of the Trustees of Conneaut Lake Park, which currently owns the park.

"Press on (with work for the good of Conneaut Lake Park) is all we can do at this point," as the difficult situation continues to unfold. He was especially perplexed noting that plans were shaping up on important lease agreements in the 116-year-old amusement park.

Township supervisors are planning to sell a judgment that Summit has against Trustees of Conneaut Lake Park for unpaid amusement taxes from 1996 and 1997 when the park was owned by Property On the Lake, Inc. The judgment was awarded by Crawford County Court in 1998. A legal advertisement by Summit Township was published this week saying the township is seeking a buyer for the judgment.

Property On the Lake, Inc. deeded the amusement park over to Trustees of Conneaut Lake Park, a public trust, in

1998. Trustees also inherited the park's myriad financial problems with the transfer.

The park owes \$99,062.72 in back amusement taxes from 1996 and 1997 plus \$52,998.17 in interest as of Aug. 15, 2008 — for a total of \$152,060.90, with interest continuing to accrue at 6 percent per year.

Sad news of the passing of **Karl Bacon** who was 98 years old.

In 1946, Bacon and partner Ed Morgan opened the Arrow Development Co. in Mountain View, CA. The two were a tight team who started out doing some machine work and just about anything else that would bring cash through the door. Bacon was the math mind, a self-taught engineer who tended to figure out what needed to be made while Morgan concentrated on how to manufacture it.

Morgan got the idea that they could build a merry-go-round for the city of San Jose, which they did. Soon a man named Walt Disney was talking to them about coming up with some rides for a new park he was opening in Anaheim. They did that, too.

Mr. Toad's Wild Ride, Mad Tea Party, It's a Small World, Alice in Wonderland, Matterhorn Bobsleds, Pirates of the Caribbean, Haunted Mansion and more. The engineering feats pulled off by Bacon and Morgan were revolutionary. They were the first to design a tubular steel rollercoaster (the Matterhorn), which led to their corkscrew designs and ever more terrifying coasters. They invented the first high-speed flume ride. They devised the single-rail guidance system for car-based rides like Autopia.

Mr. Bacon was a true father of the modern amusement ride and will be missed by all.



The New York State Board for Historic Preservation recently recommended the addition of 25 properties and districts to the State and National Registers of Historic Places, including **Chautauqua County's Midway Park**.

Midway Park was established as a trolley park in 1894 but has transitioned into a "kiddieland" amusement park. What is now Midway State Park in Chautauqua County retains its original picnic grove and lakeside swimming facilities, along with 18 amusement park rides from the mid-20th century.

Property owners, municipalities and organizations from communities throughout the state sponsored the nominations.

"These nominations reflect the incredible diversity of architectural vision, craftsmanship, innovation and history that are present in buildings and landscapes across New York State," said Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Commissioner Carol Ash.

"Listing these landmarks will give them the recognition and support they deserve."

Listing these properties on the State and National Reg-

isters can assist their owners in revitalizing the structures. Listing will make them eligible for various public preservation programs and services, such as matching state grants and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits.

Southern Tier Hospice and Palliative Care is offering a pack of 12 "carousel cards" for sale. The cards, produced by artist Wilton Tiffit, depict images from the **Eldridge Park Carousel** in Elmira, NY. Each package contains 12 note cards, all with a different carousel image, along with envelopes. The cards are \$12.95 per set, which includes shipping and handling.

For more Information or to purchase the cards, contact the hospice offices at (607) 962-3100, or by e-mail at info@sthospice.org.

Kiwanis Kiddieland in Merced, CA, say the attraction is on schedule to reopen at the start of its regular season in April.

Kiddieland, a six-ride, not-for-profit children's amusement park located in Merced's Applegate Park, was shut down by state officials in August after they discovered the 51-year-old attraction had never undergone a required California safety inspection.

Before then, the state's Department of Industrial Relations, which inspects amusement parks, apparently didn't know Kiddieland existed. Safety officials discovered the park – and its failure to obtain a required operating permit – after another amusement park brought the matter to the state's attention.

Mike Wegley, the Kiwanis president, said Kiddieland is on track to reopen at the start of its regular season in April.

"We'll be back," Wegley said. "Just a little later than we had wanted."

Before it was shut down, Kiddieland operated weekends from April to October and regularly hosted children's birthday parties. The Kiwanis Club had hoped to reopen the park for the final month of last season, but it wasn't able to meet

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SAVE OUR WOODEN CAROUSELS

Notes from Marianne...

By Marianne Stevens

Carousel Historian, Co-Author of
"Painted Ponies"

Marianne is shown right at a dinner with founding members of the NCA in Sandwich, MA. (Fall 1973)



Greetings –
I hope that everyone had a Happy New Year!

I was saddened to hear that PTC #28, one of the last of the Philadelphia Toboggan Company portable carousels, will be coming up for auction in February.

Built in 1914, PTC records show that the carousel was originally sold to Frank Herd, then to Beckman Gerety, and then in 1946, to James Strates. And, although the PTC records show that the carousel was donated to the Circus World Museum in Baraboo, WI, that was actually a 1918 Herschell portable according to Strates.

Given the information from PTC, I was among those that thought the carousel was at Circus World awaiting restoration to operate at the museum someday, but that apparently is not the case.



1987 photo courtesy of Patrick Wentzel.

Instead, the carousel will emerge from its storage container in Florida to be auctioned by Norton on Feb. 12.

Let's hope that there is someone out there who will lovingly restore this precious piece of history and get it back to the beautiful piece of equipment it once was.

The horses have been fibreglassed, which won't make the restoration job easy, but it can be done. I haven't seen the merry-go-round in years. I came across James Strates Shows' carnival back in 1970. They were set up at a shopping center in Maryland and I stopped to photograph the carousel. The ride operated with Strates Shows for another 17 or 18 years when it was replaced with a new portable double-decker. The PTC has been in storage now for over 20 years.

With a little effort, this would be a perfect carousel for some small town. Please, let's not lose another treasure.

Dan's Desk Continued...

the requirements for a safety certificate in time.

Kiwanis officials have said that no one has ever been seriously injured at Kiddieland and that they believed the attraction was operating safely, even if it lacked the proper certificate. Club officials have said they've made several "common sense" safety upgrades over the years, as well as improvements imposed by the park's insurance carrier.

The **Adirondack Carousel** in Saranac Lake, NY, is downsizing this month due to the recent economic downturn. The Adirondack Carousel, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization working to build a hand-carved full-size carousel filled with wildlife native to the Adirondacks. A landmark for the community, the proposed year-round pavilion will provide new space for special events and workshops.

After assessing their economic situation and not meeting target Capital Campaign goals, the Adirondack Carousel Board of Directors decided that reducing expenses by eliminating paid staff and office space was their best option in these tough economic times.

According to Executive Director, Dylan Rodrigues, even though the Adirondack Carousel was recently awarded a grant for \$240,000 by New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYS OPRHP) to purchase carousel mechanics and pour the foundation for the Pavilion, the organization still needs almost a million dollars in financing to complete the project.

"When we started the \$1.5 million Capital Campaign in early 2007, the possibility of bringing this innovative attraction to Saranac Lake next summer seemed possible," said Ms. Rodrigues.

"But we know now that the economy has been in a down-spin since then and it has been much more difficult than we had anticipated to raise the funds."

As of mid-December, 2008 the carousel has received over \$300,000 in financing through commercial and private donations and has 13 carousel animals waiting to ride on the carousel when it becomes a reality.

"By downsizing our operations, we hope that the organization can weather the economic storm and we can eventually bring the Adirondack Carousel to Saranac Lake," added Ms. Rodrigues.

The Adirondack Carousel will still be accepting donations at P.O. Box 1059, Saranac Lake, NY 12983.

Congratulations to **Dollywood** for taking home four trophies from this year's International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) awards.

The park won its third consecutive Heartbeat Award for the theme park show with the greatest ability to reach the hearts of its audience. "Dreamland Drive-In" repeated the win in this category it first claimed in 2006, while the park's "Great American Country Show" won last year. The honors bring the park's total IAAPA wins to 11 over the past three years, more than any other theme park worldwide.

Letter to the Editor:

Dear Carousel News & Trader,

You have a nice article in your latest issue about the Watch Hill Carousel in Rhode Island. Many years ago I was contacted by a nice older lady asking if I could make an organ facade for them and I did. You show the organ in its original state on page 30 [Dec. 08] as it was delivered by me on my way to my wife's relatives in the Boston area. It was supplied with an very good 8-track sound system and many tapes.



[In the photo on page 34] it looks like someone changed the entire front and lowered the drum shelves and added a picture of trumpets and a picture on the lower panel. The drums were real and also the cymbal, but the case had no mechanism in it. It would

be good of you to give me credit for the original delivery of that case many years ago.

I wonder why someone would remove the decorative scroll and lower the drum shelves and do what has been done. It was a copy of a North Tonawanda band organ facade of which I have made many of them including a real one for a doctor close by. Granville Trimper ordered a real organ in a similar case from me many years ago and they added the wood trim. Another facade was made for the West Point Park, (now gone), and for a carnival in Massachusetts. I think Fred Fried was the one who told the older lady from Watch Hill that I could make a case for them.

Sincerely,
Bill Kromer, Jr.

Carousel Gumball Machines

A recent post on our website forum is requesting information on carousel gumball machines. Here is the post:

"I was wondering if anyone can tell me any history about the carousel gumball machines. When did they start making them & where ect. I have several and none of them are the same; some are very old with only metal parts. All information will be very helpful thanks."



Photo from www.antiquegumball.com

If anyone has any information they would like to share, they can do so at www.CarouselNews.com in the forum section under seeking information.

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SEASIDE AMUSEMENT PARK FLOAT IS THE FAN FAVORITE AT ROSE PARADE



The float entered by the Cal Poly universities won the Tournament of Roses first-ever Viewers Choice Award.

Carousels and amusement parks seem to be getting some pretty good press these days, which is a good thing.

This past summer we saw the nice piece on Jane's Carousel on *CBS Sunday Morning*, and through the summer and fall, I noticed a few television commercials using a good old-fashioned amusement park as their back-drop. Over the holidays, the Mercedes Benz commercial with a red two-seater in Santa's workshop also featured an antique carousel horse along side it.

To kick off the new year, a float entered by the Cal Poly universities has won the Tournament of Roses' first-ever Viewers' Choice Award.

"Seaside Amusement," which depicted a seaside amuse-

ment park and was said to have used the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk as its inspiration, received 3,219 of the 10,618 votes cast via KTLA's website on New Year's Day.

The float was entered by California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, CA, along with California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA.

Though I didn't make it to the parade, (yes, it is just down the street), I did get to see the floats on display the weekend after.

This was my first visit to view the floats and I was amazed. There must have been 50,000 people there. It was like a small amusement park unto itself, with a full array of concessions and all.



The rendering of the float, (above), and the finished float below.



Rose parade float committee students took a road trip to Santa Cruz to research the elements of the classic West Coast boardwalk.

"We created our own field trip to the Boardwalk and we learned a lot about how to design the float," said Jennifer Woo, spokeswoman for the Cal Poly-Pomona Rose Float Club. "We took a lot of notes on how things work, styles and colors that we wanted to use."



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NEW DEVELOPMENTS FOR ELDRIDGE PARK

(EDITOR'S NOTE: While so many other carousels and amusement parks scrape for every penny in this tough economy, Bob Lyon continues to do the impossible – raise money. Lyon and his tireless efforts are an inspiration.)

By Jennifer Kingsley

Reprinted courtesy of the Star-Gazette, (Dec. 24, 2008)

Dressed as Santa, Dr. Bob Lyon said today he was the “bearer of good news for the community” when he announced approximately \$92,000 in grants and donations recently secured for Eldridge Park and hinted at more to come.

The money – a \$25,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Elmira-Corning and the Finger Lakes Inc., a \$32,000 grant from the city of Elmira, and nearly \$35,000 from a couple in Corning who wish to remain anonymous – will fund projects already in the works at the Elmira park, said Lyon, an Elmira dentist and president of the Eldridge Park Carousel Preservation Society.

“In these tough economic times, this is good news for the community,” Lyon said at a news conference at the Christmas House on Maple Avenue in Elmira.

“Families can come to the park, listen to music in the summer and enjoy it for free.”

The projects include a Victorian-style barbecue pavilion, an ice cream shop in Building No. 1 that will also serve cotton candy and old-fashioned french fries with vinegar, and the completion of a building in Complex No. 1, Lyon said.

Five dragon-themed paddleboats will be added to the park’s attractions. They can be rented in half-hour incre-

ments and will launch from a floating dock affixed to the end of the boathouse, Lyon said.

The paddleboats already have names: Gaspara, Eragon, Saphira, Con Rit and Glaurung, he said. They will join the Eldridge Park dragon boat, Jasper II, which began offering rides in summer 2008.

“The city is in the midst of passing a resolution to allow paddleboats on the lake,” Lyon said.

The grants will provide enough money to build a Victorian pavilion, which will house a barbecue pit large enough to grill 500 chickens. The pavilion will be available for rental by businesses or wedding parties, Lyon said.

During Wednesday’s news conference, Christmas House owners Mark and Julie Delgrosso announced the winner of 20 holiday ornaments representing all the animals on the outer ring of the Eldridge Park Carousel.

Anyone who bought one of the ornament sets – there are five sets with four ornaments each – was entered in a drawing to win a complete set, Julie Delgrosso said.



Jennifer Kingsley / Star-Gazette Photo
Dr. Bob Lyon, an Elmira dentist and president of the Eldridge Park Carousel Preservation Society, talks about new projects set to begin at the park during a news conference at the Christmas House in Elmira.

2009 NCA TECHNICAL CONFERENCE

SAVE THE DATE!

2009 NCA Technical Conference

Friday, May 8 through Sunday, May 10, 2009

Sandusky, OH

Friday’s activities will include a tour of the three Cedar Point carousels: a 1912 Muller four-row, a 1921 Prior & Church Racing Derby and a 1921 three-row Dentzel. There will be plenty of photo opportunities and, hopefully, a chance for a ride. Also, on Friday will be a tour of the Lorain County Metroparks and a tour of the Sandusky Maritime Museum. Finally, there will be a special performance of The Farndale Avenue Housing Estate Townswomen’s Guild Dramatic Society’s Production of “MacBeth” at The Coach House Theatre. Saturday will be full of educational seminars and conclude with dinner at the Merry-Go-Round Museum, including behind-the-scenes tours. Look for more information in next month’s issue or visit www.nca-usa.org.



1921 Prior & Church Racing Derby at Cedar Point.

Carousel Calendar

AUCTIONS

Feb. 12, 2009, 11 AM

Orlando, FL. Surplus Rides and Parts from Strates Shows. Items include 1914 PTC #28 three-row carousel selling as a complete unit only. Numerous other rides include Chance Zipper, Chance Skydiver, Kid Power Steam, 3 Tower Skyride, Scooter Cars, Bumber Cars and much more. Contact Norton Auctioneers at (517) 279-9063 or visit www.nortonauctioneers.com.

April 11, 2009, 10 AM

Lawrenceburg, IN. Bob Kissel's *Carousel Horse, Animals, Antiques and Collector Items Auctions*. Over 50 carousel horses and animals. Gambling wheel, juke boxes, ferris wheel seats and much more. Consignments still accepted. At the Lawrenceburg, IN, Fairgrounds. For information, call Bob Kissel at (812) 839-3255.

May 13, 2009, 11 AM

Auburn, IN. Norton's Annual Consignment Auction held at the 480-acre Kruse Auction Park in Auburn, IN. Contact Norton Auctioneers at (517) 279-9063 or visit www.nortonauctioneers.com.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Feb. 21, 2009

Santa Cruz, CA. *28th Annual Clam Chowder Cook Off*. Talented chefs from throughout the west coast compete for the glory of the BEST CLAM CHOWDER! Admission is free; visitors may purchase tasting kits (\$8). Cooking starts at 10 a.m. Public tasting begins at 1:00 p.m. Winners announced at 3:30 p.m. For information or to get an entry form, contact the Chowder Committee at (831) 420-5273. Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. 400 Beach St., Santa Cruz, CA. (831) 423-5590. Web: www.beachboardwalk.com.

Feb. 27-Mar. 1, 2009

Kissimmee, FL. *Mid-Winter COAA Meeting*. View the Milhous Collection in Boca Raton and Bill and Cindy Hall's five restored organs. For information visit www.coaa.us, email rbopp1@tampabay.rr.com or call (918) 527-0589.

Ongoing

Sandusky, OH. *Merry-Go-Memories* at the Merry-Go-Round Museum.. New exhibit features horses from the Euclid Beach Grand Carousel, Philadelphia Toboggan Company #19. Open weekends only in January and February; 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Saturday; 12 p.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday. \$5 adult, \$4 senior (60 and over), \$3 children (ages 4-14). Children under the age of three are admitted to the museum free. A carousel ride is included with museum admission. Merry-Go-Round Museum, 301 Jackson St., Sandusky, OH 44870. (419) 626-6111. www.merrygoroundmuseum.org.

SEND US YOUR EVENTS!

Fax to (818) 332-7944

or email roland@carouselnews.com.



"Inspiration" carved by Larry Pefferly has been sponsored by Ron and Gail Bellohusen. A number of Eldridge Park Carousel figures are still available for sponsorship. for information, visit www.eldridgepark.us.



This postcard shows the original Eldridge Park Jasper. Courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Randall.

Judy Mastro-nardi, of Elmira, was picked from among 400 entrants, as the winner of the popular ornament collection. Each set of four ornaments sells for \$40, Julie Delgrosso said.

All of the proceeds benefit the carousel, she said.

Lyon expects most of the new projects to be up and running by Memorial Day weekend, he said, and hinted at more good news to come.

"We'll have an announcement in the spring that will blow everyone away," Lyon said. "People will really be smiling."



Jasper II launched last spring. Photo courtesy of Dick Castor.

JANUARY 2009 ISSUE CORRECTION:
The photos and text from Fred Fried's booklet on the Woodside Park Dentzel Carousel last month were graciously supplied by Barbara Williams.

LONG-LOST CAROUSELS

1916 PTC #38 AT DORNEY PARK



Photos from the Jerry Betts/CNT Archives



In 1932, Dorney Park purchased the 1916 Philadelphia Toboggan Company Carousel #38 from Shellpot Park in Wilmington, DE. The original building that housed that carousel was open-sided, then Dorney Park encased the house in glass. Within the first 30 minutes that the carousel operated in the new building, 28 windows were broken from brass rings. Dorney Park chose to remove the brass rings and arms from the ride due to the damage to the glass house. In October of 1983, this carousel was destroyed in a fire at the park.

The 1910 Carousel is One of Only a Few Mullers Remaining

Forest Park Carousel Seeking New Operator/Vendor to Rejuvenate Ride



The Forest Park Carousel first operated in a small park in Dracut, MA.

Photos by John Caruso

By Ben Hogwood

Reprinted courtesy of The Queens Chronicle

The carousel in Forest Park shuts down for the winter months. The city parks department is looking for a new vendor to operate the merry-go-round next year.

The carousel in Forest Park during the winter months is an unwelcoming site: fences block the entrance, dead leaves litter a cold hard ground and the 49 carved horses, lion, deer and two chariots sit hibernating behind blue and yellow corrugated metal gates.

But when it's time for the carousel to reopen in the spring, the Department of Parks and Recreation wants to have a new vendor in place to operate the ride, one that the city hopes can drum up some more customers for a historic

machine that too few know about.

New York has four carousels in its parks: Central Park in Manhattan, Prospect Park in Brooklyn, Flushing Meadows-Corona Park in Queens and Forest Park.

But despite being constructed by the Van Gogh of carousel carvers, the Forest Park ride is probably the least used of them all.

While the carousel sits at the corner of Woodhaven Boulevard and Myrtle Avenue, it is barely noticeable from the streets. Signage is poor: the only markers for the structure sit just outside the enclosure.

And while the parks department said it hasn't had any problems with the current vendor, others haven't been satisfied.

Maria Thompson of Woodhaven became attracted to the carousel almost 41 years ago, shortly after moving here



The beautiful carousel is a hidden gem in the city. Too hidden some say.

from the Bronx and taking her young daughter to the park.

"I never saw such happiness on children's faces," Thompson said. "The music, the horses, the whole atmosphere. It's like toyland."

She said the site's condition has deteriorated over recent years and the hours of operation have been inconsistent, something both she and the parks department hope changes next year.

The city wants the new operator to update the carousel and its surrounding area to a degree – put in some new picnic tables, fix up some of the horses and maybe add some new lighting – but its primary goal is to get someone who knows how to advertise the location and get people into the park.

The history of carousels at Forest Park is one of wax and wane. The ride that stands there now holds some of the last surviving creations of Daniel Muller, widely recognized as the greatest carver of carousel animals.

Muller emigrated from Germany in the 1880s and set up shop in Philadelphia in 1903. He worked with another manufacturer, the Dentzel Company, on the Forest Hills carousel, with William Dentzel constructing the frame and Muller, a classically trained sculptor, carving the animals.

However, a different Dentzel carousel operated at the park until it burnt down in 1966. Thompson said she believed it was destroyed by vandals.

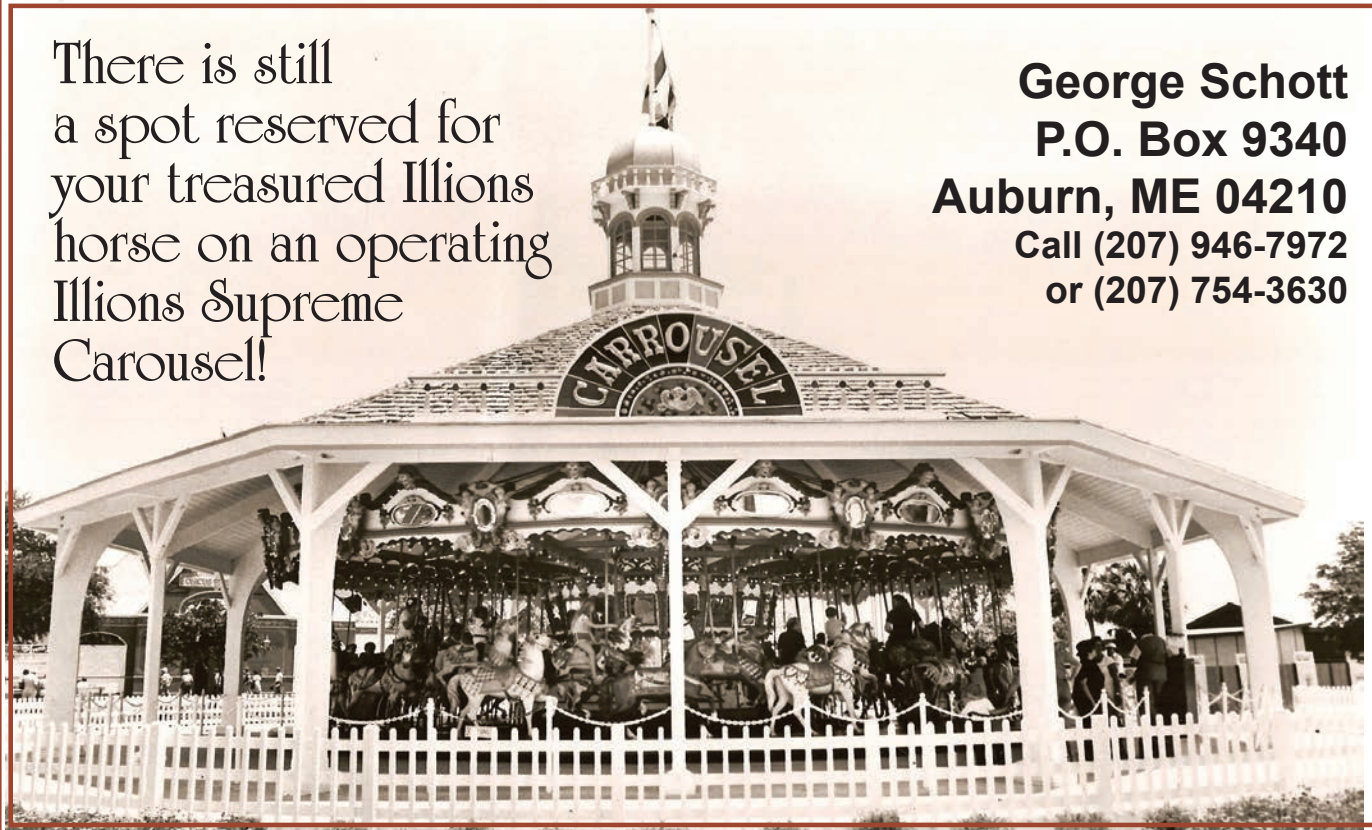
The area stood vacant until 1972, when the city located the Muller piece in the possession of a Connecticut architect, Victor Christ-Janer. "Why he had it we don't know," said Debby Kuha, a Forest Park administrator.

Nor did she know why he gave out some of the horses to his employees, but he was able to corral them in time for the sale.

The carousel was restored and operated until 1985, when its vendor let it fall into disrepair. Fortunately a group of dedicated carousel-lovers, led by the late Marvin Sylvor of Fabricon Designs, restored the ride to its former glory yet again, and after three years of work, it reopened in 1989.

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This Muller tiger is one of three menagerie figures on the ride along with a lion and a deer.

But the merry-go-round still wasn't out of the woods yet. It was about this time, said Thompson, that the city began to realize the value of the machine. New York was in a financial crunch and the city was looking for anything it could sell off to fill its coffers. It considered breaking down the ride and selling each carving individually.

Thompson formed a group with local politicians, including state Sen. Serphin Maltese (R-Glendale) and area council members that opposed moving the carousel.

After receiving the backing of then-Borough President Claire Shulman, the city relented and the ride has spun in the park during the summer season ever since.

The carousel was placed on the state and national registers of historic places in 2004, but Thompson wants to see it landmarked by the city – the only way to secure its future at the location.

She would also love to see it enclosed, to be used year-round. "It's a priceless jewel," she said. Kuha hopes that, with the new vendor, more people will realize the prized possession they have in their borough and pay it a visit. "If you're 3 or if you're 93, you still like a carousel," she said.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The RFP for the new vendor is out. If you would like a copy or know someone who might be interested in the operation, contact the New York City Dept. of Parks and Recreation at www.nycgovparks.org or you can email me directly at roland@carouselnews.com.)



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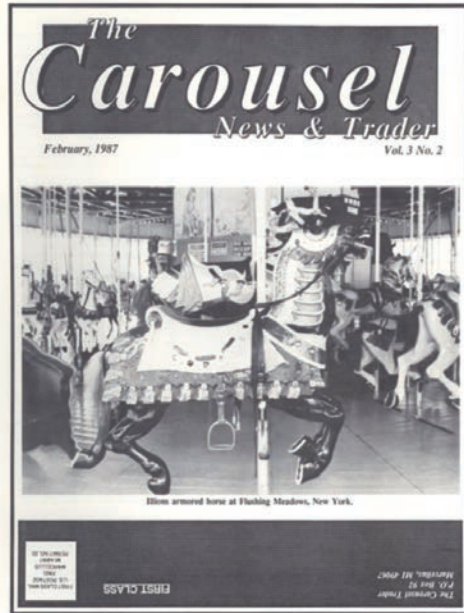
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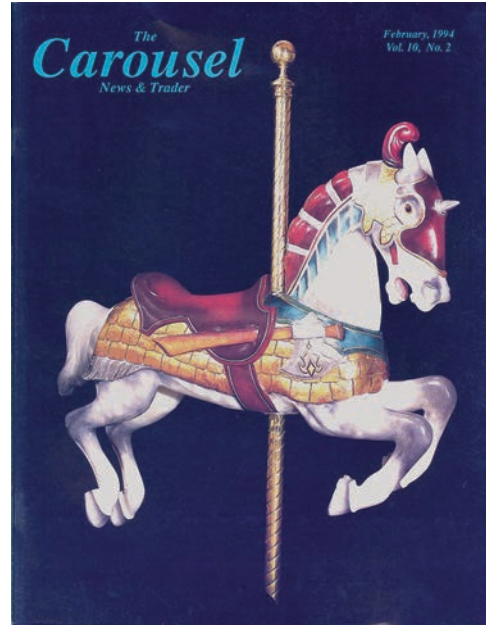
Carousel News & Trader Through The Years

22 YEARS AGO



COVER: Illions armored horse at Flushing Meadows
1895 Greyhound to be sold auction * 1914 PTC finds home in
Minneapolis • Carousel Christmas in Grand Rapids, MI
Powder Post beetle infestation in wooden carousel animals.

15 YEARS AGO



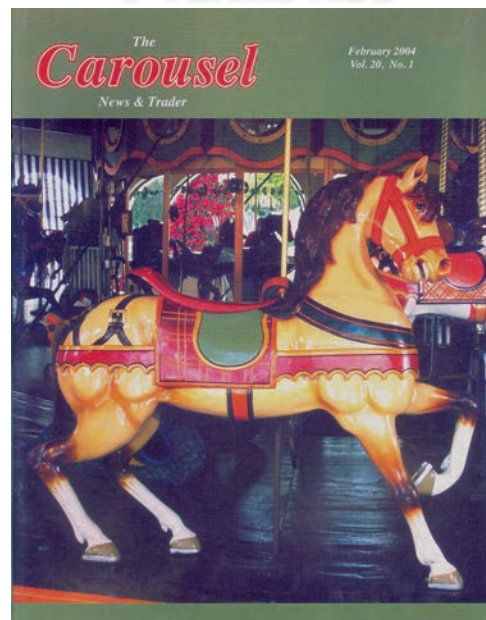
Restoration of Idora Park PTC #61 • Carousel Magic
building carousel for Israel. • Kromer's band organs
Bucktail Camping Restort in Tioga County, PA,
welcomes 1914 Allan Herschell.

9 YEARS AGO



2000 COVER: 1926 Illions Supreme stander from
Circus World • Penny Myers obituary • Europe's
Carousels and Amusements • NCA Convention
hosted by Herschel Carrousel Factory Museum;
COAA and the CMMA attend.

5 YEARS AGO



COVER: Loeff stander from Seaport Village , CA
Seaport Village carousel to be sold • Memorial City
Mall Carousel, Houston, TX • C.W. Parker Carousel,
Brenham, TX • Empire State Carousel Grand
Opening • Eldridge Park Carousel

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Loeff Menagerie Carousel Was Sent to Seattle After 1906 Earthquake

From Luna Park to Playland to Long Beach and Back to San Francisco



The historic Loeff Carousel is well protected as it spins into its second century.

Bill Faulkner photo, courtesy Zeum

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Marianne's story originally appeared in the Dec. 1998 issue of the CNT. Many of you know this story, others may not. Now that the carousel has now surpassed a decade at its new home in San Francisco and a century of thrilling riders young and old, it seems worthy of another look.)

By Marianne Stevens

Special to The Carousel News & Trader

Did you ever have to make a decision about doing something that could make many people happy but might make you sad? I faced that dilemma several years ago, in 1994.

I didn't want to sell my Loeff carousel from San Francisco's Playland. I liked it better than any of the machines that I had owned, and that included PTC, Illions, Dentzel and Herschell-Spillman. But the San Francisco Redevelopment Committee really wanted to bring the carousel back and put it in a new civic center they were building downtown called Yerba Buena Gardens. There it would win the hearts of millions, including the children and grandchildren of those who rode it in their youth at Whitney's Playland at the Beach.



The Carousel at Luna Park, Seattle, Circa 1907.

Photo courtesy of Washington Antique Carousel Society.



Marianne Stevens poses proudly with the armored row of her Loeff Carousel at Shoreline Village in Long Beach, CA during the 1997 ACS Convention. CNT Archive photo

Yerba Buena Gardens is the crowning achievement of a group of visionaries who dreamed of getting rid of the seedy hotels, flop houses and tattoo parlors that occupied the site between 3rd and 4th Streets and Howard and Folsom, and putting a wonderful, beautiful education and entertainment complex downtown for the people of San Francisco. Besides the well loved carousel, the complex would have an ice skating rink, a bowling alley, many gardens, museums and a high-tech area for children. You couldn't have a better location for a carousel.

But, I hesitated. I was getting a lot of pressure to sell from my oldest son, Larry. He probably saw it as a solution to future problems: "What to do with the carousels when Mom goes? Shoreline Village had closed. What to do with a large (50 foot, 53,000 pound) carousel?"

Long Beach made a high bid on it, but it was future money and it had to be raised. San Francisco was waiting in the wings; waiting for everything to calm down. Such a decision. I knew I could find another location, but would they take care of it any better than Shoreline Village had?

San Francisco had a prior claim on the carousel, too. It had operated there for 62 years. Perhaps that was where it should go. Yet when everything was auctioned off at Playland in 1972, no one stepped forward to "Save Our Carousel." No one, except me, and I have owned it for 25 years.

Maybe it was time to let go and send it back where it had such a loyal following. So I made the reluctant decision to part with it. October 17th was the culmination of that decision and I was there to share in the celebration. So were ACS members Sue Hegarty and Tom and Linda Allen.

There was the Mayor, the Honorable Willie Brown, a consummate politician if there ever was one, and many dignitar-



The Zeum Loeff includes lively rows of menagerie jumpers.

ies, and lots of speeches. But, there were two very special ladies there who had worked very hard on this project. Without their efforts, it might not have happened: Sue Bierman, Supervisor of the city and county of San Francisco, and Helen Sause of Yerba Buena Development. They probably had tears in their eyes, as I did, when the first ride started. I wondered if the grand old carousel could pull the weight with over 100 people on it, but it somehow managed.

As I looked over the ethnic faces of those waiting in line for a ride, I knew then that my decision had been the right one.



This imposing Loeff lion, along with the other current Zeum photos in this issue are courtesy of Emily Bush. You can visit www.carouselmultimedia.com to view and purchase her photos as museum prints or even coffee mugs and T-shirts.



When Luna Park in Seattle closed, the Loeff family found a home for their carousel in San Francisco. Photos by Emily Bush

The following article, (with slight revisions), is the release put out by Zeum when the carousel turned 100-years-old in 2006.

Zeum Celebrates 100th Anniversary of Loeff Carousel from Playland-at-the Beach

In 2006, as San Francisco commemorated the centennial of the 1906 earthquake and fire, Zeum celebrated the 100th anniversary of its historic carousel, which was spared from this disaster – and others later in its rich history – by the luck of timing. Today, the Zeum Carousel marks the entrance to Zeum at Yerba Buena Gardens and is a symbol of both the past and the future.

In celebration of the Zeum Carousel's 100th anniversary, Zeum launched "Stories-Go-Round" – a project to collect stories about the carousel throughout its rich history. Members of the public are invited to come to Zeum to share their carousel memories or to submit their stories online. The stories will be collected for a future exhibit at Zeum, and will be permanently preserved in the archives of the San Francisco Public Library's History Center.

The Zeum Carousel was hand-carved in 1906 by German immigrant and legendary craftsman Charles I.D. Loeff in his Rhode Island shop. According to Warren Crandall, great great nephew of Playland-at-the-Beach owners George and Leo Whitney, Loeff already operated an old-fashioned merry-go-round with stationary horses in San Francisco's Steeple Chase Park, not far from the Zeum Carousel's current SoMa location. After the mechanism that allowed for "jumping" horses was invented, they say Loeff began con-

struction on a new and improved carousel to replace the old one in San Francisco. However, before the new carousel could be installed, the great earthquake and fire destroyed much of the city, and the park, causing the carousel to be re-routed to Luna Park in Seattle, WA.

The carousel was once again spared from disaster in 1911 when Luna Park suffered a major fire. When the park closed in 1913, the Loeff family found the carousel a new home. It was installed in San Francisco's growing ocean-side amusement park as one of the park's crown jewels.



This lion has traveled a long way back to San Francisco.



The Loeff carousel was a beloved fixture at Playland for nearly sixty years until the park closed in 1972. Private collector Marianne Stevens again saved the carousel from a premature demise by purchasing the ride in its entirety, thus preventing it from being dismantled and auctioned off in pieces.

After a few years in storage, the carousel was moved to Long Beach, CA, where it continued to capture the hearts of riders for another fifteen years.

Finally, in 1998 the carousel was purchased and restored by The San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and installed in the newly developed Yerba Buena Gardens, not far from where Steeple Chase Park was located before the earthquake. Crandall marvels, "I'll bet it's the only carousel that took over 90 years to reach its originally intended destination."

When the carousel re-opened in Yerba Buena Gardens in 1998, Crandall came for a ride with his 5-year-old daughter and his grandmother, who had ridden the very same carousel at Playland-at-the-Beach in 1914. According to Crandall, his grandmother got tears in her eyes as she rode



The intricate and playful carvings extend to every figure on San Francisco's Loeff carousel.

the carousel from her youth, saying, "I just never thought I would see this carousel again." She passed away shortly thereafter.

Crandall and his family are not the only ones with personal stories and touching memories of the Zeum Carousel through the ages.

Sharon Holmlund recalls the story of how her parents first met on the carousel at Playland in 1941. Her father was a radio operator in the U.S. Navy, who narrowly escaped the attack on Pearl Harbor. During his first leave after the attack, he visited Playland with some fellow sailors where he became captivated with a redheaded young lady riding the carousel. After saving her from the unwanted attentions of a drunken sailor, Sharon's father spent the day sightseeing with the young nurse in training, thus beginning a long relationship that would culminate in over 50 years of marriage. Sharon visited the Zeum Carousel in its current location with her parents in 2000, who were thrilled to re-live their first moments of romance on the historic treasure.

"We are thrilled that the tradition of this San Francisco treasure will continue with new generations of visitors to Zeum and Yerba Buena Gardens," said native San Franciscan and Zeum CEO Adrienne Pon. "I can remember riding the carousel as a young girl and hope the Zeum Carousel continues to bring joy to all kids, big and small."

"Zeum is a community-based, multimedia arts and technology museum with a mission to foster creativity and innovation in young people of all ages and backgrounds. Through hands-on programs in animation, sound and video production, live performance and visual arts, Zeum delivers a powerful learning experience that stimulates critical thinking, creative exploration, and expression."

"The Zeum Carousel bridges the gap between past and future by reminding us how "new technology" delighted visitors 100 years ago, as Zeum continues to do for new generations of kids and families."

A rare “sneaky” tiger is shown here on the Loeff carousel at Luna Park. Distinguished by its head-down predatory position, it is one of just three such Loeff carvings known. “Sneaky the Tiger” on the Riverfront Loeff Carousel in Spokane, WA, is the only one remaining for the public to ride. Another is with a private collector. And, while she may have parted with her favorite carousel, this “sneaky” tiger stayed home, equally treasured and safe from daily rider abuse.

Tobin Fraley/CNT Archive photo



(This remaining information is courtesy of online resources.)

Luna Park History

From 1907-1913 Luna Park stood on the northern tip of West Seattle, an amusement park known as the “Coney Island of the West.”

Amusement attractions included the Figure Eight roller coaster, a merry-go-round, Chute-the-Chutes, the Water Slide, Cave of Mystery, and other fun park standards. The Canal of Venice, The Original Human Ostrich, The Joy Wheel, and Infant Electrobator were some of the others.

A less-desirable attraction for West Seattle residents was a well-stocked bar in Luna Park. Angered that the West Seattle city council would allow such a venue, West Seattle residents sought to be annexed. Despite the moralistic attitudes of the time, Luna Park survived even when the City of West Seattle did not. West Seattle was annexed by Seattle in 1907.

Moralism continued its upswell in the coming years, however, and Luna Park finally fell victim in 1913. The park was closed, and its attractions, except for the Natorium swimming pools, were torn down.

During extreme low tides you can still see the pilings that supported the large pier, but most of the year they lay hidden underneath the waters of Elliott Bay.

Playland History

San Francisco’s Playland, (also known as *Playland-at-the-Beach* and *Whitney’s Playland* beginning in 1928), was a 10-acre seaside amusement park located next to Ocean Beach at the western edge of



San Francisco, CA, along the Great Highway where Cabrillo and Balboa streets are now. The park began as a collection of amusement rides and concessions in the late 1800s, and was known as *Chutes At The Beach* as early as 1913. The park closed on Labor Day weekend in 1972.

Before Playland

The area that became Playland began as a 19th century squatter’s settlement known as “Mooneysville-by-the-Sea.” By 1884, a steam railroad was in place to bring people to the first amusement ride at the city’s ocean side – a “Gravity Railroad” roller coaster, and to the Ocean Beach Pavilion for concerts and dancing.

By 1890 there were trolley lines to Ocean Beach: the Ferries and Cliff House Railroad, the Park & Ocean Railroad and the Sutro Railroad that encouraged commercial amusement development as a trolley park. The Cliff House, which opened in 1863, and Sutro Baths, which opened in 1896, drew thousands of visitors.



A 1918 cliff side view of what would become “Playland at the Beach.” At the time of this photo it was probably still known as “Chutes at the Beach.”

A black and white photograph of a carousel. The carousel is partially visible, showing several ornate horse figures mounted on poles. The structure is supported by a complex network of wooden beams and metal rods. A large American flag is draped across the top of the structure. In the foreground, a white vertical post supports a rectangular sign with black text. The sign reads: "Jumping On Or Off THE MACHINE WHILE IN MOTION IS PROHIBITED". The carousel is situated under a large, open-sided wooden structure, possibly a pavilion or a covered walkway.

JUMPING ON OR OFF
THE MACHINE
WHILE IN MOTION IS
PROHIBITED



- CATCH THE -
GOLD RING
AND GET A **FREE RIDE**

**The Original Long Beach Looff Carousel
Built in 1911. Burned to the g round in 1943
Tobin Fraley/CNT Archives**



It is said that the first attraction appeared in 1884, a “Gravity Railroad” roller coaster. In the early 1900s the park was known as “Chutes at the Beach” and in 1928 became known as “Whitney’s Playland at the Beach.”

Shown left, a postcard from Playland circa 1938 shows the view from the Cliff House.

Photos courtesy of Barbara Williams.

The various rides and attractions that began to spring up along the beach were separately owned by various concessionaires. For example, John Friedle owned a shooting gallery and baseball-throwing concession. Some of the rides came from a San Francisco amusement park located on Fulton Street known as *The Chutes*, which burned in 1911. The rides that survived that fire were moved, including the Shoot-the-Chutes which inspired the first name for the amusement area, *Chutes at the Beach*.

Around 1913, Arthur Looff, leased a piece of land for a carousel and its house – the Looff Hippodrome, located next to John Friedle’s concessions. Friedle and Looff become partners in Looff’s Hippodrome and began to buy other concessions to realize their vision of creating “the grandest amusement park on the Pacific coast.” By 1921, they had ten rides, including the Shoot-the-Chutes.



This ticket book offers a 25 cent discount on 20 rides for 10 cents each. No refunds.



The mechanism during installation at Shoreline Village in Long Beach, CA, in 1983. Barbara Williams photo.

A writer for the San Francisco Chronicle in 1922 reported that, “By 1921, the owners had spent \$150,000 to produce 10 spectacular new rides [clean, safe, moral attractions] which were open from noon to midnight, everyday.” These new attractions included Arthur Looff’s “Bob Sled Dipper” roller coaster in 1921, (also known as “The Bobs”), and the Looff-designed Big Dipper roller coaster in 1922. These

new rides joined the Shoot-the-Chutes, the carousel, the Aero-plane Swing, the Whip, Dodg-Em, the Ship of Joy, the Ferris wheel, Noah’s Ark, and almost a hundred concessionaires.

Then, in 1923, George and Leo Whitney hit town. The Whitney brothers opened a photographic concession in 1923 pioneering a fast photo-finishing process that allowed people to take pictures home from the park rather than having to wait days for the film to be developed and images printed. By 1924 the Whitney brothers owned four shooting galleries and a souvenir shop in addition to the quick-photo studio.

In 1926, George Whitney became general manager of the growing complex of seaside attractions and changed the name to *Playland-at-the-Beach*, (also to be known as *Whitney’s At the Beach*). Although the attractions continued to be operated as independent concessionaires, during the late 1920s and ‘30s, especially during the Depression when concessions began to fail, George and Leo began to purchase the attractions outright.

Playland took up three city blocks and in 1934. The Midway had 14 rides, 25 concessions and a number of restaurants including *Topsy’s Roost*. The Whitneys bought the roller coaster in 1936 and the carousel in 1942.

Although Playland’s attractions originally sat upon leased land, the Whitneys eventually purchased the land beneath as well as several adjacent lots for future expansion.



Though many figures appear to be carved with just beauty in mind, more than one horse on the San Francisco Looff seems to be carved armed for his ride on the Barbary Coast.

In 1937, George Whitney, Sr. purchased the then-vacant Cliff House from the Sutro estate and reopened it as an “upscale roadhouse” that same year. George Whitney was called “The Barnum of the Golden Gate” as he went on to buy up the concessions and even bought the Sutro Baths in 1952. He bought out his brother in 1952 and continued to operate the area on his own until his death in 1958.

Despite this expansion, the post-war years saw the tearing down of the Shoot the Chutes in 1950, and the Big Dipper in 1955, and after George Whitney died in 1958, Playland was never quite the same. For a while after George Whitney’s death, Playland was operated by his son, George K. Whitney, Jr., and then by Bob Frazier. It was eventually sold to Jeremy Ets-Hokin in 1971 and it was torn down in September 4, 1972. Condominiums were built on the Playland property and a permanent art project commemorating Playland was installed in 1996.

The Playland Carousel

It is said that Arthur Looff commissioned the carousel in 1906 for a little amusement park that was originally on Market and Van Ness in San Francisco, CA, but because of the earthquake in 1906 the carousel was shipped to Luna Park in Seattle, WA.

After the failure of Luna Park, Arthur Looff leased land for the carousel and its house – the Looff Hippodrome – and carousel came to Playland in San Francisco. Looff’s Hippodrome at Chutes-at-the-Beach is said to be the first permanently installed concession at the park in 1914. The carousel was an elegant 68-horse merry-go-round with a \$5,000 organ, a staggering amount at that time.



My favorite horse. As with all of the carvings on this page, I get the sense he is smarter than the revolver by his side.

The Playland Fun House

Among the more popular concessions at Playland was the Fun House originally called the *Crazy House*, erected in 1923-24. Laffing Sal was the laughing automated character whose cackle echoed throughout the park. After Playland was closed, one of the original Sal’s was relocated to Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, and another Sal was located in the Musée Mécanique in San Francisco. The last remaining Walking Charley figure is located at Playland-Not-At-The-Beach.

Patrons at Playland entered by first passing through the mirror maze, next by squeezing through the spin-dryers and finally by stumbling across the slinky, kinky catwalk. The Fun House had air jets, rickety catwalks, steep and winding staircases, the topsy-turvy barrel and the three-story climb up to the top of “the longest, bumpiest indoor slide in the world” – and a 200-foot indoor slide.

The famous fun house mirror sequence at the end of Orson Welles’ *The Lady from Shanghai*, (1948), was filmed on a Hollywood set, but the last moments of the movie, the exterior shot of Welles walking past the Funhouse, was filmed at Playland at the Beach.



Another beautiful, yet subtly armed horse. Emily Bush photos



Playland's Topsy's Roost

In 1929, George Whitney opened a nearby "chicken shack" restaurant known as Topsy's Roost located just north of Playland at the foot of Sutro Heights. Driving south along the beach from the Cliff House, the first building you came to was Topsy's Roost, which became more than just a Chicken Dinner House – it was also a popular nightclub.

The club had a live orchestra and dance floor and was decorated so it looked like the patrons were sitting in ramshackle chicken coops. There was seating on the main floor around the dance floor as well as the balcony. Patrons sitting on the balcony level could slide from their "coops" down to the dance floor if they wanted to dance. Eventually Topsy's Roost closed and the space became Skateland and later, the Slotcar Raceway.

Playland Ice Cream

The *IT'S-IT* ice cream sandwich was invented in 1928 by George Whitney, and sold only at Playland-at-the-Beach. In fact, for forty years, Playland was the only place you could find *IT'S IT*. After the demolition of Playland in 1972 the ice cream treat was made and sold elsewhere and is now sold in stores in fifteen states.

After Playland

In addition to the Zeum carousel, you can reminisce and experience a little of the original Playland feeling at *Playland-Not-At-The-Beach* where arcade games meet Playland memorabilia, creating fun for all ages.

PLANNING A VISIT TO SAN FRANCISCO?

The **Zeum Carousel** is located in Yerba Buena Gardens, on the corner of Fourth and Howard Streets in downtown San Francisco, CA. The carousel is open daily and is also available for private events. For information, call (415) 820-3320, or visit www.yerbabuenagardens.com.



Playland-Not-at-the-Beach is located at 10979 San Pablo Avenue in El Cerrito, CA, and is open on weekends and some holidays. For information call (510) 592-3002 or visit www.playland-not-at-the-beach.org.

Other Historic Carousels in the Area Include:

Tilden Park in Berkeley; Golden Gate Park; San Francisco Zoo; and the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk.



“I want a soft green, not as blue-green as a robin’s egg, but not as yellow-green as daffodil buds”

On a Continual Journey to Identify And Match Original Carousel Colors



This old photo of a Dentzel carousel clearly shows the soft transitions on the original body colors and areas of metal leaf. I’ve found white necks and bellies on every major carousel manufacturer’s original paint jobs, even on dark figures such as the horse on the left. My guess is that this was done to eliminate a “hard line” when painting one side to the other. I’d also venture to guess the figure on the right is palomino, but could also be a soft gray. Photos courtesy of the Susan Germain collection

By Susan Germain

Special to The Carousel News & Trader

When thinking about matching colors, I’m reminded of a scene from the classic movie, “Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House.”

In this scene, Myrna Loy describes the colors she wants her rooms painted, “I want a soft green, not as blue-green as a robin’s egg, but not as yellow-green as daffodil buds. Now the dining room, I’d like a gay yellow. If you’ll send one of your men to the grocer for a pound of their best butter and match that exactly you can’t go wrong! This is the paper we’re going to use in the hall. There’s some little dots in the background, and it’s these dots I want you to match. Not the little greenish dot near the hollyhock, but the little bluish dot between the rosebud and the delphinium. Is that clear?”

“The kitchen is to be white. Not a cold, antiseptic hospital white. A little warmer, but still not to suggest any other color but white. For the powder room I want you to match this thread...as you can see, it’s practically an apple red, somewhere between a healthy winesap and an unripened Jonathan.”

The contractor: “You got that Charlie?”

Charlie the Painter: “Red, green, blue, yellow, white.”

The contractor: “Check.”

There is nothing more subjective and harder to explain than color. Some carousel painters are as particular as Mrs. Blandings, while some just paint “red, green, blue, yellow and white.”

This classic movie scene brings up the old argument of “restoration” vs “repainting”.



An early Looff on opening day. During this time period, the painter made his dapples as large gray stippled circles.

Photo from the Perron Collection

In the past, “park paint” has been tolerated by the historically minded carousel fan because we were just happy when carousels remained intact for public use. Today, with the wealth of information and experienced carousel restorers available, there is little excuse for any park, municipality or collector to settle for a substandard paint job. After all, the paint is the first thing that everyone sees.

I liken it to automobiles. Your eight year old Chevy needs a fresh coat of paint, so you take it to the local body shop to get the best modern finish. But would you take your vintage Bentley to the same shop? Will he even know the proper paints and colors for restoration painting? Carousels, like cars, are working artifacts, that if cared for properly, can last far beyond their intended life span. And, like cars, an unresearched paint job can lower its value as an antique.



This PTC is likely in original body paint and clearly shows the light and dark softly shaded base coats with smaller, more random thumb sized dots, either wiped off or painted on top. The trappings have obviously been painted over, not only indicated by the harsh colors, but also by the lack of symmetry.



A little Stein & Goldstein pony, sporting what appears to be nice old dapple body paint. For this S&G, the painter used a similar dappling technique, but smaller circles with more gray between them. Note that this is not claiming to be original or factory paint in any way just an example of “old paint” that someone obviously took time with.

I am very disappointed to see beautiful work my fellow restorers, (whom I highly admire), become obliterated by well meaning, but uninformed painters. I cannot believe we have not come further in our reverence for these artifacts nor for the artists dedicated to true preservation. Although modification of colors on each figure may seem subtle to some, I assure you, when viewing the carousel as a unit, these subtle changes are magnified and often ruin the overall look of the ride. (See the comparisons on the next pages as example).

Occasionally I am faced with the misconception that repainting may be quicker or cheaper than painting a “museum quality” restoration. It doesn’t take any more time, effort or money to paint figures using the correct colors than to paint them in random colors. For example, substituting metallic paint for real metal leaf dulls the whole sparkling visual effect of a carousel. Because metallic paint tarnishes, it requires frequent touch ups therefore saving no cost in the long run. But many hired to paint a carousel are unconcerned with longevity and simple leafing techniques are a mystery, so it’s not even offered.

When starting in restoration I quickly learned only certain pigments were available at the turn of the century. All the variations are blended from those twenty base colors. It’s not difficult, you just have to learn to work with the pigments’ different properties...as in the case of purple which was not available right out of the can. Cobalt blue makes a very different purple than Prussian blue and will make a huge difference when matching color.

Why use Japan Oils? Because Japan oil paints were commonly used by every major carousel manufacturer during the golden age. We are at a disadvantage in that there is no longer lead in the paints, requiring two or more coats



How many colors does it take to match this saddle for touching up? In the end, five. This is a clearer example than strip room charting, since it's only a repaint job for a ten year old restoration. This restoration clearly shows extreme fading from having only one thin layer of paint and getting full sunlight. Note the dull silver paint in the mis-matched stripe. You often find more "amateurish" carving on the off side, since this is where apprentices learned the craft.

to cover properly. And every coat gives you another chance at getting that color reproduced accurately. And good quality Japan Oils are a varnished based paint and every layer is an added protective coat to the wood. Oil paint is organic and "breathes" by expanding and contracting along with the wood and is less likely to crack or peel than synthetics.

When restoring a piece, having original colors is like having half the work done for you. Once you have gained experience and know your colors' properties, very little time is



No color has more possible combinations as green. You can see here it took me several tries before finding the correct tone & tint. For the peach blanket, I started off with the wrong red at first....once realizing the base was a bluer red, it was easy to match to the correct color. Even though this paint job only had one layer and saw 50,000 riders last year, the durability of Japan Oil Paints is undeniable!



Here is where I have mixed colors to determine the matching formula, bottom to top: Too yellow. Then add white, too chalky. Add sienna instead and get a very close match! The trim color has added umber and you're set to go! Once repainted, they'll receive my minimum requirement of 2 paint coats, smoothing the choppy brush strokes seen here.

spent on research or choosing what colors to paint where. I feel a sense of responsibility to record all the pieces I've seen in original paint because most likely we're the last generation of restorers to document these original color schemes. Ideally, it's preferable to preserve all original paint found, but in many cases only the smallest traces of the paint remains in obscure areas. And in too many other cases, original paint is disregarded and stripped away for expediency of the process.

When stripping and recording colors, sometimes only a quarter sized sample is found beneath several paint layers and wear. You learn quickly to "read" from areas that get the least wear; the side that faces into the center, under the saddle cantle, under the chin, in the pin striping grooves, etc. I have often found trappings with one color on one side of a figure and a wholly different color on the other side! Colors often overflow beyond the carved area and rarely have hard lines or mistakes.

I have however, discovered what appeared to be putrid color combinations – I've seen a lot of chartreuse on PTC's, chrome yellow & sugar pink on Carmels, hot pink trimmed with orange on Dentzel's. But as soon as those colors are painted back on the piece, you see exactly the look they were going for. But, some are kind of unusual and difficult to reproduce. And everything is up to interpretation, depending on the physical acuity of the viewer's eyes. Colors can often be distorted by yellowed chemicals, staining from overlapping layers, fading from sunlight, room lighting and the like. Previous documentation and knowledge can give that extra fighting chance for accuracy. When stripping a Dentzel and finding pink, I know exactly what shade of pink that is and just how to mix it from three base colors of Japan Oil paint.

Technique is important, as well. Old photos are a most



These paintings are all from Ontario Beach Park's Dentzel in Rochester NY. The "Germantown" and "Caution" canvasses were both restored by a qualified painting conservator using proper preservation techniques. The "5¢" panel appears to be either a newly stretched and painted canvas, (where did the valuable original go?), or simply painted over as a "re-paint". See how just one or two incorrect colors can impact the overall look of the carousel?

valuable research tool. Even though black and white, old photos can clearly show painting techniques, metallic leaf, shading and contrast. Technique of paint application is often determined by factory preference, and often by time period. Some painters and shop paint techniques changed over time, just like the carvings often do. It certainly doesn't cost any more to do it correctly. It just takes knowledge.

Once you've done several "touch ups" and matched colors, your eyes get educated on pigments and you have a better idea where to start. And once you've built up a library of color charts and photographs, it becomes even easier to discern colors and where they should go.

Remember too, that none of us have seen it all, with all our knowledge there's always an exception. In all my years restoring I've never once seen any figure in original paint sporting a blue saddle. (possibly a seaweed type saddle on a sea creature?) And if you have a picture of one, I'd love to see it and be proven wrong.

I've found all shades of brown from a peachy buff to chocolate, black, wine, oxblood red, even a mossy brown, but

never any shade of blue. Maybe a blue saddle looks good on a palomino horse, but until I see one in original paint, I'll stick to proven examples.

So how do you remember what you've seen several weeks later after the woodwork and primer are completed? Before any work begins, I find mixing the color directly on the surface and writing the formulas on a chart most helpful not only for me, but also for my apprentices and clients.

Once you start compiling books full of charts showing tints and color formulas, you'll find the same colors used over and over by each company. This even helps determine colors on rounding boards and other trim. At first it seems odd carousels were sometimes "color coordinated." But giving it some thought, it makes perfect sense that when "Joe" was using a great green, he'd paint the trappings of one, then the blanket on another and then use the remainder on another figure's trim. This way, the carousel would look somewhat unified instead of a jumble of bright colors. According to old photos, some carousel companies even coordinated the figures row by row!

When you get a single collector's piece already stripped to the wood, these charts can show your customer authentic color schemes and combinations to choose from. Although my favorite quote is, "I want you to use historically authentic colors, but it needs to match my couch." I inwardly chuckle thinking of Mrs. Blandings and her wallpaper. I encourage all my apprentices to keep logbooks of color formulas to use until they are memorized. I look forward to the day all



this information is available for younger generations whom have never seen original paint, to learn from. Maybe then, the days of blue saddles, silver paint and strangely painted horses will really be a thing of the past.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Yes, I did notice that this article by Sue just happens to coincide with the article on Marianne's Loeff. I spoke to both of them about it. Marianne just chuckled when I mentioned an article on original colors that had mention of blue saddles. Marianne is very happy with the playful bright colors chosen for the Loeff and as she says, "I don't claim them to be in original paint.")

And Susan, of course, means no disrespect to Marianne and/or the San Francisco Loeff.

Myself, I found it fun that these two articles landed together ... especially once I knew that everyone was okay with it.)

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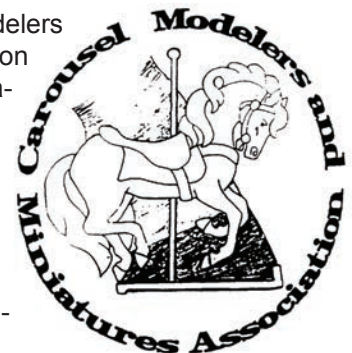
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Carousel Modelers and Miniature Association Reorganizes for 2009

The Carousel Modelers and Miniatures Association (CMMA) has been reorganized. The CMMA was founded in 1986 for the purpose of bringing together modelers, miniaturists and woodcarvers interested in building operating miniature carousels.



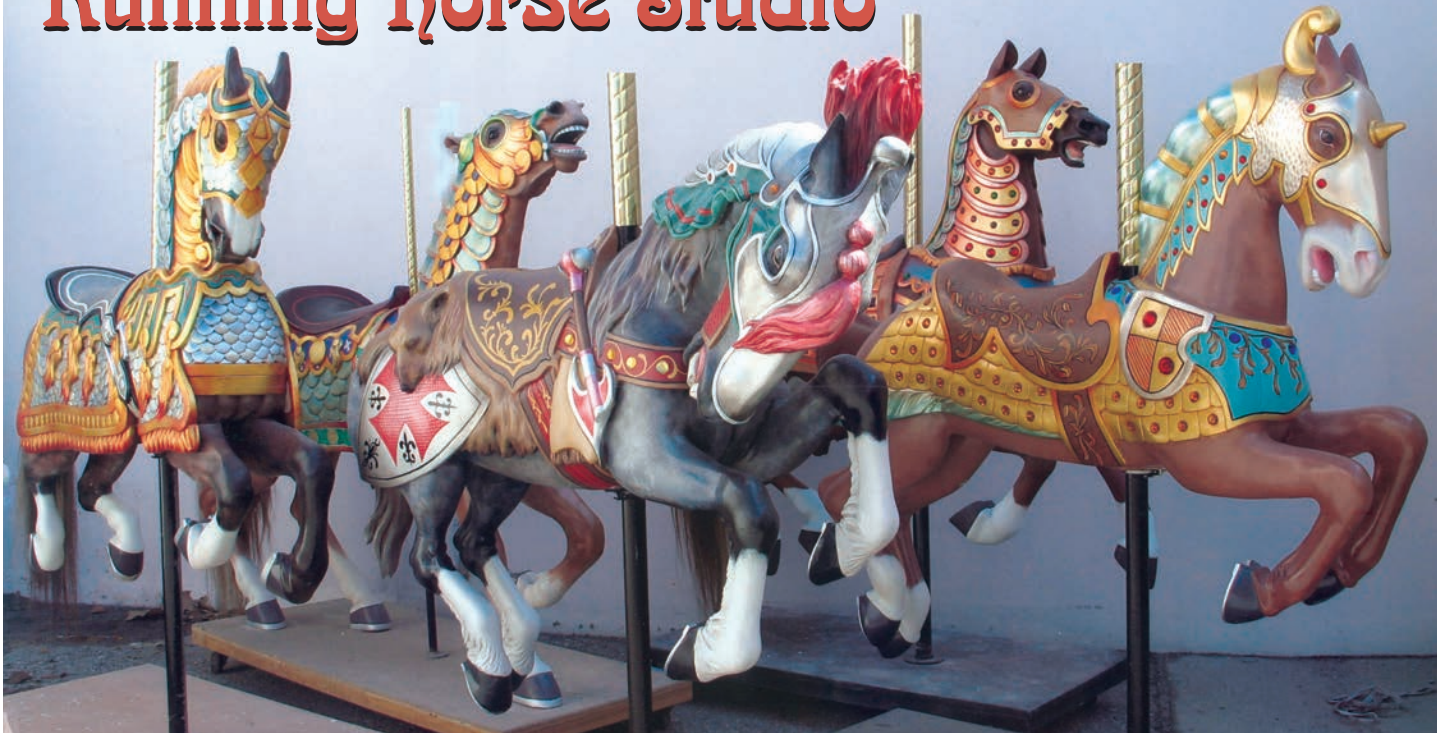
CMMA membership includes the quarterly publication, *Horse Tales*, a membership directory and the hobby's greatest fellowship. Plans are also underway for a 2009 convention.

The CMMA is now accepting 2009 memberships. Past CMMA members will be contacted with membership information. Membership dues are \$20 per year. Checks or money orders should be made out to the CMMA and sent to the CMMA secretary-treasurer.

If you are interested in carousel models, miniatures or woodcarving, please contact the CMMA for additional information. All inquiries or questions should be sent to Patrick Wentzel, CMMA secretary-treasurer, 2310 Highland Ave., Parkersburg, WV 26101-2920 or call (304) 428-3544, or email pwentzel@patrickwentzel.com.

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The Carousel Traveled with the World Famous Strates Shows

Rare 1914 Wagon Mount PTC #28 To Sell at Auction in Orlando, FL



NCA Census Chairman, Patrick Wentzel took these photos of PTC #28 in Cleveland OH in 1987, the last year the machine ran.

By Roland Hopkins

The Carousel News & Trader

The history of so many of the classic hand-carved wooden carousels from the 20th century is sketchy at best. Were there closer to 1,000, 3,000, 5,000? That would all depend on what machines you are talking about. Are we talking about hand-carved park machines by the masters like E. Joy Morris, Dentzel, Muller, Loeff, Illions, Stein & Goldstein, Herschell, and Parker or are we including metal machines and small portables?

Of the few remaining Illions, Dentzels and Loeffs, etc... we continue to do due diligence to get the history correct and trace the machines we know of. It is not always easy. So many machines burned. Others were sent back to the shop to be reconfigured, and in most cases, valuable records were lost or destroyed.

The Philadelphia Toboggan Company did a tremendous thing for us history buffs. They gave each machine a number and thus, a name. PTC #61 sits immaculately restored in Brooklyn awaiting a proper home for the public to ride. PTC #19 awaits in storage in Cleveland, OH, going on a decade now.



PTC #28 is one of just three known PTC portables remaining.

PTC shows 87 numbered carousels on record. Approximately 12 of those were known to be returned to the shop, reconfigured, and sent back out with new numbers, so in actuality, they carved about 75 machines. Approximately 33 of these machines remain operating today or in known storage. It is thought that PTC carved just eight portable machines, and only three of these are known today.



Thanks to these photos by Patrick Wentzel, and with his help, all but two of the horses stolen from a storage container in 2002 were recovered.

The only remaining PTC portable that you can currently ride is the 1917 PTC #45 at the Western Washington Fairgrounds in Puyallup, WA. There is another portable known to be in storage and the third is PTC #28, built in 1914, which goes up for auction on Feb. 12 in Orlando, FL.

PTC records show that the Strates Shows acquired the machine for their traveling carnival in 1946. James Strates, now 78, recalls the machine as a kid, so Strates may have owned the ride longer.

The portable merry-go-round, with its factory wagon mounted center pole, traveled the Eastern Seaboard with the Strates Shows for over four decades, finally being re-



placed by a modern double-decker machine in 1988. The machine has been in storage at Strates' Florida home base ever since. At some point in time, the intricately-carved wooden horses were coated in fiberglass to protect them from the wear and tear of the traveling carnival.

Actually, a few of the horses did go on one final ride. In 2002, Patrick Wentzel, NCA Census Chairman, spotted what he thought to be one of the horses from PTC #28 on eBay. Wentzel contacted the seller and concluded that the horses were stolen. He then contacted James Strates who confirmed that the carousel was, (or should be), still in storage. When Strates checked the container, Wentzel's suspicion was confirmed...most of the horses had in fact been stolen. Wentzel worked with Strates to alert the authorities and with then CNT publisher, Walter Loucks to get the word out to collectors and dealers.

In fairly short time, 12 of the horses were found in New York and another 18 were recovered in Florida with the help of Wentzel and these photos he took in 1987.

"You never know when your photos and slides will come in handy," said Wentzel back in early 2003. "Research does pay off. I hope they can recover all the horses."

According to auctioneer Dave Norton, 40 of the 42 original horses will be part of the auction on Feb. 12 when the machine sells as a complete unit. There will be no bidding on individual figures.

The Only Remaining Railroad Carnival in the United States

Strates Shows - Three Generations Of American Carnival Tradition



The Strates Shows Midway set up on the road in the early 1960s. Note that PTC #28 awaits just inside the entrance.

Strates Shows, Inc., is celebrating its 86th anniversary this year. This family-owned and operated carnival was founded in 1923 by Greek immigrant James E. Strates and continues today under the direction of his son, E. James Strates, and five grandchildren.

The Founder: James E.

Strates: 1929-1959

James E. Strates came to America in 1909 and, like many immigrants, worked at a number of odd jobs. He eventually became a professional wrestler working under the name "Young Strangler Lewis." He grappled on the wrestling circuit, and by the end of 1919 Lewis was one of the top contenders for the World Middleweight Championship and one of the top mat promoters of his time.

It was through wrestling that Strates was introduced to carnival life. During his off-season, he began wrestling with a carnival athletic show. Eventually, he and two partners acquired an existing carnival and renamed it Southern Tier

Shows, after the region in Upstate New York. The show consisted of a three-abreast merry-go-round, a Ferris wheel, an athletic show, 15 concessions, three side shows and five hard-rubber-tire trucks. It took 24 hours to move the show 22 miles from its home in Bath, NY, to its first stop in Wayland, NY. After a hard first season, James E. Strates bought out his partners, and by 1927 Southern Tier Shows was billed as the largest show in New York. The show traveled on 18 trucks and was completely motorized before the start of the Great Depression.

At the end of the 1932 season, Strates decided to change the name of Southern Tier Shows to James E. Strates Shows. He also purchased

the show's first five flatbed railroad cars and 17 trucks to carry his equipment. From this season on, Strates purchased five flatbed cars each year until his train totaled 40 cars in length. During the 1930s, travel by railroad was the trend of the carnival industry, but today Strates Shows is the only





On Dec. 22, 1945 a fire engulfed a tobacco barn used for storage in Mullins, NC, destroying most of the rides. All that survived completely intact was the train. Strates managed to rebuild and was back on the road in the spring of 1946.

Shown left, PTC #28 on the road in the early 1960s.

Photos courtesy of Strates Shows.

remaining railroad carnival in the United States. In 1997, the 61-car train transported equipment to 15 locations and covered more than 6,500 miles on the Eastern Seaboard.

On December 22, 1945, disaster struck. That winter the show was being stored in a tobacco barn in Mullins, SC, when fire engulfed the barn. The only usable piece of equipment remaining was the train. With an insurance policy payment of \$250,000, Mr. Strates made the daring move to rebuild his show in time for the start of the 1946 season. Only three months after the fire, James E. Strates Shows was rebuilt. With the help of the city and citizens of Mullins and show agents scouring the country from coast to coast buying rides, trucks, lumber, generators and everything else that was needed, Strates was able to rebuild and maintain his fair commitments that year.

By 1953, Strates Shows was the fourth largest carnival in the nation and was contracted to play several major fairs on the Eastern Seaboard. To accommodate the growing carnival and great show train, Strates relocated the show's winter quarters in 1955 to a 40-acre site in Taft, FL, where over a mile of railroad siding was laid for the train. Strates Shows continues to use this property as its winter quarters and calls Central Florida its home.

The Boss: E. James Strates 1959-Present

In 1956, E. James, son of founder James E., came back to the show where he joined the management team under the supervision of his father. With him was his young wife Phyllis. Three short years later, his father suffered a stroke in his office while playing the York Fair in Danville, VA.

On Sunday, October 11, 1959, James E. Strates passed away at the age of 65. After his death, E. James took over as president and manager of the carnival.

As president, E. James led the company through a challenging management transition and proceeded to build one of the strongest show routes in the east. To keep pace with the continual growth and change in times, he became very innovative. During his early years, he led the industry with the development of a centralized ticket system, the introduction of cooperative promotions, and the first sale of advance tickets among carnivals.

During the summer of 1972, in Wilkes-Barre, PA, Strates Shows was caught by fierce weather conditions that caused the Susquehanna River to flood. Fortunately, the rides were protected on high ground, but the train, the company's major mode of transportation, was completely submerged. In order to make the show's next date, rides were moved by truck to the next location while a crew was left behind to clean the train. It took three weeks to ready the train, washing away mud and debris with fire hoses and removing trees that were tangled together on the top of the flat cars.

The Third Generation: 1979-Present

As the business progressed, all five of E. James and Phyllis's children joined the company, each finding their own niche. Susan Magid, the oldest of the Strates children, became the Insurance Director and Sibyl Strates Doremus the Marketing Director. James E. and John head up the Operations Department, and Jay became the Administrative Director. 1993 marked the first year that all five Strates children worked together in the family business and they continue to do so today.

With the involvement of the third generation came new ideas and opportunities for growth. In 1982, the company diversified into the fair business with the purchase of the Anderson County Fairgrounds in Anderson, SC. By 1989,



Strates Shows realized the need to expand to larger executive offices to handle the administrative duties of the company. To coordinate the company's business, the computer system was updated to a local area network that connects the administrative offices with the road office and the Anderson facility. Strates Shows has also recently developed an Internet page, www.strates.com. This page includes the current route, beautiful color renditions of the show's collectors series posters and the capability to connect people to the various fairs' Internet pages for more detailed event information.

Since its beginnings in 1923, many changes have occurred at Strates Shows and in the carnival business. In our technological society, the animals and rare "freak shows" have become a thing of the past, and the famous girl shows have disappeared. Today, fairgoers are attracted to large spectacular thrill rides. Strates Shows stays abreast of the market by investing in the newest, most advanced equipment and through continued commitment to producing good, wholesome family fun. During the 1997 season, more than four million people enjoyed the Strates Shows midway.

For information, visit www.strates.com.

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Admission is free for IISA members; \$25 for members of other trade associations; and \$50 for all others. The trade show is held at 6915 Riverview Drive in Gibsonton, FL. For information, visit www.gibtownshowmensclub.com.

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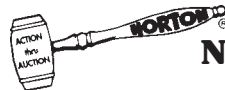
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Pennsylvania's Willow Grove Amusement Park



The Illions Carousel from Coney Island was installed at Willow Grove for the 1910 season, replacing the Dentzel, and remained there until the park closed in 1975.

A Carousel News subscriber recently wrote in looking for information on, or photos of the Illions Carousel from Willow Grove Park in Pennsylvania, which reminded me that I had this book awaiting review.

Willow Grove Amusement Park had an especially rich carousel history. The park opened with an E. Joy Morris Carousel in 1896 which remained at the park until 1905. In 1902 a second carousel, a Dentzel menagerie was added to the end of the Midway. These two machines would be more than enough for any park, even today, but not for Willow Grove.

In 1906, The Philadelphia Toboggan Company installed PTC #11, a three-row menagerie which replaced the original E. Joy Morris machine. PTC had recently bought out Morris and the growing company would share profits on their new machine with the park.

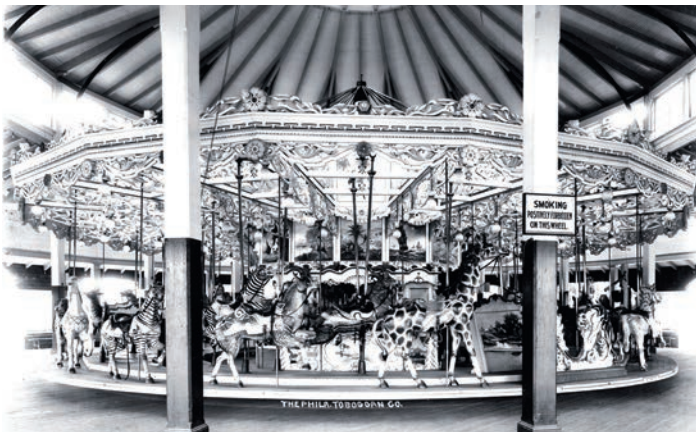
After the 1909 season, the original Dentzel in the sec-



In the early 1960s the park went from charging per ride to a flat admission fee of \$3.95 for adults and \$2.95 for children which meant you could ride the Illions all day.

Photos courtesy of Old York Road Historical Society and Arcadia Publishing. "Images of America: Willow Grove Park" is available at local retailers, Amazon.com, and at www.ArcadiaPublishing.com.

ond building was removed. Thomas Ryan was awarded the concession. He installed an M. C. Illions and Sons Carousel Works machine that he purchased from Coney Island. It was a four-row machine that would remain at the park until it closed after a series of fires and financial hardships in 1975. The Illions Carousel was purchased by Charlotte Dinger who displayed it at her Carousel World Museum in Peddler's Village in Lahaska, PA, until her death in 1997.



PTC #11 replaced the park's original E. Joy Morris Carousel in 1906.

Images of America: Willow Grove Park

The Old York Road Historical Society
Arcadia Publishing

Willow Grove Park illustrates the fascinating history of one of America's most famous amusement parks. Willow Grove started as a trolley park in 1896. This park set the standard for providing first-class entertainment and amusement. Here John Philip Sousa, Victor Herbert, and Arthur Pryor gave daily musical concerts, while various rides thrilled those seeking more rigorous fun. Through a wide range of images, Willow Grove Park captures the rich history of this well-known icon.



The book's author, The Old York Road Historical Society, was founded in 1936 to study and perpetuate the history and folklore of the communities along and adjacent to the Old York Road. The Society's collections contain the largest group of historical material related to eastern Montgomery County, including some 70,000 photographic images. A few of these images were selected for this book and were supplemented by photographs from other public and private collections.



This Dentzel menagerie carousel, installed in the park in 1902, would be replaced by the Illions in 1910.



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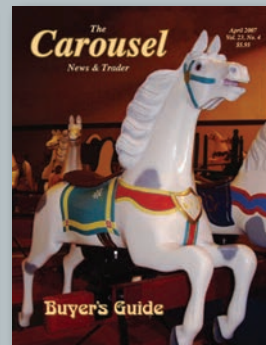
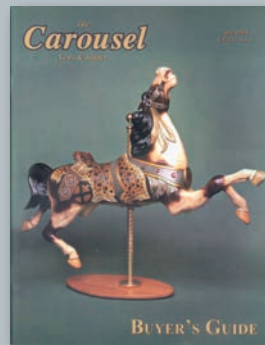
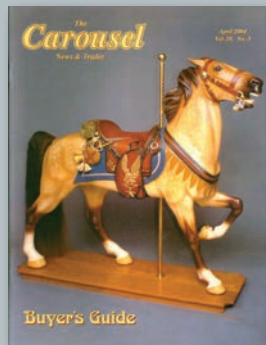
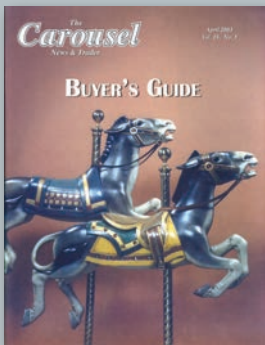
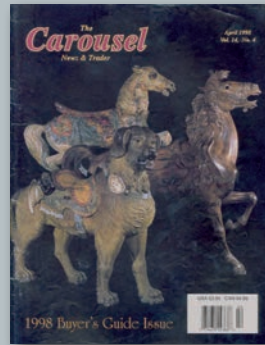
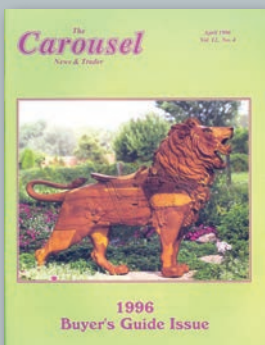
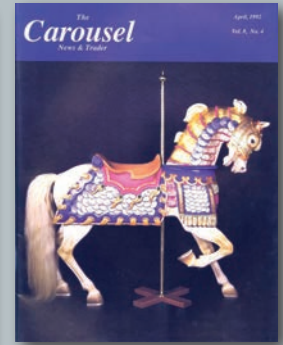
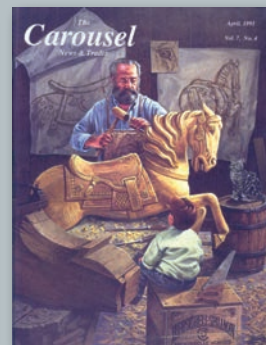
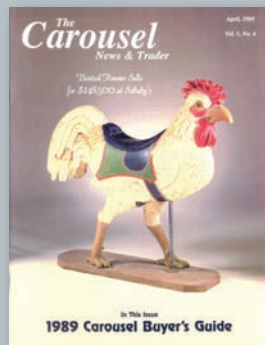
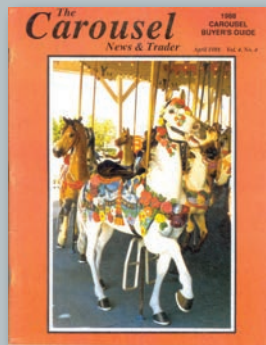
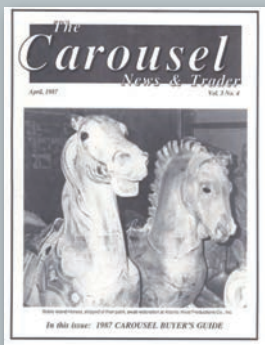
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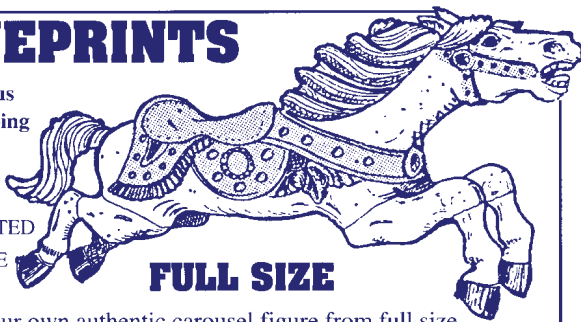
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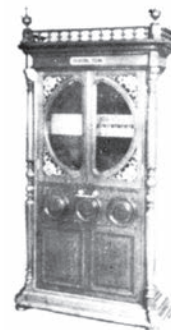
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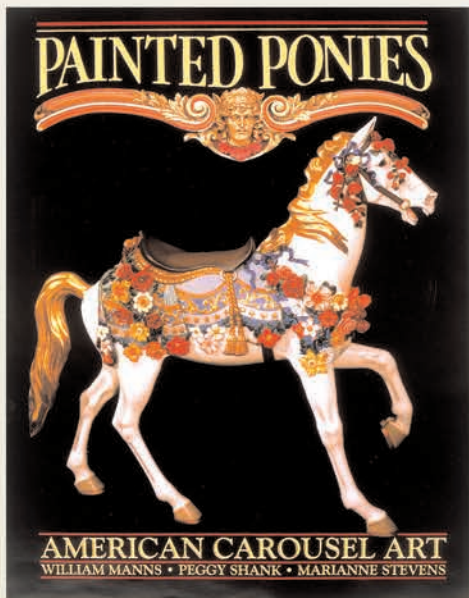


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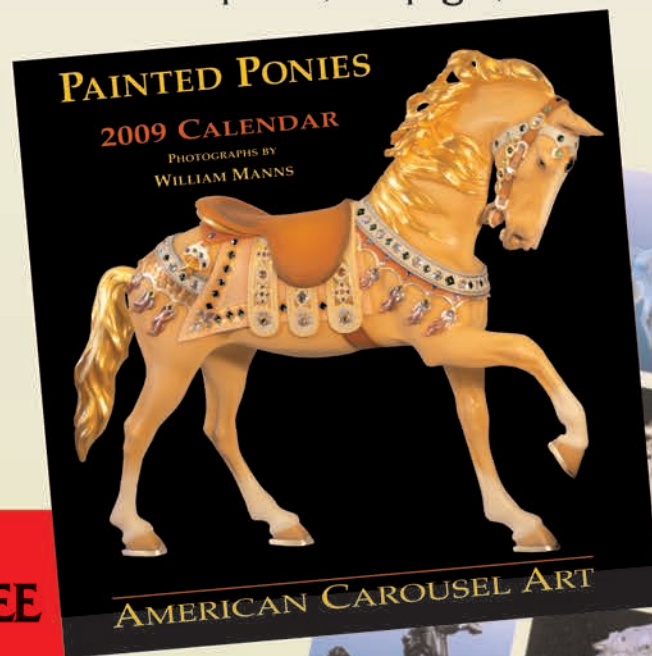
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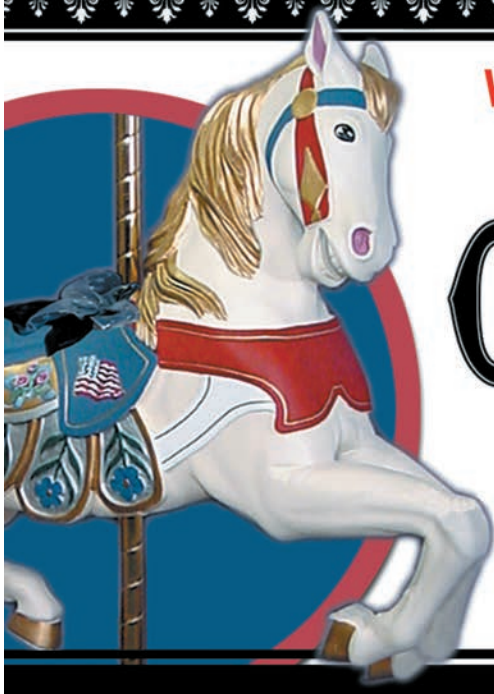
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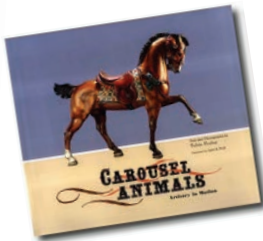
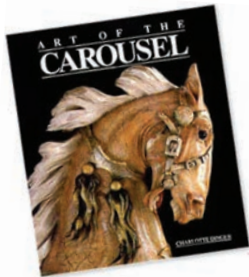
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