

The
Carousel

News & Trader

November, 1992

Vol. 8, No. 11



Golden Gate Park Herschell-Spillman, San Francisco, California



PTC #62, Santa Monica, California

"Nancy Lynn" Memorial Horse

The Memorial Horse for Nancy Lynn Loucks is complete and soon ready for shipment.

Jerry Reinhardt, noted miniature carousel horse carver from Stilwell, Kansas, has completed the special memorial carving in memory of The Carousel News Founder, Nancy Lynn Loucks. The carving depicts one of Nancy's favorite figures, an Illions with a great flowing mane, that rides the Wyandott Lake machine in Columbus, Ohio. Only 250 castings will be done of this special edition figure.

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"Nancy Lynn" a special limited edition horse by Jerry Reinhardt is an Illions second row horse that rides the machine at Wyandott Lake, Columbus, Ohio. Nancy Loucks loved the head and mane on this figure, so it was chosen as the memorial horse for her.

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Realistic miniatures from operating wooden carousels. Cast from a carving by nationally known woodcarver Jerry Reinhardt. NCA #3 is the "GYPSY QUEEN", a Libertyland Park DENTZEL in MEMPHIS, TN. Limited Edition of 1000, priced at only \$158.00, shipping included. All profits to NCA Preservation Fund.



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Some NCA #1 PTC from Atlanta, GA, and NCA #2 LOOFF from Spokane, WA still available.

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IMAGE 9" X 24" PAPER 11" X 26"

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COVER

The gold foil-embossed panels on this month's cover are a sampling of California artist Tom Brittain's imaginative carousel art work.

Working primarily in watercolors, Tom is known for his imaginative and surrealistic interpretations of carousel animals. He modeled the cover pieces after Santa Monica's PTC carousel and the San Francisco Golden Gate Park Herschell-Spillman.

Tom has a special affection for the Santa Monica carousel, and is pictured at the right on the machine. The carousel was restored by the Carousel Works of Mansfield, Ohio.

A full story about his paintings of carousel figures, amusement piers and a variety of other subjects appears on page 18.



In this issue:

Calendar	5
Conneaut, PA amusement auction results	8
Letters	10
Sandusky Merry-go-Round Museum	14
Hampton carousel Virginia landmark	17
Artist Tom Brittain captures carousels (cover story)	18
Meet Charles Walker	22
Lake Compounce Park opens again	26
Miniature Carousel Builders Virginia convention	32
The dentist's Parker carousel	35
Burlington, NC Carousel Festival benefits community	36
Cedar Point receives honors as best park	38
Grady Pack's first carousel horse	39
Aten auction in Santa Monica, CA report	41
Successor to the Band Organ: the Merri-Org	46
Carving pattern - jumper horse	48
Classified ads	50

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Drawing © Lyne's Creations, San Marcos, CA

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CAROUSEL CALENDAR

AUCTIONS

November 7 Bob Kissel auction, Hamilton, Ohio. Carousel horses, toys, antiques and more.

DATE PENDING Norton Auctioneers, auction of Belchertown, Massachusetts State School Stein & Goldstein carousel (see April 1992 TCN&T).

November 29 Pleasure Beach carousel horses, Bridgeport, Connecticut. See ad beginning on page 27 for information.

Winter Auction, Guernsey's of New York.

February 6, 1993 Auction Under the Big Top, Tampa, Florida. Details pending.

CAROUSEL EVENTS

Current—July 1996 The Mary Lockman Collection of 20 Tonawanda carousel animals is on display at the Herschell Carrousel Factory Museum, North Tonawanda, New York.

November 7, Children's Open House at Pediatric Dental office. 10 AM to noon, includes clowns and magician. Free event. Contact Dr. and Mrs. Michael Healey, 1145 Hightower Trail, Dunwoody, Georgia 30350 (404) 993-9395. See story on page 35.

December 12 Hollywood Park, CA, carousel event. See story page 39. For information or to offer assistance call Patti Nash Stoltenberg (310) 419-1451 or (310) 927-0694.

CONVENTIONS

November 18—21 IAAPA (International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions) Convention and Trade Show, Dallas, Texas. (703) 836-4800.

May 26—30, 1993 American Carousel Society Convention in Portland, Oregon. For information contact Craig Knight, 1015 Munich St., San Francisco, CA 94112-4505.

April 2—4, 1993 NCA Technical Conference, St. Paul, Minnesota. Hosted by Our Fair Carousel, Inc., PO Box 17276, St. Paul, MN 55117, (612) 645-9253.

EXHIBITS

November 27, 1992 through February 1, 1993 American Carousel Museum exhibit of 75 animals on 4 floors of Nordstrom's complex in San Francisco, California.

November 27, 1992 through January 1, 1993 Sixty carousel animals from the Perron collection. Show held in the Newmark Building on Second and Union in Seattle, Washington. Also as part of the event the Perrons' Illions/Carmel carousel will operate at the Westlake Mall in Seattle.

Current through April 25, 1992 Sandusky, Ohio Merry-Go-Round Museum hosts a display of the finest in carousel art from the American Carousel Museum, San Francisco, CA. (419) 626-6111.

SHOWS & FESTIVALS

January 16—17, 1993 Dixieland Extravaganza Show and Sale. Juke boxes, carousel art, slot machines and more. Morocco Temple Center, St. Johns Bluff Rd. S., Jacksonville, Florida. Contact Chip Nofal, PO Box 1507, St. Augustine, Florida 32085, (904) 928-0666 evenings, (904) 641-4821 days.

February 5—7, 1993 Third Annual Carousel & Amusement Park Show/Sale, Chapel Hill Mall, Akron, Ohio. Sponsored by the Summit County Historical Society (216) 535-1120 and Chapel Hill Mall (216) 633-7100.

June 11—13, 1993 Morgantown, West Virginia. Carousel Heritage Show. Ride their Chance 36 ft. carousel, see a circus on the 13th, miniature carousels, circuses, toys, dolls and railroads.

MISCELLANEOUS

November 7 Papier Mache Carousel Art Classes, New England Carousel Museum. Four week course for children. N.E. Carousel Museum, 95 Riverside Ave., Bristol, Connecticut 06010 (203) 585-5411.

Begins January 9, 1993 Large size carousel horse woodcarving class. Saturdays 9 AM to 4 PM for 9 months. Nemy Electric Tool Co., 7635 A-Auburn Blvd., Citrus Heights, California 95610 (916) 723-1088.

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History of the Bridgeport Carousel and P.T. Barnum's Pleasure Beach

By William Manns

Phineas T. Barnum was sometimes referred to as "The Price of Humbug," "The Shakespeare of Advertising" and even "The King of Adjectives." He was a man with a genius for inspiring curiosity, like a circus parade lures spectators to the Big Top he could convince hundreds of thousands to step right up and inspect the smallest man in the world, exotic animals and strange human feats. Barnum was best known for the creation of his Barnum & Bailey Circus, which he founded in 1880.

In 1850 P.T. Barnum settled in Bridgeport, Connecticut. He had great vision for Bridgeport. A major real estate developer and one-time mayor, Barnum donated large portions of land including Seaside Park, one of the first waterfront parks in America.

One of Barnum's big dreams was the development of a 37 acre island that was to become known as Pleasure Beach. Unfortunately, Barnum passed away in 1891 shortly before the park opened.

Barnum's dream for a million dollar playground was taken over by Mr. McMahon and Mr. Wren. They were wholesale liquor dealers and land developers. They opened the Pleasure Beach Amusement Park in 1892. Within three years the park boasted a roller coaster, miniature railroad, skating rink, a 5,000 seat coliseum, a merry-go-round (not the one up for auction on November 29) and steeplechase horses, a bicycle race track and other arcade amusements.

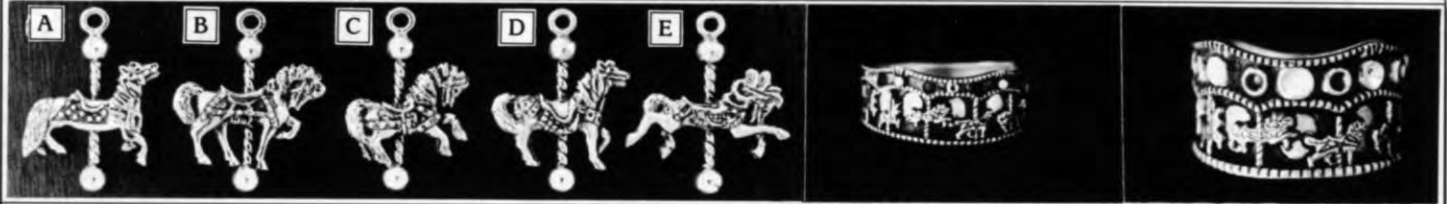
Through the years the park was devastated by numerous fires. In 1907 the steeplechase horse ride was destroyed. In 1919 the Bridgeport Board of Park Commissioners bought the park. In 1938 they took over full operation.

The Pleasure Beach carousel came to Bridgeport shortly before World War I. The machine was created by Coney Island ride builder William Mangels.

This wonderful carousel features primarily horses created by Russian immigrant Charles Carmel. The carousel carries several inner row horses carved by Marcus Illions.

The Pleasure Beach carousel operated up through World War II as a glittering gem of the carvers' art. During the 1950s the park began to deteriorate as did many other local amusement centers. Attendance fell off drastically by the '60s and the carousel closed for good in 1968. Since then the horses have been in storage. At one time the city had hoped to restore and operate the carousel and went so far as to have the horses professionally restored by The Carousel Works and R&F Design.

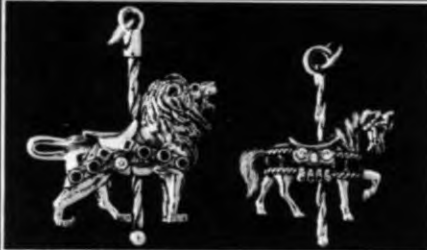
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CONNEAUT AMUSEMENT PARK AUCTION RESULTS

A Pennsylvania landmark for 100 years, Conneaut Lake Amusement Park sold off a substantial portion of its ride arsenal at an auction held October 8, 1992.

The park is changing its direction of operations with more emphasis on concerts, its hotel, campground and water park. The wooden coaster, merry-go-round, train and a few selected rides will remain at the park.

Ride prices realized included a 1981 Chance Yo-Yo at \$46,500, a 1970 Spider at \$37,000, Chance tram cars (3) at \$20,000 and a Paratrooper for \$33,000.

Kiddie rides included a Skyfighter that fetched \$6,500, Caterpillar at \$5,500, Hampton Car Ride for \$12,000 and boats for \$3,500.

An astounding price of \$20,000 was bid on a small kiddie Allan Herschell merry-go-round with 20 aluminum horses.

Over 200 registered park owners from 19 states were in attendance for the 110 lot auction, which lasted all but two hours.

The auction was managed and conducted by Norton Auctioneers of Michigan, Inc., who have corporate headquarters in Coldwater, Michigan. The Norton firm is known throughout the world for auctions of museums, unique collections, carousels, carnivals, unusual antiques and all types of tourist attractions.

Other non-ride items sold were a 16 player Fascination game for \$20,000, Balloon Race Clown Game at \$3,000, Western Themed Shooting Gallery for \$19,000, Cotton Candy Machine at \$900, Marble Candy Table for \$1,000, and a copper candy kettle that fetched \$650.

According to David A. Norton, chairman and chief auctioneer of the firm bearing his name, "prices were 25 to 30 percent higher than we had advised our client to expect." Norton is celebrating his 26th year in the auction profession.



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Letters

PAINTING ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Would someone please point me in the right direction as to where I can buy a book on the finishing and painting of carousels? I cannot do the wooden ones yet, and am

trying to duplicate the wooden ones, using Wonder (plastic) horses. I want to do them well, and am very willing to take the time to do so. But I would very much appreciate being able to purchase a book that would go into some detail on finish and painting. Everything I see advertised focuses on carving wooden figures. Is there something that would help me?

Maralee Gibson
PO Box 581
Shelton, WA 98584

We don't know of any books on the subject, but perhaps some of the readers would be willing to share some ideas and suggestions.

INDIAN WALK CAROUSEL HISTORY

I have enjoyed the recent articles in *The Carousel News & Trader* on the history of carousels and the research on newly discovered carvers. It is exciting that carousel enthusiasts are still digging into history and sharing their findings through the *Trader*.

I particularly enjoyed reading about the efforts of Sam and Elaine Willard in bringing another carousel back to life. I hope that the following may add to our knowledge of that carousel:

In an interview in "Billboard" magazine in August 1951, John Wendler refers to the Herschell Spillman Company experimenting with wagon mounted carousels in approximately 1912. The central power plant was mounted on one wagon, while all the other parts were carried on a second, larger, wagon. In this interview Wendler states that the company made only three of these carousels, the first of which went to California. The issue of *Carousel Art* magazine on the Spillman/Herschell companies has a circa 1913 photo of a Herschell Spillman carousel owned by Davis Bros. of Los Angeles, California, mounted on two wagons. There is no indication, however, that this is one of the wagon-mounted carousels.

In December 1914 the Herschell Spillman Company advertised that their new 1915 carousel, "built on wagons" would be a "sensation." These are probably the carousels referred to in the Wendler interview.

Clearly as the Herschell Spillman organization wasn't formed until 1900 the Herschell Spillman mechanism owned by the Willards cannot date to 1891, and probably dates to 1915. It is exciting that they have been able to save one of the three that were manufactured, certainly a rare fine and a unique place in carousel history.

Brian Morgan, President
National Carousel Association

NEW READER'S PLASTER CAST MIRROR

On a recent trip to Cleveland I was delighted to hear of the Merry-Go-Round Museum in Sandusky.

My visit to the museum brought back many happy memories of the county fairs I attended with my grandparents in Indiana as I was growing up.

Although I have always had a fear of real live horses, the horses of the carousel always fascinated me.

While at the museum I was able to ride the

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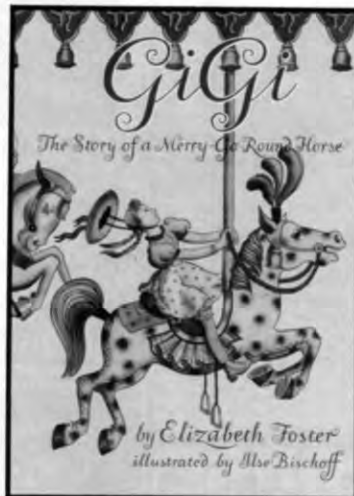
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carousel—what a delight! It had been years since I had seen the authentic animals. It makes me sad to think that only a precious few of the horses are being created now in this mass-production world of ours.

I would be grateful to contact someone who actually does carve the horses in the old way, to get an idea of what is involved in making the figures.

I began my modest collection of carousel horses about 8 years ago, having seen a Tobin Fraley figurine in a shop in Michigan. Since then my collection has grown to include Fraley figurines, Willitts horses, coffee mugs, miniatures, posters, portraits and jewelry.

During my trip to Florida last year, I found a wonderful plaster cast mirror which I was able to finish using chalks. This was a project in which I could use my own creativity to finish the horses as I remembered them.

None of the craft supply stores in my area have seen this type of plaster craft before, so I will have to wait until my next visit to the Tampa area to start another project.

Vicki L. Rease
Mt. Pleasant, Michigan



We feature articles about carvers who use traditional materials and tools on a regular basis. The Carousel Works in Mansfield, Ohio creates entire carousels, and is open to the public.

Your mirror is lovely. If we learn of other stores which sell these plaster cast items, we will be happy to pass on the information.

LAUGHING SAL AND SAM

In addition to our collection of carousel horses and animals we also have a Laughing Sal from Asbury Park, New Jersey and a Laughing Sam from San Francisco California. We would appreciate any information, history

and/or photos that the readers can share. Any information would be greatly appreciated in maintaining accurate restorations.

Thanks, and keep up your fine work on the greatest publication going for carousels.

Al and Heidi Moody
7227 Via Bella
San Jose, CA 95139

If our readers can provide any information, please contact the Moodys.

**THE MAGIC CHRISTMAS PONY
AUTHOR WRITES TO THE TRADER**

Please note that the Great Wall of China, as mentioned in the book review in the October, 1992 issue, is about one thousand six hundred miles long as *the crow flies* and is almost thirty feet high. In actuality, the wall is 2,500 miles long and 26 feet high. One of your sharp-eyed readers might pick up on this.

Regina Cooley
Rancho Mirage, California

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SERIES TWO MINIATURES

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Picture a Carousel at the Merry-Go-Round Museum



Rachel Pratt (left), Museum Director and her assistant, Kate Terrell (right) with special guest, Louise Muller and her husband, David.

Story and Photos by
Barbara Nelson

Few words were needed to convey the excitement at the Sandusky Merry-Go-Round Museum's Birthday Gala and Art Show on Saturday, September 26th. The atmosphere abounded with lights, laughter and the strains of background music provided by the Firelands Bay String Quartet all of which highlighted the magnificently restored carousel.

Rachel Pratt, President of the Board and Museum Director, and her assistant, Kate Terrell greeted the guests as they entered the lobby. In the main room a buffet table provided a sumptuous fare. Guests ate and relaxed to the symphony music and sat in the chariots and on the park benches for a nostalgic remembrance of a by-gone era.

The program began with the introduction of special guest, Louise Muller Reyes, daughter of Daniel Muller. Louise was de-



The carousel showcases the artistic work of Tom Wade and Maureen Murphy.



Louise Muller Reyes, views Tom Wade's reproduction of her father's Indian pony.



Socializing abounded around the new carousel. There is a mixture of antique and contemporary figures on the machine.

lighted to see a version of the famous Muller Indian Pony being reproduced in a smaller scale by resident artist/carver, Tom Wade. Several of her father's carvings were on display throughout the museum. Rachel Pratt and Gerald Kasper conducted the drawings for door prizes and for a 1993 Pontiac Grand Am obtained from Kasper Transportation and sponsored by the Sandusky Cultural Arts League. Daniel Tokar Jr. of Port Clinton, Ohio won the car.

For the remainder of the evening guests browsed through the Museum's Larimer Gift Shop and viewed artwork on display by the Gallery on the Lake from Port Clinton and the Bay Gallery of Sandusky, while listening to the carousel music from the 1939 Wurlitzer 105 band organ from the collection of Terry Haughwout. Everyone had the opportunity to ride the newly restored carousel.

Tom Wade constructed the new rounding boards, platform and scenery around the 1939 Allan Herschell frame. Canvas artist, Maureen Murphy painted the scenery. The 36 foot carousel has two 1916 Herschell-Spillman chariots accompanied by antique wooden horses, a 1930 Allan Herschell mule, a mixture of contemporary animals and numerous half and half horses on loan from Pam and Bob Shaw of Utica, Ohio.

Permanent contributions were being accepted to maintain the carousel. Tax deductible donations of \$3000 to \$5000 would buy a horse or contribute a horse; \$1000 would purchase artwork for a scenery panel; \$500 would secure artworks for the rounding board; and a gift of \$150 to \$300 would supply artwork for a fence panel.



Three restored animals on the 1939 Allan Herschell frame. The center figure is a 1930 Allan Herschell mule.

Guests also had the opportunity to view the extravagant display of the finest in carousel carvings on loan from the American Carousel Museum in San Francisco, California. Represented are the works of Daniel Muller, Gustav Dentzel, Charles Loeff and Marcus Illions. The famous Teddy Roosevelt tiger and rare Dentzel rooster are showcased in this display of over forty pieces. The show has been extended until the spring of 1993.

For more information, write Merry-Go-Round Museum, P.O. Box 718, Sandusky, OH 44870 or call (419) 626-6111.



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HAMPTON CAROUSEL NOW VIRGINIA LANDMARK

Story by Karen Smith

Early this year the Hampton carousel was awarded the rare Virginia Landmark Register status by the State Board of Historic Resources. The carousel's registration as a state historic landmark grants the carousel a much sought after status. Not all items considered by the board are approved. The state board has forwarded their recommendation for the carousel to become a National Historic Landmark. The carousel joins other Hampton landmarks with this status such as St. John's Church, Hampton University and the Emancipation Oak.

Elizabeth Walker, acting director of Parks and Recreation, praises Osceola Ailor for completing the extensive background information necessary for the state landmark application. Mrs. Ailor, a volunteer, spent over six months researching and compiling the information.

A second outstanding achievement came when the Virginia Downtown Developers Association named the carousel to its highest honor, the Award of Excellence, for downtown revitalization. The award recognized the Hampton carousel for outstanding downtown improvements and for innovativeness, success, adaptability to other communities and efficiency in using available financial and human resources.

Louellen Brumgard, one of the award judges, said "The city saw an opportunity to take a piece of the past and tie it to its future. The forethought and vision to save the carousel and weave it into the city's plans for downtown was an excellent achievement."

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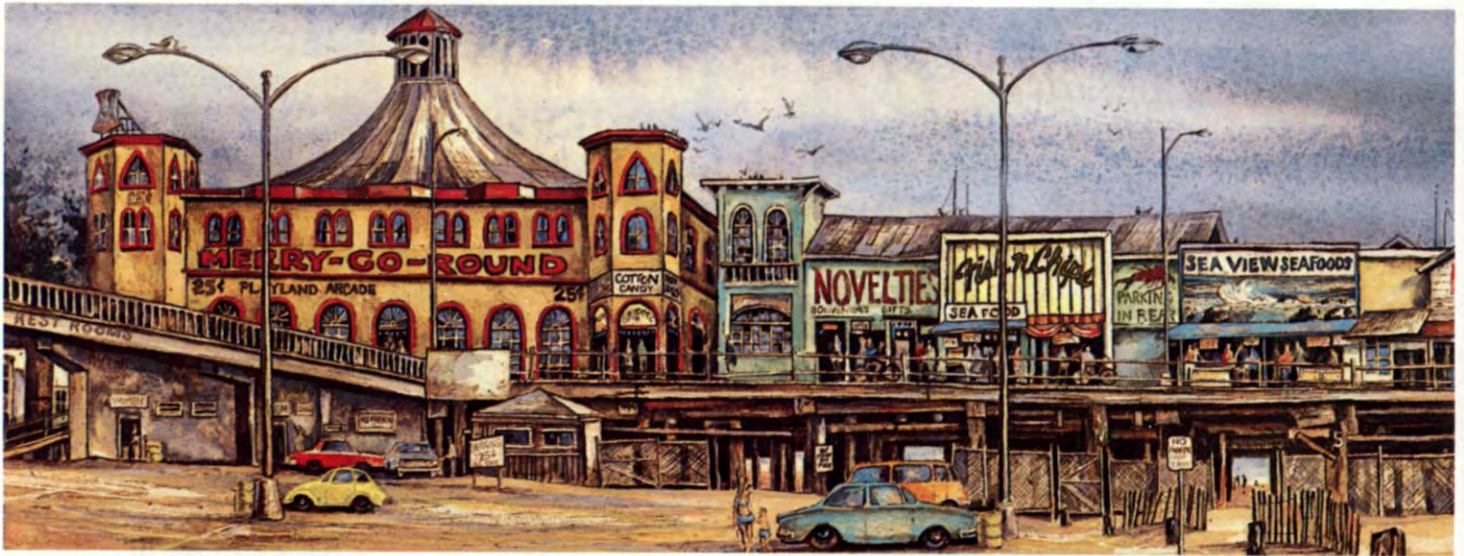
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Capturing Carousels

Artist Tom Brittain interprets the fantasy and motion of California's carousels in watercolors.



Tom's painting entitled "Carousel Horses" has an abstract or surrealistic background.

Light, motion, sound and beauty swirl together, separate components that create the aura of the carousel. Artist Tom Brittain captures the excitement of a carousel in operation in his paintings.

While commissioned paintings are sometimes more exact reproductions of his subjects, most of his pieces are his own creation, often combining figures from different carousels. They are placed in a composition involving movement, lights and color relationships, giving the impression of the carousel, of actually being there.

Many of Tom's paintings of carousels depict horses facing left or moving clockwise. When asked the reason for this design approach, Tom explains "Compositionally, it works better if the horses move *into* the composition rather than off it. I can make a painting work either way, but I believe they work better this way. That is why I title some of these pieces 'classic' or 'European' carousels."

This concept of a subject moving out of a picture is a commonly-held principle in design. From whatever angle they are painted, Tom's horses and menagerie are fantasy and imagination captured in his art.

Tom's interest in carousels began in early childhood. He remembers going to carnivals and spending a lot of time on the Santa Cruz boardwalk, as well as San Francisco's Playland. Riding and catching the rings on the Santa Cruz Looft was more important to him as a child, but as he grew up he was drawn into the artistry of the carousel.

He began his art studies at the age of 12, and has been a professional working artist since 15. Tom attended San Jose State



The printing company which produced this poster in 1990 entered it in a national competition sponsored by Nolan Paper Co. The poster won first prize for best design of the year.

College and Art Center College of Design, graduating with honors in 1972. He also attended UCLA, studying print-making there.

Some of his first art work based on carousels began in 1972. His painting class met at the Santa Monica Pier at the carousel building, a Loeff Hippodrome which houses PTC # 62. His early paintings were of the exterior of the building and the rides and atmosphere of the surrounding pier.

Soon afterward he began to paint carousel figures, which proved to be a popular theme. Today he has produced quite a number of carousel paintings and prints.

He was commissioned to create a painting for a poster for the 1990 Independence Arts Festival. The piece combined different styles of carousel horses against an abstract backdrop of light and color.

The festival was sponsored by GTE Directories of Southern California, Miramar Sheraton, and the Chamber of Commerce of Santa Monica. The printing company which produced the poster submitted it to a national competition sponsored by Nolan Paper Company. The poster won first prize for best design of the year.

Shortly thereafter GTE and the Huntington Arts Center commissioned another poster, "Classic Carousel" for the Huntington Arts Center Horse Show.

Arcades, roller coasters and amusement piers are popular themes in Tom's work. Once there were seven amusement piers from Santa Monica to Venice. Now only the former remains.

The nostalgia of the famed Ocean Park and Lick Pier in 1926 is captured in Tom's painting by the same name. It is reminiscent of the boardwalks and amusement piers that once populated the east and west coasts of the U.S. So few remain, razed to make way for condominiums and hotels. Once the Disneyland of its day, the park and pier have been completely torn down.

Santa Monica provides inspiration for Tom in many of his paintings. The arched harbor entrance, now restored, is featured in *Carousel Sunset*. The pier is the subject of a triptych whose panels include the merry-go-round building, boardwalk arcades and fishing boats.



European Carousel features horses moving from right to left, moving into the painting rather than out of it. A mixture of styles of carvings are depicted, blending fantasy and reality.



Above is the second panel in a triptych view of the boardwalk in Santa Monica. The first panel (facing page) features the Loeff Hippodrome building on the pier, which houses PTC # 62. Tom's paintings preserve the nostalgia and history of the California coast.



Classic Carousel was used for the Huntington Arts Center Horse Show poster.

The Carousel News & Trader, November, 1992

Two of his latest pieces, *The Santa Monica Carousel* and *The San Francisco Carousel*, published in 1991 and distributed in 1992, are six-color lithographs embossed in foil. The details of the brass poles and gold-leafing on the animals and sparkle of the lights reflect from the golden embossing.

The demand for Brittain originals over the past 10 years has far outgrown the availability of new works. Each year Tom chooses from his work a few personal favorites for reproduction.

Limited editions of his work are produced solely by Tom Brittain, in order to control the quality, quantity and accurate signing and numbering of the pieces.

A limited edition art print combines the talents of the artist and craftsmanship of the printer. The lithographer reproduces an original piece of art in a limited number of prints on high-quality, acid free paper.

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The artist then inspects each print, and signs and numbers them in pencil. This signature indicates the artist's approval of



Against a dark and stormy sky, the landmark San Francisco "Cliff House" is another of Tom's paintings which have been produced as prints.



the quality of the reproduction.

All prints which do not meet the artist's standards are destroyed, as are the printing plates.

Numbering (example: 41/500) signifies the individual print's sequence in the total edition of 500 pieces.

Edition size is determined by the artist, and can vary. Some, such as the foil stamped San Francisco Carousel and Santa Monica Carousel, are available in both signed and numbered versions.

Many of his paintings are mixed-media, using acrylic, watercolors, collage, gold leaf, embossing, etching and other techniques. Tom experiments with different mediums, including three dimensional pieces of art-work as well.

In his shop in Studio City Tom spends the majority of his time creating and designing his art work. He also maintains a full framing shop, packaging and shipping his own pieces. His art work is sold through a few exclusive gallery showings and at his studio by appointment.

A 30-day money-back guarantee of customer satisfaction has provided its own satisfaction for Tom, who has never had a piece returned.

When he is not planning shows, painting or travelling, Tom spends time with his wife



Carousel is a painting based on the Santa Monica PTC carousel.

Jorja and son Chris at their home in Studio City, which they share with their four cats, dog and two birds. His life is a busy and

productive one, capturing the art of the carousel in his own unique style.



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CHARLES WALKER

Profile of a Preservationist

By Ben Morrision



Four rows of horses ride on Walker's 1920 PTC #53. The outside row horses are standers.



It's been nearly 25 years since Charles Walker purchased PTC #53. Crowded into a concrete building, the carousel now awaits a new wooden floor. Restoration proceeds as his finances permit.

The Carousel News & Trader, November, 1992

Just a few short blocks from where Margaret Mitchell wrote the classic "Gone with the Wind," the phone rings at the Herschell Harrington Scenic and Lighting Studio in Atlanta, Georgia.

Charles Walker, clad in a flannel shirt and blue jeans, answers the phone.

The caller, a perplexed carousel owner from a distant state is searching for solutions to a seemingly unsolvable technical problem with an antique merry-go-round.

"Are the sweeps straight or are they warped?" quizzes Walker, the voice of authority. "If the old wood is warped the sweeps won't allow the floor to hang straight."

Before the day is over, Walker will field other questions from carousel enthusiasts.

Charles Walker is the owner of a theatrical lighting company, carousel authority and Conservation Chairman for the National Carousel Association.

When it comes to finding someone with a working knowledge of old wooden carousels, Charles Walker is an authority, a humble authority.

Walker was bitten by the "carousel bug" as a child. His first ride aboard a leaping carousel horse came at about age 3. His family made ketchup during World War II and would sometimes swap ketchup for a carousel ride for young Charles. Otherwise, the ride cost about 15 cents, Walker recalls.

It was the travelling carousels of the carnival that first captured the youngster's imagination.

"The beautiful shapes, the paint, the band organ, all left a strong impression on me," says Walker. Those early impressions would be lasting. The carousel experience was art, something worthwhile, he thought. Little did Charles Walker know how lasting those early impressions would be. Walker would wind up owning not one, but two antique carousels of his own and would lead the fight to save others.

Back in the 1960s, Walker was artist in residence at the Southeastern Fair, the largest annual event in the state of Georgia. One half million people passed through the gates during the fair's ten day Atlanta run. During his tenure, Walker constructed spectacular special effects, such as a 36 foot high replica of a volcano which shot fireworks out its top.

Walker's boss at the Southeastern Fair also owned the Grant Park Dentzel carousel in Atlanta. Charles helped maintain the 3 row, 40 foot machine until the wooden figures were privately sold to collectors in the late 1970s.

It was during his days at the Southeastern Fair that Charles Walker went from a carousel enthusiast to a carousel owner.

"A carney told me about a bigger machine than the Grant Park Dentzel. He said come with me and I'll show you." Little did

Walker know that he was about to discover a 4 row carousel manufactured by the Philadelphia Toboggan Company.

The owner of the carousel was an apartment house owner who bought the carousel to install at Savannah Beach. As it turned out the owner couldn't acquire the property he needed to develop so the carousel was put in storage.

"I went in the warehouse where the PTC was stored and there were stacks and stacks of horses staring at me and I said to myself, I had to have it." Walker knew it would take lots of hard work to restore the machine, but the owner convinced Walker he could do it. Money was another problem.

"I was a starving artist, meaning no money," says Walker. "My father said don't buy it, you don't need something that big that needs that much work."

Walker asked the owner how much it would take to buy the carousel. "How much do you have," replied the owner. "\$3,500.00 is all I have to my name," said Walker. "Sold," said the owner, who also agreed to move the machine for its new owner. "He thought he would eventually get it back from me. Later, he wanted to buy it back, but I said no." The year was 1969.

Now a carousel owner, Walker asked himself where he would work on restoring such a huge project. The answer came from some of his friends who said Walker could use their defunct theatre while they went to Europe for the summer.

"The more I worked," says Walker, "the more I realized needed to be done. It was in such bad condition. I first worked on some of the outside scenery then a few of the horses, while I had a free place to work I got an enormous amount of work done."

But Walker fell on financial hard times. The Southeastern Fair closed its doors for good. Walker then resorted to freelance decorating to earn money to help restore PTC #53. During that period he also remodeled a vintage movie theatre and successfully fought to save Atlanta's historic Fox Theatre.

While still employed at the Southeastern Fair, Walker purchased a second merry-go-round. "My father decided I had to have a merry-go-round that worked, so I could make money to restore the big carousel. So he said why don't you find a carousel that works. I found one in Chattanooga, a 2 row Allan Herschell, and I thought, I'll buy it, make lots of money and I'll be able to fix the PTC and we'll all be millionaires."

When Walker went to look at the carousel he found, "a sad looking Allan Herschell with horses which looked like drowned rats. I fell in love with it immediately," he says. Walker's father chipped in and they bought the machine for \$3,500.00, including the trailer where the machine was stored.

Walker says, "It needed enormous amounts of work, too. But I got it all fixed up. I had the idea that I would get rid of the strange looking horses and replace them with fiberglass PTC type horses, to make it the prettiest little carousel on the road."

In the meantime Walker had to use the all-wooden Herschell horses. Eventually he fell in love with the charming horses he once called "drowned rats."

Walker's traveling antique became a popular attraction. It was the first amusement ride to be put back in Atlanta's historic Piedmont Park. Later Walker toured the 32

foot carousel at the Kentucky Horse Park, laying the ground work for a permanently installed carousel.

"In one day we rode 3,392 people on those 20 horses and 2 chariots," says Walker. The "trick," he says, is to sell tickets and run the line of customers all the way around the machine. That way, says Walker, the customers are entertained by the band organ and the other riders until they can take their turn. The kids love the band organ, says Walker. "They all ask what is that thing in the middle making the loud music. They've never seen a band organ."



In Walker's Atlanta studio, his PTC carved horses await their return to the 1920 frame.



Charles Walker spends much of his time trying to preserve wooden carousels. He likes nothing better than to talk about preservation, as he's doing here at a recent technical conference.

Walker worked for, then later purchased the Herschell Harrington Scenic and Lighting Studio, a theatrical lighting company near downtown Atlanta.

After buying the lighting company, Walker erected a huge concrete building behind his shop. What Walker didn't plan on was midtown Atlanta becoming the hot neighborhood.

"No sooner did I get involved than the land speculators came breathing down my neck wanting to buy the property and throw me out. They became a nuisance," says Walker.

Walker steadfastly turned down their offers of untold wealth to buy his property. After all, he needed a place to restore his carousel.

The 4 row, 1920 PTC #53 was scorched when it ran at Allentown, Pennsylvania, its first home. After being moved to Tampa, Florida, the horses suffered serious wood rot damage caused by high humidity. A metal floor had replaced the original wood platform.

Walker is facing a Herculean task, as he slowly restores the carousel. Restoration proceeds as finances permit, Walker ad-

The Carousel News & Trader, November, 1992

mits. Already he's spent more than \$20,000 he figures. "What happens," he says, "is the money keeps giving out. The last big expenditure was the brass, about \$7,000, and that sent me reeling," says Walker. "And it's going to be about another \$5,000 for the new floor." Such are the harsh realities of carousel restoration.

Saddled with the restoration of the carousel and trying to juggle a full time business, Walker has somehow managed to find the time to take on the duty of Conservation Chairman for the National Carousel Association. He is the logical choice. "It's not that we're necessarily conserving all of the old stuff in the old styles, but rather we're trying to keep these carousels together in one piece," he says.

He's taken his ideas and preservation concepts to the "front lines," the amusement park operators and the carousel owners. Walker has published a series of brochures and technical manuals which he hands out to carousel owners at the amusement park conventions. "It's nothing more than selling old to people who own old," he says. At first the owners were skeptical, "They thought I was selling something. When they found out I wasn't they came around to share their ideas."

Walker learned quickly that people love to get free hand-outs at conventions and they love to talk about their carousel. "Many park owners now realize that having a carousel in their park is like having money in the bank. All they have to do is protect and maintain it. They get lots of good PR from the old carousel," says Walker.

Charles Walker realizes he's helping to save a little of the past for those in the future. "About all we can expect," he says, "is to encourage the preservation of as many old carousels as we can. I don't know that it's possible to save them all. I think it's taking the owners to realize they can be immortalized by working with a non-profit group to make a museum piece of the machine that's in their park."

Walker believes that by working with carousel owners some machines have been saved from the auction block. And some carousel owners have been persuaded to donate their carousels to non-profit organizations. Owners, can often times deduct the carousel on their taxes after donating it.

As for auction houses that persuade owners to sell their carousels contending the machines are too valuable and fragile to be hauling passengers, Walker points out, "If the owners will just conserve their carousels and their parks, they'll slowly make money on them. It won't be quick money, but it will survive, and it's not going to hurt antique horses to be ridden or be in the weather. Wood is durable, it can be repaired," he concludes.



Charles Walker's 2 row Herschell carousel is a crowd pleaser. In one day more than 3,000 people climbed aboard its 20 wooden horses and 2 chariots.



Restoring band organs is also high on the accomplishment list of Charles Walker. He says, "You must have a band organ for the carousel. That is the magical element."

Sometimes Walker worries about the carousel "craze." He says, "There was a time when collectors clashed with preservationists. It's happened with lots of other preservation groups, too. Everybody filled their pockets with money. But now things have settled down. The big hype about the carousel horses has been created by the people who make the money off them, the auction houses, they've hyped the thing enormously."

Charles Walker believes antique carousels were built to last. "People seem to be a little too reverent," he says. "Like it's a religious experience to deal with these things. They were made to have fun on, for entertaining. They're still durable and entertaining today, if managed correctly."

June through August is when Charles Walker's lighting studio business slacks off enough to allow him time to continue restoring his PTC.

It's a slow going, monumental labor of love. "If I had a particular place for the carousel to go, I think I could divorce myself from the business long enough to get it together," Walker says. He dreads the thought of taking it all down and trying to re-assemble it somewhere else.

For those curious about when PTC #53 might be up and running again, Walker says, "I've been answering that question for years. I hope we all live long enough to ride it."

Up to his neck in work, the phone rings at Charles Walker's studio. "Your drop rods may be too long," he tells the caller, another inquiry from a carousel owner.

And so goes another day in the life of Charles Walker.



At a recent NCA Technical Conference near St. Louis, Walker admired the heavily carved horses aboard PTC #35 at Six FLags Over Mid-America.

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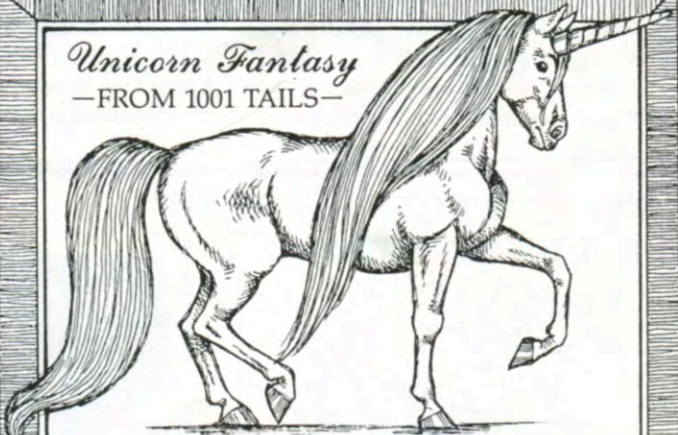


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Volunteers Work to Open Lake Compounce Park

By Kate Langeway

This Labor Day Weekend, Lake Compounce in Bristol, Connecticut began and ended its 147th season. Thanks to the dedication of many enthusiastic volunteers, Lake Compounce still holds the record for the longest continually operating amusement park in the country. Stretch Norton, whose great-grandfather Gad Norton founded the park in 1846, organized and inspired local volunteers to get the park up and operational one more time.

The weekend was a resounding success. Thousands of visitors from all over Connecticut listened to the Wurlitzer (repairs courtesy of a volunteer all the way from Rye, New York), ate hot dogs and cotton candy, and rode the carousel and several other rides made operational for this one special weekend.

The park's current financial difficulties have made its future uncertain. The carousel's auction was narrowly avoided in 1989 when legal action taken by Bristol and Southington residents aborted the attempted sale. How long the carousel can remain at Lake Compounce is still a big question.



The Lake Compounce carousel pavilion in Bristol, Connecticut on opening day September 4, 1992. The park was opened for four days and all monies raised went to local charities.

The carousel at Lake Compounce has operated there since 1911. It was installed after electricity was added to the park. The pavilion that housed the original Compounce carousel can be seen at the side of the Lake.

Built by B.A. Murphy, the second Compounce carousel includes 47 horses, one goat, two chariots, and the original Wurlitzer band organ. The animals include carvings by Loeff, Carmel, and Stein and Goldstein. The six most outstanding outside-row horses were no-where to be seen over Labor Day Weekend. Last year, park officials announced these very valuable figures

had been removed for safe-keeping and placed in storage.

Monies raised from the park's four days of operation are going to local charities, but the community didn't do this for money. They did it for love. Lake Compounce had always been a family place, an integral part of Bristol. No one wants to see it closed. The spirit that guided citizens to give up their weekends to clean and then operate the park can't easily be extinguished. If nothing else, a small part of this determination might be preserved to save the carousel.

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See carving pattern on page 48




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Small Wonders

Miniature Carousel Builders gather in Hampton, Virginia for their sixth annual convention.

Story by Karen Smith

The sixth annual convention of the Miniature Carousel Builders International (MCBI) took place on June 13 and 14 in Hampton, Virginia. The MCBI convention was held in conjunction with a special Children's Festival located on Hampton's downtown waterfront park, where the Hampton carousel is located.

The MCBI displays were set up in a room in the Radisson Hampton Inn, also located



Convention Chairman Charles Haverty of Virginia Beach, VA rides PTC #50. Pat Wentzel photo.



The gang's all here! More than 70 MCBI members, family and friends attended the sixth annual convention in Hampton, Virginia. They gathered outside PTC #50. Marsha Wentzel photo.

on the waterfront. Over 70 members, family and guests attended the convention. They came from as far away as California, Oregon, Florida and New York. Over 28 miniature carousels were on display. Members who were unable to transport their carousels because of distance brought carvings and photos to display.

The imagination of the MCBI members is endless. A wide variety of styles were available for viewing, from a solid brass carousel, to all wood carousels, to porcelain. Some of the carousel machines that were not com-

pleted had paper or cut-out figures to show how the carousel will look when they are finished.

Friday night offered an informal get-together where members could meet one another before the convention got underway. Pictures were exchanged and videos shown on carousels, miniature and full size.

On Saturday the convention was open to the public from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. MCBI members were always ready to show off their carousels and answer any questions. Both the general public and members



Herley Bailey of Princeton, West Virginia built this miniature carousel, one of more than 28 displayed at the convention. Karen Smith photo.



Carousel built entirely of wood by Ernest Hendricks of Detroit, Michigan. Members came from across the U.S. Karen Smith photo.



Harold Vandemark of Defiance, Ohio even built a ticket booth for his carousel. Karen Smith photo.



A hand-crafted band organ built by John Bowden of Hillsboro, Missouri. Karen Smith photo.

seemed to have a good time.

After the displays closed, MCBI members had a picnic dinner at the Radisson's poolside setting, overlooking the carousel park.

Sunday started with a private showing of the Hampton carousel, PTC #50. Members were allowed to photograph, ride and study the carousel from 10 a.m. until noon.

The Hampton carousel is a circa 1920 three-row machine, with 48 horses, 2 chariots and band organ. It was just restored in 1991 by R&F Design of Bristol, Connecticut.

Convention Chairman Charles Haverty from Virginia Beach did an excellent job of preparing and conducting the convention. Everyone had a good time, and can't wait until next year.

The seventh annual Miniature Carousel Builders International convention will be held in Memphis, Tennessee. For information about the MCBI, contact Patrick Wentzel, 2310 Highland Ave., Parkersburg, WV 26101-2901, (304) 428-3544.

POLITICIANS ON PONIES

November in the U.S. means elections, whether candidates are running for City Council, Mayor, Governor or President. Most politicians probably feel like they are competing in a horse race, and some candidates are often referred to as a "dark horse."

Usually donkeys and elephants are the symbols of the two leading political parties, but Governor Mario Cuomo of New York chose a Binghamton, New York steed for his ride.

Ed Aswad of Carriage House Photography in Binghamton sent us this photo. Binghamton is the sponsor of the next National Carousel Association Convention, scheduled for August 11-15, 1993.





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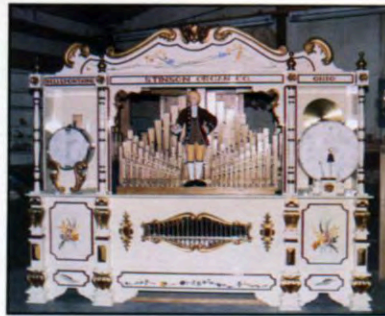
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DANIEL'S DEN HOLDS OPEN HOUSE

September 11 & 13, 1992

John and Cathy Daniel of Daniel's Den, South Pasadena, California hosted an open house at their studio on Friday September 11 and Sunday the 13th. The event was an additional compliment to the Jim Aten carousel art auction held in Santa Monica on Saturday the 12th.

The Daniels displayed many of their carousel animals as well as band organs, carved figures and other amusement collectibles. Many who traveled from across the country to attend the auction were pleased for this opportunity to visit the Daniels and enjoy their hospitality, and perhaps do a little shopping.

DENTIST'S CAROUSEL A PSYCHOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE

Story and photos
by Ben Morrison

Orthodontia is a highly skilled, technical science that requires the talents of an artist, particularly when dealing with youngsters.

Among his dental tools, Dr. Michael Healey counts pliers, which he uses to bend wires onto brackets of the braces he affixes to children's teeth. Like other orthodontists, you'll also find the usual array of picks and mirrors on Dr. Healey's table, as well as photographs and molds of his patients' teeth, both before and after treatment.

But when you're a dental patient of Dr. Michael Healey, your pain, if there is any, might just turn into pleasure. Among Dr. Healey's tools you'll find something no other dentist offers his clients.

It's an antique merry-go-round. Call it a psychological advantage if you will.

Michael and Carol Healey are carousel buffs. They started collecting individual figures for their home. Then they discovered a little two-row Parker carousel that was being sold by a carnival company. In 1989, the Healeys bought the machine from Derby State Shows. "We saved it from a scrap heap," says Michael.

The carnival company agreed to renovate the worn-out machine. Michael and Carol and some of their friends took charge of painting the 20 metal horses. Later the Healeys put a new, richly polished oak floor



Michael and Carol Healey take great pride in their Parker carousel.



Doctor Michael Healey of Dunwoody, Georgia operates a 1932 Parker carousel with 20 metal horses for his orthodontia patients. A brick and lattice pavilion was built adjacent to his office for the machine.

on the carousel and erected the machine in a new building adjacent to Michael's dental practice.

"It was definitely more work than we thought it was going to be," say the Healeys, "But the kids absolutely love it." Carousel owner, authority and Conservation Chairman for the National Carousel Association, Charles Walker, who lives in nearby Atlanta, was also instrumental in guiding the Healeys in operating their carousel. "Charles was immensely helpful," they said.

Their little Parker was probably manufactured before 1932. The Healeys believe their carousel was one of the last C.W. Parker made before closing the doors in Leavenworth, Kansas.

The vintage carousel operates several times each year for a children's open house. It's sort of a big party for the kids.

"When I operate the carousel," says Michael, "the kids see me in a different light." The dentist believes the carousel is providing his young clients with lasting, good-time memories.

The Healeys proudly admit to having active imaginations. "Some people purchase stocks and bonds, others collectibles. We got the carousel to share with friends," the couple says. "Besides, it's therapeutic and a good hobby."

To say the least, the Healeys have a one-of-a-kind exhibit in their Dunwoody, Georgia dental building. There were some quizzical glances when the carousel was erected. "It's the only ride in town that's covered," says the dentist. However, he adds, "To insure it I had to prove I wasn't running a carnival!"

From their dental chairs, Dr. Healey's young patients can view the brightly colored carousel and that, says the dentist, takes the young minds off what's happening in the chair. It helps some kids overcome their fear.

"Every time the kids come in, they want to ride it," says one dental technician. "The kids just love it." And what kid wouldn't!

Don't be surprised to see Dr. Healey working on more adults who elect to have braces once they find out was a pleasure it can be going to the orthodontist.



From his dental chair at the window, a young patient gazes upon Dr. Healey's carousel.

CAROUSEL BENEFITS COMMUNITY SERVICES

Burlington, North Carolina holds its Sixth Annual Carousel Festival.

The 1910 Dentzel menagerie carousel in Burlington, North Carolina raises community awareness. Residents of Alamance County know their beautiful carousel is worth preserving. They also know about the needs and goals of their local community service agencies, via the annual Carousel Festival. The festival was held on September 11 and 12, 1992 in the 56 acre Burlington City Park.

A portion of the proceeds raised by the Carousel Festival Committee through the sale of booth spaces, souvenirs and concessions are deposited into the Carousel Restoration Fund. This fund will help to ensure that the animals and operating mechanism will continue to be maintained.

D.A.R.E. (Drug Awareness Resistance Education) was selected once again to benefit from the festival's fund raising. Last year nearly \$2,000 in donations was presented to the non-profit organization.

"You Can't Beat a Woman" is the theme of the abused women's shelter in Burlington. Their food sales at the festival helped raise



A 1910 Dentzel menagerie carousel is the highlight of Burlington's City Park. The carousel came to the park in 1948 with 46 animals and 2 chariots. It was restored between 1981 and 1985.

funds to continue their mission. Groups such as the Sierra Club and Boy Scouts set up displays. Other non-profits sold a variety of refreshments throughout the event.

There is no admission charge at the festival, and no charge for the rides, including the carousel. Just as it is important to preserve the carousel for future generations, it is important to promote greater understanding among people of every ethnic background in the surrounding community. By charging no admission, ride or entertain-

ment fees, the Carousel Festival attracts people from all socio-economic levels.

Under the 100 foot long "carousel tent" 26 exhibitors displayed carousel art, gifts, carvings, stamps, t-shirts and more. Rosa Ragan demonstrated restoration techniques, and Jerry Reinhardt talked to audiences about carving miniature carousel animals, and the history of woodcarving and carousels.

John Dzedzy of Greenville, Delaware created a special commemorative print of



Diane Vaught is known as the driving force behind preserving the carousel, her favorite project.



Throughout the festival there were long lines to ride the carousel. It is a community treasure, operating from Easter through Halloween each year.



Local school children painted pictures of carousel animals, including a buffalo, shark, eagle and white tiger.



Friends of the Carousel sold t-shirts, ornaments, books, figurines and other items to raise monies for the ongoing restoration and maintenance.



Wanda Parks-Kenyon brought her stained glass, leaded glass Tiffany-style lamps and jewelry to the show. Next to her Roger and Darlene Hartis sold miniature carousels.

"Holly," the Burlington carousel's deer. The hand-signed poster was a big hit at the festival. A contribution of \$5 from the sale of each \$30 print was donated to the restoration fund.

New carvings by Steve Crescenze, Frank Caracci and Grady Pack fascinated visitors. The carvers spent much of their time explaining the process of creating a full-size carousel figure.

Local "celebrity" Grady Pack's first carousel carving drew a lot of attention after an article about him appeared in the Burlington Times-News. (See his story on page 39).

Frank Caracci's horse won "Best in Show" with a \$300 cash award. The natural wood horse was once a tree in front of his home. He bought an old sawmill and waited two years for the wood to dry out in order to carve the figure.

Many visitors expressed an interest in



Artist Nancy Straley (second from left) takes a break from selling paintings and prints. She watches as Rosa Ragan demonstrates stripping old paint with a heat gun.



Grady Pack poses with his first carving, a full-size horse. See story on page X for more on Grady.



Frank Caracci's horse won "Best in Show."

carving miniature figures as well, as whittling is a favorite pastime in North Carolina. Questions about where to find patterns, resources and reference materials buzzed throughout the tent.

Artists Patricia Baker, Nancy Straley

and Skee Johnson returned to Burlington again this year to enthused crowds. There were also ceramic carousel eggs, stained glass, lamps, Christmas ornaments, miniature carousels and gifts of all kinds.

Students at Burlington's schools did paintings of carousel animals which were displayed under the tent. Their imaginative work included a carousel eagle, cow and shark.

Outside the ball field was filled with arts and crafts booths, offering everything from bird houses to the very popular sponge alligators and pop guns the children clamored for.

There was plenty for children to do at the festival. In addition to the rides there was face painting, clowns, tattoos, story-telling, music, dancing, rope skipping, puppets and magic.

Music for every taste was performed on the Main Stage. The country music group "Wild Rose" performed on Sunday.

More than 50,000 people had a good time and are looking forward to next year's seventh annual festival.



Brad Thomas climbed aboard an ostrich to change a lightbulb. Staff and volunteers keep the carousel in immaculate condition.

CEDAR POINT RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL HONORS AS BEST AMUSEMENT PARK

Cedar Point amusement park/resort in Sandusky, Ohio has recently received honors on two continents, named the best amusement park of the year.

Readers of *Inside Track*, a publication that follows amusement park trends around the world, voted Cedar Point its favorite amusement park in its 1992 Amusement Park Readers Poll. The Delaware-based newsletter has nearly 2,000 subscribers in 12 countries.

In England, *First Drop*, the 500 member amusement park club of Great Britain, named Cedar Point the "Best Amusement Park in the United States" for the second consecutive year in its annual amusement park survey.

According to Mark Wyatt, editor of *Inside Track*, more than 1,000 subscribers responded to the survey. "I don't think anyone is more qualified to vote on the favorites in the amusement industry than those people who visit parks as a hobby," stated Wyatt. "Our readers go out of their way to spend their free time traveling around the world to various parks. They notice the little things that an average park guest probably wouldn't."

First Drop members agree with readers of *Inside Track*. Co-founders of the British club Andrew Hine and Justin Garvanovic conclude that their organization voted Cedar Point "the best" for many of the same reasons. "All of our members talk about visiting Cedar Point—if they haven't already," says Garvanovic.

Cedar Point operates a 4-abreast Prior & Church Racing Derby, 3 and 4 row Dentzel carousels, and a 4 row Daniel C. Muller machine.

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Figure 1.



Figure 2.

LOCAL CARVER IS A BIG HIT AT BURLINGTON CAROUSEL FESTIVAL

Grady Pack has worked with wood most of his life. His father was a general contractor and cabinet maker. Upon Grady's retirement from AT&T as a Material Planning Specialist in 1989, he worked on several crafts, clocks and cabinets, but never tried carving.



Figure 3.

Then in January 1992 Grady decided to carve a carousel horse. After discussing the idea with Diane Vaught, the driving force behind the Burlington carousel restoration project, he made a pattern. By projecting a slide of one of Diane's own horses on the wall, he was able to draw a pattern which fit the dimensions of the actual figure. The pattern was transferred to cardboard and fit together. (Figure 1).

Once he had a pattern, Grady cut the body pieces out of basswood. (Figure 2). Because his bandsaw is not large enough to glue the coffin type body together and then cut it, he cut each of the 12 body pieces separately and laminated them together.

That's when the actual carving was ready to begin. The horse's head, neck and legs were glued, cut and carved before final assembly, and contains 50 separate pieces. (Figure 3).

Beginning carving on May 12, Grady finished the figure on August 1, spending more than 300 hours on the carving alone. He estimates he spent 30 hours on the pattern, 140 on gluing and cutting, 50 on sanding, and 60 hours painting the finished horse.

A real tail from Sally Craig completes the figure (see page 37 for photo of the finished horse). When asked if he will carve another, Grady says he is ready, although this time he knows what to do differently.

Hollywood Park Racetrack Invites Participants

Hollywood Park is planning an event to celebrate their San Antonio Roller Works carousel in December, 1992. The carousel was featured in the October, 1992 issue of *The Carousel News & Trader*.

Patti Nash is anxious to hear from readers, vendors, painters, carvers and anyone who would be interested in participating in the event. A tentative date of December 12 is set.

The racetrack has undergone extensive renovations and draws large crowds during the horse racing season which begins in November.

Please contact Patti at (310) 419-145 (work) or (310) 927-0694 (home) to indicate your interest in this event. Everyone is invited to join in the fun and ride this unique metal carousel decorated in a racing theme.

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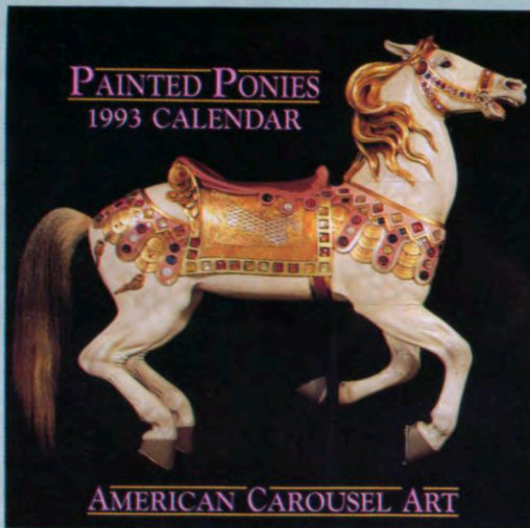
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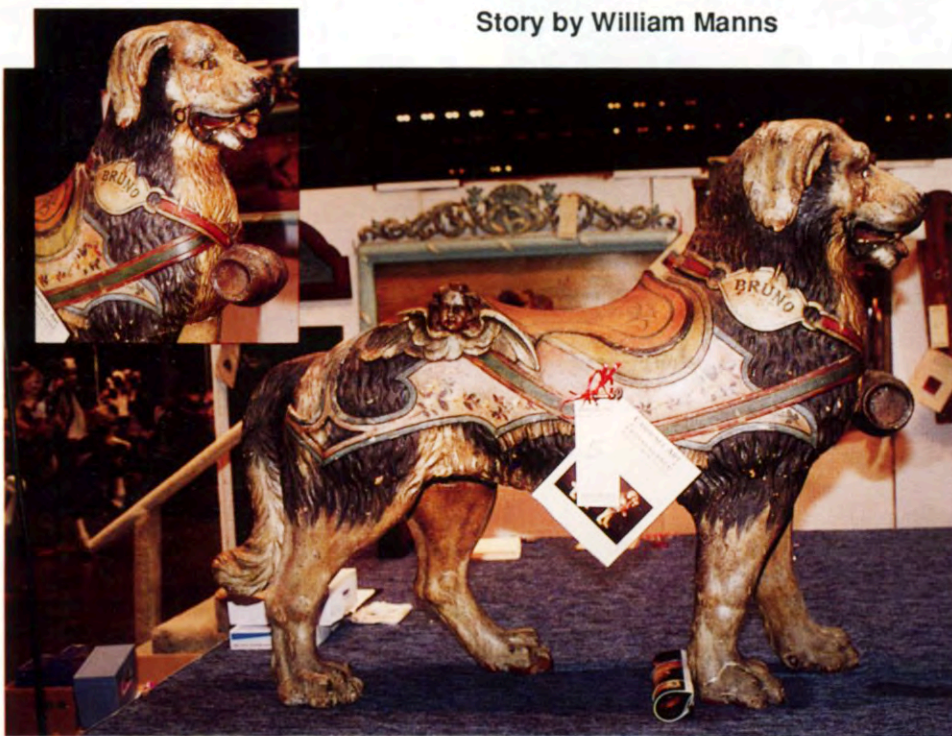
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California Carousel Auction Sets World Record!

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Story by William Manns



Bruno, one of five PTC St. Bernards, set a new World Record price for any carousel figure when he sold at public auction for \$174,900

A thundering herd of over 100 carousel ponies and menagerie figures were rounded up for a carousel art auction extravaganza held on September 12, 1992 at the Santa Monica Civic Center in California. The show's promoters, Jim and Gayle Aten from Portland, Oregon, have long been collectors and dealers in the highly specialized carousel art field.

The preview on Friday offered a few additional benefits as Jim Aten and John Daniel, from Daniel's Den in South Pasadena, California, gave a short presentation on carousel art collecting, including some history on values and the joy of collecting. They also took some questions from the guests on the topic. Carousel restoration artist Pamela Hessey from Martinez, California gave a short talk on paint restoration and technique. John Hughes from San Jose, California, did a demonstration of wood restoration and repair.

According to Aten, carousel art has been one of the strongest antique categories for more than a decade. During the past 10 or 12 years prices have increased 300 per cent to 2,000 per cent, with increases of 300 to 800 per cent being typical. Some exceptional animals have done much better.

A decade ago the world record for a carousel animal was just over \$20,000. The current record is more than eight times that amount. America's love affair with carousel art was rekindled in the early 1970's when a small group of enthusiasts formed an organization to promote carousel art awareness and historic research.

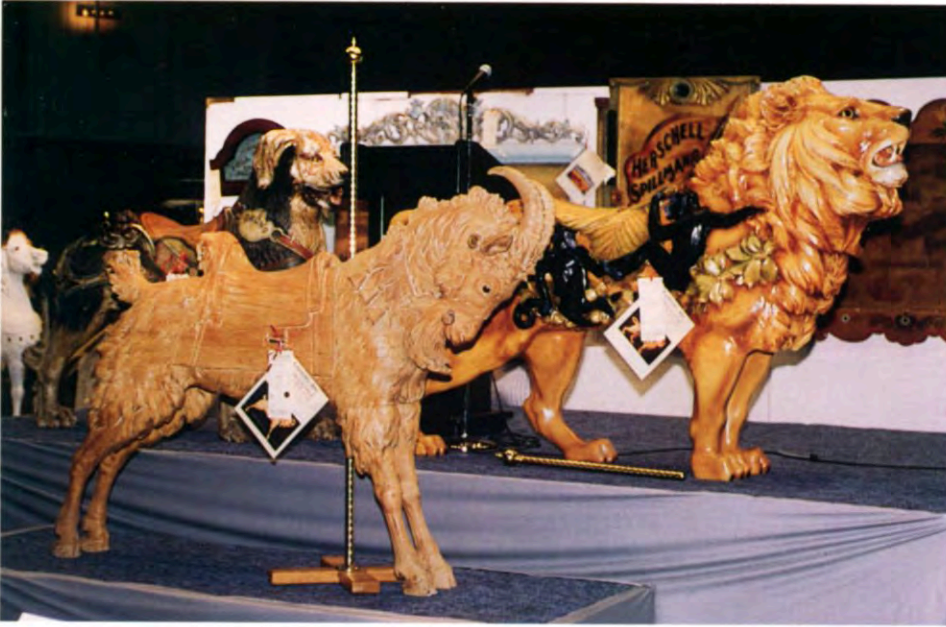
Jumping, prancing, snorting ponies that



This outstanding Muller stander "Circus" horse set a new record for a Muller equine at \$79,500.



Jim Aten from Portland Oregon, manager of the auction poses in front of the now famous "Bruno".



Three record setters hold center stage before the auction. The Muller butting goat sold for \$76,850, the Dentzel lion at \$95,400 and of course the PTC St. Bernard.



Auctioneer Gorden Riewe offers an outstanding Carmel stander that sells for \$24,380.



A good crowd views the 130 lots of top of the line carousel art items.

The Carousel News & Trader, November, 1992

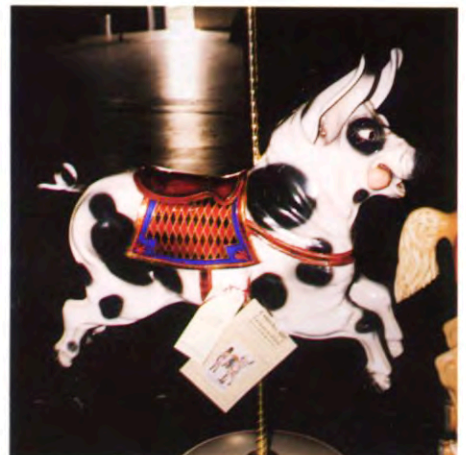
were allowed to wither away on the midway are now sought out for the fine art carvings which they are now recognized as. Their creators who were little known in their own time are now revered as master artists. Names like Marcus Illions, Charles Carmel, Daniel Muller and the Dentzels are the big names in the carousel art market whose carvings were offered. Over 500 bidders and guests traveled from throughout the U.S. and Canada to attend the exceptional Santa Monica auction.

The richly illustrated color auction catalog was a visual feast for a carousel fan. It included many of the rarest menagerie animals and over two dozen outside row standing horses, the largest and more ornate figures highly desirable for the advanced collector.

Unlike most carousel auctions, where the majority of the figures are smaller inner row jumpers, Aten's sale featured primarily more expensive, higher quality figures. Given the current economic slump and pre-election political unrest, many knowledgeable carousel dealers questioned whether or not the market could carry such a high end auction.

Anyone who doubted the strength of the carousel market was soon set straight. The auction attracted almost every serious collector of carousel art and the dealers who specialize in the wooden animals. Aten had publicized the sale for well over four months throughout the country.

The first horse to be put up for sale was a circa 1920's Illions outside row stander with a wild golden mane. A young San Francisco area couple bought it for \$32,330 (all prices quoted include a 6% buyer's premium). A great start for a great auction. The first five figures brought over \$525,000 and the sale had just begun! A circa 1906 carousel St. Bernard by the Philadelphia Toboggan Company in original paint sold for a new world record of \$174,900.



This very unusual pig by an unknown carver still brought a bid of \$6,360.



John Daniel (left) and Jim Aten answer questions from the crowd during an informal time of discussion about carousel art collecting during the preview time on Friday evening.



This miniature English style carousel was consigned by Ken Highfield. It was built in England in the 30's and had to be rewired for 110 volt power. It sold for \$6,360.

Auctioneer Gordon Riewe was enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Riewe conducted his most important sale ever as he went on to set even more records. He sold a butting goat, one of only five in existence, for \$76,850, a new record for a menagerie animal by artist Daniel Muller.

It was obvious that exceptional art sells for premium prices regardless of the

economy. The serious collector turned out in record numbers for a chance to own the very best of the carousel carvers' art.

The auctioneer set the next record for a carousel lion when he sold the king of beasts by Dentzel for \$95,400. The lion had two well carved monkeys hanging from a palm leaf saddle carved on the side. The record setting day wasn't over yet. A Daniel Muller

roached mane outside row standing horse, circa 1905-10, brought \$79,500, a new record for a Muller equine. It also ranked as the third highest selling carousel horse purchased at auction. This exciting auction may have set a record for setting records!

Other outstanding animals included a Philadelphia Toboggan Company, circa 1919 horse, decorated with a bearskin and Indian



This restored Illions stander sold for a bid of \$32,330.



This lovely E. Joy Morris strolling deer was a good buy at \$16,960.



This signed Illions lion was nicely restored and sold for \$42,400.



This rare Illions standing tiger drew a lot of interest and sold for \$34,450.



This great little inside row Loeff running ram found a new home for a bid of \$12,720.



These panels from Presidents Park carried pictures of many well known persons and sold for \$530 each.

The Carousels News & Trader, November, 1992 head that fetched \$39,750. A Daniel Muller signature horse, circa 1907, went for \$58,300. Menagerie carvings by William Dentzel included a jumping rabbit that went for \$34,450, a leaping pig brought \$11,660, and a running ostrich, circa 1915, sold for \$16,960. A giraffe, circa 1910 by Herschell Spillman, fetched \$30,740 and a circa 1916 jumping ram by Charles Loeff brought \$12,720.

The auction did have a good selection of middle row and portable carousel animals of the Country Fair style. These lively ponies ranged in price from \$2,200 for a circa 1890's Armitage Herschell horse to \$4,505 for a circa 1918 C.W. Parker jumper with an American flag on the side. There were well over a dozen smaller horses that sold for \$5,000 or less.

Along with all the exceptional carousel animals there was an equally fine group of carousel scenery panels, ornamental shields, chariots and other carousel artwork. An extraordinary Herschell Spillman signature panel, circa 1910, in original paint sold for \$3,816. A cherub decorated a single seat chariot by Charles Loeff, circa 1905, sold for \$4,982. A Wurlitzer band organ model 145B brought \$13,780.

This blockbuster auction grossed over \$1,600,000. The average horse sold for more than \$15,000. Prices for horses ranged from just over \$1,000 to almost \$100,000. There certainly was a horse for every budget.

With many first time buyers present it became too much for some as they were heard to let out a yell when they were successful in purchasing one of the figures. Sometimes their friends would even applaud for them. Animals were purchased and shipped all across the country.

ATEN CAROUSEL AUCTION

Santa Monica, California, September 12, 1992

Prices listed include the 6% Buyers Premium. (X) indicates not in catalog. OR (outside row), MR (middle row), IR (inner row).

Lot	Cat. Pg. #	Item	Price
5	3	PTC St. Bernard	\$174,900
64	21	Dentzel lion, Sterling Forest, NY	95,400
116	39	Muller, stander, OR Conneaut Lake Pk, PA	79,500
7	4	Muller, OR butting goat	76,850
65	21	Muller, OR stander, initialed eagle	58,300
30	12	M.C. Illions standing lion, signed	42,400
34	13	PTC, OR stander, "Indian Pony"	39,750
77	25	Charles Loeff, OR leaping lion	37,100
31	X	M.C. Illions standing tiger	34,450
56	19	Dentzel jumping rabbit	34,450
68	22	Dentzel standing giraffe	34,450
1	1	M.C. Illions, OR stander	32,330
53	18	Herschell Spillman, OR standing giraffe	30,740
4	3	Dentzel jumping cat, w/fish	29,150
47	16	Carmel, OR jumper	29,150
75	24	PTC, OR stander, Petticoat Junction	28,620
2	2	Carmel, OR stander, Eldridge Pk.	26,500
28	11	Dentzel, OR stander	26,500
48	17	Carmel, OR stander, Eldridge Pk.	26,500
14	7	Gustav Dentzel, c. 1890, OR stander	25,440
49	17	Carmel, OR stander, Eldridge Pk.	25,440
97	32	Stein & Goldstein, OR stander	25,440
81	26	PTC, OR stander	24,910
3	2	Carmel, OR stander, Eldridge Pk.	24,380
99	33	Carmel, OR stander, Eldridge Pk.	24,380
78	25	Muller Dentzel, OR stander	23,850
23	10	Carmel, OR stander, Eldridge Pk.	22,260
27	11	E. Joy Morris, OR stander, Lakemont Pk.	18,020
70	23	E. Joy Morris, MR jumping zebra	18,020
22	9	Dentzel running ostrich	16,960
25	10	PTC, OR stander from PTC #31	16,960
87A	X	E. Joy Morris strolling deer	16,960
57	19	C.W. Parker jumper	15,900
9	5	Gustav Bayol jumping donkey	15,900
32	12	Gustav Dentzel, OR stander	15,370
10	5	Herschell Spillman, OR stander	14,840
86	28	Carmel, MR stander	14,840
85A	X	E. Joy Morris sea monster	14,840
35	13	M.C. Illions, OR jumper, Indian pony	14,310
36	13	Wurlitzer, model 145B, Band Organ	13,780
17	8	Herschell Spillman, OR stander	13,250
55	19	M.C. Illions, OR jumper	13,250
54	18	Loeff, IR running ram	12,720
20	9	Dentzel jumping pig	11,660
21	9	Stein & Goldstein, MR jumper, Indian pony	11,660
45	16	PTC, "chariot horse", stander	11,660
93	31	Carmel, MR jumper	11,395
46	16	M.C. Illions, OR jumper	10,600
12	6	Loeff, IR jumper	9,540
74	24	Muller, MR jumper	9,540
87	29	PTC or Morris, prancing deer	9,540
89	30	Stein & Goldstein, MR jumper	9,540
6	4	Daniel Muller, MR jumper	9,010
8	5	E. Joy Morris prancing goat	9,010
82	27	Muller, IR jumper	9,010
98	32	Muller, IR jumper	8,215
88	29	Dentzel, IR "top knot" jumper	7,685
11	6	M.C. Illions, IR stander	7,420
50	17	Carmel, MR jumper	7,420
80	26	Muller, IR jumper	7,420
92	31	Carmel, MR jumper	7,420
15	7	Loeff, MR jumper Eldridge Pk.	6,890
511	36	Muller, IR jumper	6,625
16	7	C.W. Parker jumper	6,360
29	11	Loeff dragon chariot	6,360
91	30	M.C. Illions, IR stander	6,360
100	33	C.W. Parker, IR jumper	6,360
109	36	Carousel pig, carver unknown	6,360
110	36	Dentzel, IR jumper	6,360
66A	X	English miniature carousel	6,360
69	23	Loeff, IR jumper	5,300
86A	X	Orton & Spooner two seat dragon	5,300
112	37	Loeff scenery panel	5,088
33	12	Loeff complete chariot	4,982
71A	X	Heyn prancer	4,770
66	22	C.W. Parker	4,505
101	34	C.W. Parker jumper, flag	4,505
38	14	Herschell-Spillman chariot side	4,250
42	15	E. Joy Morris, IR stander	4,240
52	18	C.W. Parker jumper	4,240
43	15	Allan Herschell, OR jumper, Trojan mane	4,240
44	15	Herschell-Spillman jumper	4,240
71	23	C.J. Spooner (English) rooster	4,240
83	27	Loeff, IR stander	4,240
108	35	Illions, IR jumper	4,240
106	35	Allan Herschell, Trojan mane, jumper	4,240
59	20	Herschell-Spillman, signed scenery panel	3,816
13	6	Loeff, IR stander, Eldridge Pk.	3,710
105	35	Loeff, IR jumper	3,710
107	35	C.W. Parker, IR jumper	2,915
107A	X	Dare jumper	2,597
79	26	Armitage Herschell jumper	2,544
95	31	Anderson (English) jumper	2,332
102	34	Armitage Herschell jumper	2,226
102A	X	Armitage Herschell, OR jumper	2,120
57A	X	Illions Supreme rounding board	1,908
84	27	European, small lion	1,855
40	14	Herschell-Spillman chariot side	1,696
39	14	Devos (French) chariot side	1,325
61	20	Spillman Engineering signed scenery panel	1,272
113	37	Dentzel rounding board panel	1,060
114	37	Dentzel rounding board panel	1,060
55A	X	Illions Supreme inner cornice	1,060
100A	X	Allan Herschell, IR, half & half	1,060
58	20	Dentzel signature panel	1,060
62	20	PTC signature panel	742
60	20	T.F. Murphy, signature on canvas	530
63	20	M.B. Borelli signature panel	530
113A	X	Panels from Presidents Pk.	530
117A-120A		Loeff mirrored rounding boards	318
18	8	C.W. Parker, OR jumper, Hunters Pride	Passed
19	8	Illions, OR hippocampus, restored	Passed
24	10	Muller, MR jumper	Passed
26	11	E. Joy Morris, OR stander	Passed
41	15	Loeff, MR stander	Passed
67	22	PTC, OR stander	Passed
76	24	Allan Herschell, OR stander (Rockwell)	Passed
85	28	Loeff, OR jumper	Passed
90	30	Dentzel, MR prancer	Passed
94	31	Loeff, MR prancer	Passed
96	32	Dentzel rounding board	Passed
115	38	Carmel, OR stander, armored	Passed

THE SUCCESSOR TO THE BAND ORGAN

Story by Harvey Roehl

"Greatly increasing the merry-go-round's legendary patron-pulling power, the Merri-Org is rapidly becoming widely heralded as the perfect postwar successor to the old style band organ. Smartly designed, precision engineered, handsomely finished, this portable-type instrument already has solidly established itself as TODAY'S BEST ANSWER to the problem of furnishing better band organ music for carousels more easily and economically!"

What IS this marvelous device? Will wonders never cease?

Right after the end of World War II, the folks at Allan Herschell had great plans for this new technology which, we now know, was a record-changer and amplifier inside an Art Deco-styled cabinet. They called it the "Merri-Org." We can assume they were attempting to capitalize on the heavy cost of maintenance of traditional carousel organs, and to gain additional income from sale of the 78 RPM records of the day to be played on their amazing new device.


The first we ever heard about these was when Larry Kilmer of Olean, New York offered a gift of several of the disks that he'd had for many a day. We were delighted to obtain them, and promptly took them to the chap who does our recording work; he in turn played them for us in his studio that's jammed with high-tech state-of-the-art equipment. It was apparent that with a lot of clean-up work, re-recording of these for release on audio cassettes was a possibility.

We set out to look for more of these old 78s, and finally purchased and borrowed enough to produce 45 minutes of carousel music to record on cassettes to market to the public. About half of the records obtained were so worn they were unable to be "cleaned" well enough for commercial sales.

What made the project so interesting was trying to learn more about how the records were developed. Dick Bowker, David Stumpf

Junior Merri-Org

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- ★ SMART APPEARANCE . . . Sturdy plywood cabinet is gayly decorated in bright enamel with chrome and stainless steel trim.
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- ★ TROUBLE-FREE OPERATION . . . Engineered to give long, dependable service without costly repairs, maintenance or adjustments.

ALLAN HERSCHELL COMPANY, Inc.
NORTH TONAWANDA, N. Y.

(more about David in the August, 1992 CN&T), and several other friends have been helpful in trying to piece together the story of this product.

We now know that the recording was done by Howell Custom Recording of Buffalo, and that the recordings were made in Allan Herschell's North Tonawanda factory. We know that the records were issued between 1948 and 1957, and that the initial price was \$2.50 each, as quoted by John Wendler, Allan Herschell's President, in a letter to Dick Bowker dated October 11, 1948. But by then the price had already been reduced! Mr. Wendler states "You will be glad to hear that these records now sell for \$1.50 f.o.b. North Tonawanda, New York. They formerly sold for \$2.50."

An interesting sidelight, Dick points out, is that one of the disks, their #136 (36 records were produced) has the same music on both sides in spite of what the label says!

But the big remaining mystery at this time is what organ was recorded? Everyone who has heard them agrees that the music is from WurliTzer 165 paper rolls, but beyond

that it's pure speculation.

Several noted experts who have listened to the resulting audio tapes have stated that it's not pure WurliTzer band organ, and that it must be a modified European instrument. Another friend of vast musical talent says it has to be a modified WurliTzer theatre organ of some sort.

We asked Jack Hartman of North Tonawanda, a retiree from the business, for his recollections. His letter to us says:

"As near as I can remember back in 1945 or 1946 an organ from Endicott or Binghamton was sent to the Allan Herschell factory to be repaired by the T.R.T. Co. (no longer in business.) [Note: T. Ralph Tussing was the expert repairman who eventually bought the repair part of the organ business from WurliTzer.] While it was being repaired the music played constantly. The Howell Music Co. (also no longer in business) came

from Buffalo and recorded the music. This was a WurliTzer #165."

Mr. Hartman's letter only deepens the mystery!

Vestal, New York is a suburb of Endicott, Binghamton, and Johnson City. Readers of *The Carousel News & Trader* are well aware that these three communities collectively consider this "the carousel capital of the world" on the strength of having six Allan Herschell carousels, right here where they were placed in community parks back in the 1920s by George F. Johnson. He was the very civic-minded founder of the Endicott-Johnson shoe empire, and his gifts of these machines carried the stipulation that rides be forever free to the children of all ages of the area.

Today, near the end of the century, two of these carousels still have their band organs. They were in wretched condition until fairly recently when the Binghamton Kiwanis club financed their restoration to fine playing condition. The organ that was on the carousel at En-Joie park in Endicott is in private hands. This leaves three organs to be accounted for—two in small parks in Endicott

and the one in Johnson City. No one on the local scene has come up with any information as to what happened to the Endicott organs, assuming that these carousels were equipped with organs.

The two remaining carousels in Endicott are too small to have justified a big organ, and the organ on the one in Johnson City—a four-row machine—was destroyed in the '36 flood and was never replaced, according to a local authority. So perhaps Mr. Hartman has our area confused with another locale.

On the other hand, another former Allan Herschell employee who lives in Kansas replied to our query with a brief letter in which he said he believed the organ was something built-up especially for the project.

Meanwhile, we're "on the look-out" to buy, borrow or steal any of the remaining 78 RPM disks, because it's obvious that carousel music lovers are anxious to have more of this material to enjoy on their own tape players. If we can get the records, we'll produce a Volume 2. And we continue to be interested in unraveling the mystery about the organ used to make the original recordings.

The horse that appears on the cassette jacket has historic significance for us too. He (or she) is an Allan Herschell, our first carousel animal, that we bought from a dealer when we attended the founding meeting of the National Carousel Association, held at Heritage Plantation in Sandwich, Massachusetts in 1973. My wife Marion put in many hours of restoration work to bring this steed back to "life" and we're especially pleased that Jim Weaver, who does commercial art work for us, has so wonderfully captured the spirit of the carousel in the limited space available on a cassette jacket!



David Stumpf provides this photograph of a Merri-Organ on an Allan Herschell carousel.

Allan W. Jayne, Jr. of Nashua, New Hampshire provides some interesting observations about the Historic Carousel Music tape.

In a letter to Marion Roehl, he writes "The organ sounds like a WurliTzer 157, which is almost as large as the WurliTzer 165 and plays the 165 rolls. A distinguishing characteristic of the 157 is its tuning to approximately A-660 (or A-440 key of G) and the sound is noticeably lighter and less reedy than the 165. The 157 also has its fundamental counter melody pipes tuned to above middle C which is the case with the organ on the recording.

Since the Binghamton, New York band organs are both WurliTzer 150 models, these new findings would rule out the possibility that one of them was the "Mystery Organ" used for the Merri-Organ records.

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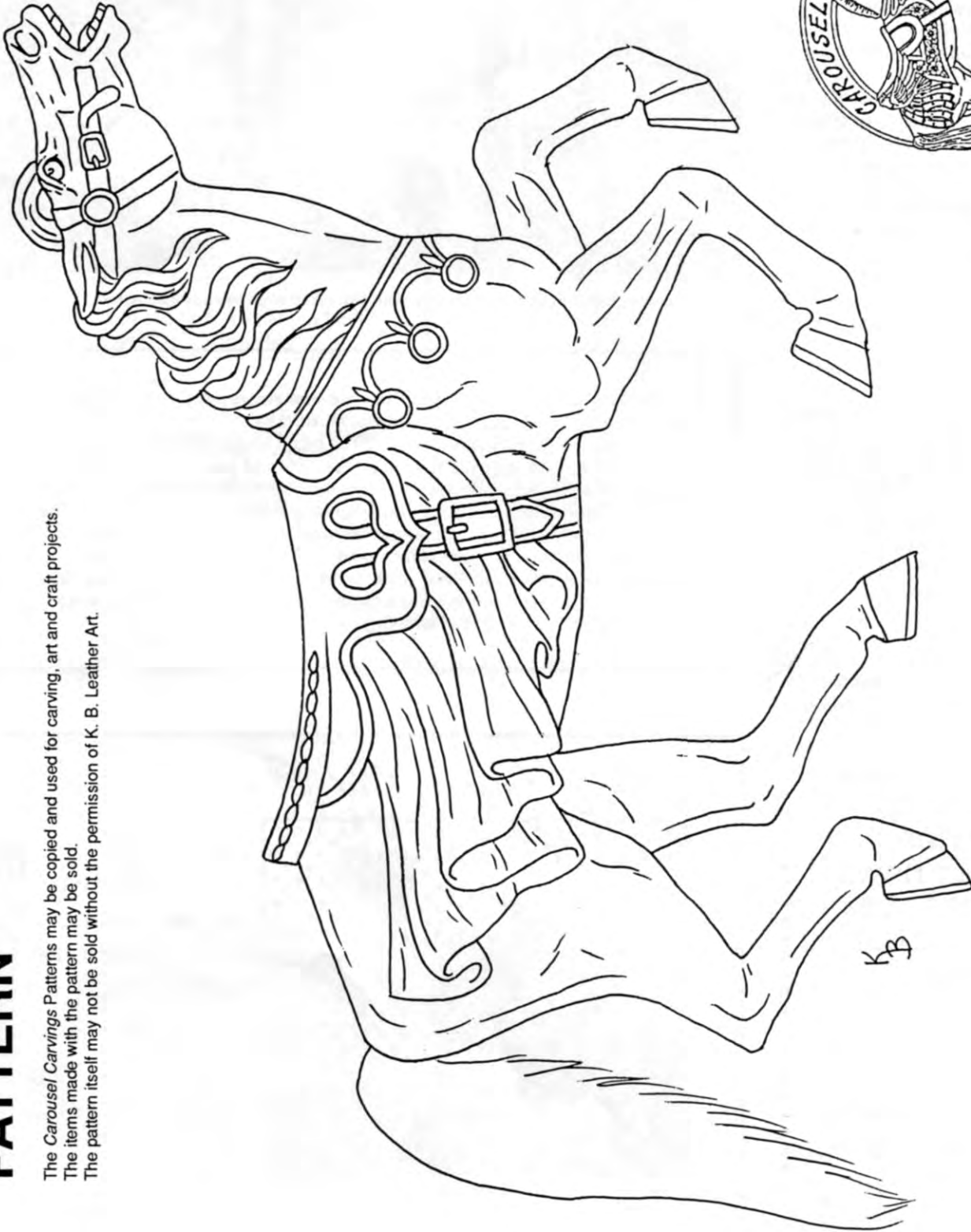
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DENTZEL JUMPER pictured on page 51 of Dinger's "Art of the Carousel", \$16,000. Others available. Send for list. Amusement Arts, Box 1158 Jerome Ave., Burlington, CT 06013. Phone (203) 675-7653.

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LOOFF OUTER-ROW JUMPER, 1884 Keansburg, NJ machine, pictured page 40 (c102) Guernsey's 1987 Saratoga Auction. Exquisitely restored, \$24,000. Nancy Stralley's famous "Windracers," AP24/30, \$2,800. Parker chariot side, banner and dolphin, \$1,800. Parker bench style chariot, bird on one side, restored, \$1,000. Four piece chariot with one seat, decorative flower and leaf motif, \$2,000. 24" dia. motorized carousel with 8 PJ's horses, \$2,200. S.A.S.E. and \$1.00 per photo. Paul Brunner, 4508 Golfpark, Lynchburg, VA 24502. (804) 237-2564.

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TUSCORA PARK CAROUSEL SUBJECT OF NEW VIDEO

The "star" of New Philadelphia, Ohio's Tuscora Park amusement rides has become the subject of a new video presentation. The 1928 Spillman carousel is featured in a 30 minute video program that provides an entertaining look at the carousel, the Wurlitzer 153 band organ, and the people most responsible for the restoration and preservation of this priceless treasure.

The video presentation was done on behalf of the New Philadelphia Rotary Club. The club has been closely connected with the amusement rides at Tuscora Park since 1985 when a group of club members, headed by Richard Geib II, formed R.T.Y. Corporation. The non-profit corporation assumed operation of the park rides which had been closed when the city couldn't find liability insurance coverage. Since then, new rides have been added and the carousel housed inside a permanent pavilion.

The video program includes interviews with Tom Layton of Sandusky and Don Stinson of Bellfontaine, Ohio. Layton restored and painted the wooden horses and carousel panels in 1979, and has provided continuing restoration work since then. Layton describes the restoration process and shows before and after photos of the carousel horses. The Wurlitzer band organ was restored by Don Stinson of the Stinson Organ Company, who details the operation of the band organ, regarded as one of the best of its type in the country.

The New Philadelphia Rotary Club will celebrate its 75th anniversary in 1993 and will restore the park's amphitheater to mark the occasion. Funds raised from the sale of the video will benefit the project.

There's plenty of footage of the carousel with its outstanding restoration. This is no longer a humble country carousel, and is one of Tom Layton's best efforts.

Band organ enthusiasts will enjoy hearing the bright and sparkling tones produced by the Wurlitzer 153. The film is both a visual and auditory treat.

The video program is on sale at the Tuscora Park office. To order a copy of the program by mail, send a check for \$21.75 to: Tarulli Video Productions, 810 Cookson Avenue SE, New Philadelphia, OH 44663.



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