

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAR 19 1976

DATE ENTERED APR 21 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Crescent Park carousel

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Bullock's Point Avenue

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

East Providence

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

__ VICINITY OF #1 (Rep. Fernand J. St. Germain)

STATE

Rhode Island

CODE

44

COUNTY

Providence

CODE

007

3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**

__DISTRICT

__BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

__SITE

__OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

__PUBLIC

PRIVATE

__BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

__IN PROCESS

__BEING CONSIDERED

STATUSOCCUPIED

__UNOCCUPIED

__WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLEYES: RESTRICTED

__YES: UNRESTRICTED

__NO

PRESENT USE

__AGRICULTURE

__COMMERCIAL

__EDUCATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

__GOVERNMENT

__INDUSTRIAL

__MILITARY

__MUSEUM

__PARK

__PRIVATE RESIDENCE

__RELIGIOUS

__SCIENTIFIC

__TRANSPORTATION

__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Captain Rocky Incorporated

STREET & NUMBER

Rocky Point

CITY, TOWN

Warwick

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Rhode Island

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

City Hall

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

East Providence

STATE

Rhode Island

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

not so represented

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Crescent Park carousel was probably built shortly after its manufacturer Charles Looff (1852-1918) signed a lease with the park's owner for the construction and operation of the ride in April, 1895. It was extant by July, 1898, when a photograph of the structure appeared in the Providence Journal of Commerce.

The machine has a circular wooden platform fifty feet in diameter with four figures abreast, including 62 horses, four chariots and a camel. It is larger than the average carousel of the period, and is unusual because all the animals are of different design. Atop the center post is a large wooden eagle, approximately four feet in wingspread, covered with gold leaf. Most of the figures probably date between 1905, when Looff arrived at Crescent Park, and 1910, when he left for Long Beach, California. The rim and center facade (enclosing the driving mechanism) are in a florid neo-baroque style typical of Looff's work, but somewhat restrained for carousel panels of the period. The band organ was installed shortly after the turn of the century and was manufactured by A. Ruth and Son, a noted German manufacturer of these instruments. Repeatedly, Looff promoted the sale of Ruth's organs to accompany his carousels, and the one here was made especially for display purposes. Originally, it employed a 94 keyless organ (played by air pressure) using cardboard books; but this was replaced early on by a Wurlitzer 165 military band organ roll mechanism.

The shed, also of Looff's design, is a fourteen-sided wood frame structure, its roof supported by two rows of vertical posts and suspended in the center by steel tension rods. It is enclosed by an unadorned frame consisting of four sliding and four stationary window panels on each bay, with vertical siding below. Four bays, and originally several more, carry two sets of double-folding doors giving access to the interior. Above, each bay has three-panel stationary transom windows with border panes of colored glass. This articulation is repeated at the clerestory, on line with the inner row of posts. Originally, the roof rose to a peak; sometime before 1909, Looff added the cupola and onion dome.

Both carousel and band organ were initially powered by steam supplied from the park's central plant. This source has been replaced by a fifteen horsepower, 550 volt, three-phase electric motor located within the structure. Lighting came from a large gas chandelier suspended over the center pole. Its fittings remain in situ. Probably by the 1920's, gas lights were replaced by 25-watt electric bulbs attached to the posts, carousel sweeps, and center facade.

The carousel and its shed remain in an excellent state of repair; recent painting of the figures and the frame as well as the shed's interior have generally conformed to the early twentieth century coloration. The carousel is prominently sited on a slight rise, at the main entrance to the park, overlooking the midway.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Recreation
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1895, dome before 1909 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Charles Looff, designer

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Crescent Park carousel is among the finest surviving examples of its type in the country, and a first-rate product of Charles I. D. Looff (1852-1918), one of the earliest and foremost manufacturers of carousels in the United States.

A native of Schleswig-Holstein, Looff immigrated to New York in 1870. Although he was trained as a furniture maker, he soon began to use his spare time constructing a carousel for Balmer's Pavilion at Coney Island (1876). Looff was probably the first man in the country both to carve the horses for these rides and to make their frames. He entered the business full-time in 1880, opening a plant at Greenpoint in Brooklyn. His operation never grew to be a large one, when compared to such other carousel makers as the Philadelphia Toboggan Company or Gustave A. Dentzel. This was partially due to the fact that Looff did much of the carving himself, and closely supervised four assistants who joined his workshop by 1890. The quality of his work quickly earned him a considerable reputation. During his career, Looff designed and built carousels throughout the United States.

Several orders came from parks in Rhode Island, including Rocky Point in Warwick (ca. 1892, destroyed), Boyden Heights in East Providence (ca. 1900, moved or destroyed), and Crescent Park. Of these the Crescent Park carousel was the largest and most elaborate. Here he opened a branch factory for regional business under the supervision of Thomas Murphy. In 1905, when his Brooklyn works were condemned for new development, Looff moved to East Providence and made the plant at Crescent Park his base of operations. This was housed in an unassuming wooden building attached to the rear of the carousel (with a six-room apartment on the second floor probably serving as his living quarters). Although it had long since ceased to serve its original function, this structure remained until recently.

Once relocated in Rhode Island, Looff proceeded to embellish the Crescent Park carousel so that it could be used as a display for prospective clients. New horses were added over the next few years, each different, and each representing the latest model. Thus, the

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Carvers and their Merry-go-Rounds" Exhibition catalogue for the Second Annual Conference, National Carousel Roundtable, Flint, Michigan, October 25-28, 1974.
 Christenson, Erin O. Early American Woodcarving. Cleveland and New York: 1952.

See Continuation Sheet 3

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

780			240							
A	1,9	3,0,3	7,6,5	4,6	2,5	2,7,5	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C							D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

City of East Providence Assessor's Plats: Plat 56, lot 118
 (section on east side of Bullock's Point Avenue, approx. 450 feet south of Crescent View Avenue)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Richard W. Longstreth, Senior Survey Specialist

ORGANIZATION

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

DATE

March 16, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

150 Benefit Street

TELEPHONE

401-277-2678

CITY OR TOWN

Providence

STATE

Rhode Island

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

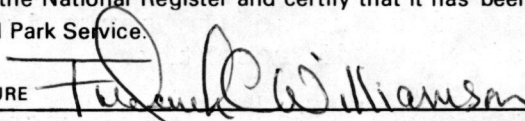
NATIONAL XX

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



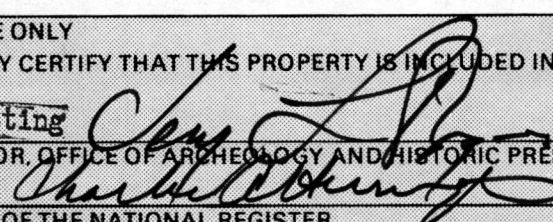
TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE March 16, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Acting




DATE

4/21/96

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:



DATE

4.17.26

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

1

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 2

carousel is extremely unusual, if not unique, in its variety. Generally, a carousel carries about five types of animals with additional differentiation coming only from color schemes. For many years, Loeff's carvings have been regarded by historians of American folk art as among the most distinguished representatives of their medium. The Crescent Park carousel is a veritable museum of his work. Of further note is the fact that not only are the animals and frame of the carousel by Loeff, but the shed enclosing them is of his design as well. Unlike many carousel casings of the period, Loeff's structures were polygonal, reflecting the form of the machine inside. Eschewing ornament, the shed's multi-surfaced mass, and the delicate articulation of its glass panes provide an unusually restrained and forthright visual statement.

Not the least significant aspect of the carousel is its excellent state of preservation. The Carousels often have long histories of being moved from one park to another, and of alterations that have significantly changed their original character. During its eighty years of existence, the Crescent Park carousel has remained in its original location and has experienced little modification after Loeff left East Providence in 1910. A principal reason for this is that it has been owned and operated by members of the Loeff family up through 1966. Very few carousels in the country have been so faithfully maintained and so little altered. Complete with its original shed and early twentieth century band organ and lighting, the carousel affords a now-rare example of the total experience as it was in its heyday.

Crescent Park, itself, is noteworthy among Eastern amusement parks. Started by George B. Boyden in 1886, it was one of New England's major parks for several decades, and is the oldest in continuous operation in Rhode Island. By the turn of the century, it occupied over three hundred acres, offering a large variety of rides, dining facilities for 1000 people, the region's largest dance hall, a hotel, and a number of cottages. In 1898, the Providence Journal of Commerce asserted it was the largest shore resort in the world under the proprietorship of a single person. An estimated 50,000 to 75,000 people visited the park each day on weekends during the peak season. Over the past quarter century, however, the park has declined in size and prestige. During the past several years, Crescent Park has

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CONTINUATION SHEET 2 ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

experienced major financial difficulties. Recently its mortgage has been foreclosed and the property is slated for sale at public auction. As separate items, the animals and other carvings on the carousel are considered extremely valuable, and the possibility of this magnificent example of nineteenth century popular art being broken up is very real.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

3

ITEM NUMBER

9

PAGE 2

Fried, Frederick. A Pictorial History of the Carousel. New York: 1964.

Hale, Stuart O. "Old-Timers in Rhode Island Carousel Business...", Providence Journal, May 19, 1946, Section 6, p. 1.

Interview with Joseph Carrolo (Employed by Charles Looff during 1890's and 1900's). Warwick, R.I.: February, 1976.

Interview with Robert Newman (Current operator of the Crescent Park Carousel). Warwick, R. I.: February, 1976.

Journal of Commerce Guide Book. Providence: 1898.

Lipman, Jean. American Folk Art in Wood, Metal and Stone. Meriden, Connecticut: 1948.

Program for the Second Annual Conference, National Carousel Roundtable, Flint, Michigan, October 25-28, 1974.

Providence Journal of Commerce. July, 1898, pp. 215-216.

Property Crescent Park Carousel

Norma

State Rhode Island Working Number 3.19.76.2793

Providence

TECHNICAL

Photos 5
Maps 1

W. R. Luce

Called 4.29.76

CONTROL

B OK 3.22.76

A first, but a very worthy first. Called R.I. Carousel was sold (with park) to the present owners incorporated differently. Carousel & park will operate at least this year. W.R.L. 3/24/76

HISTORIAN

*Accept
W. R. Luce
3/24/76*

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

*Accept
Shovich
3-26-76*

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____
Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

*Accept
Cole
3-26-76*

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

*W. R. Luce
4.19.76*

National Register Write-up _____ Send-back _____
Federal Register Entry 6-1-76 Re-submit _____

Entered **APR 21 1976**

INT:2106-74



Crescent Park Carousel Shelter.
(Elizabeth Warren, Rhode Island
Historical Preservation Commission,
1976)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Crescent Park Carousel

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN East Providence

— VICINITY OF

COUNTY Providence STATE Rhode Island

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Richard Longstreth

DATE OF PHOTO September, 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

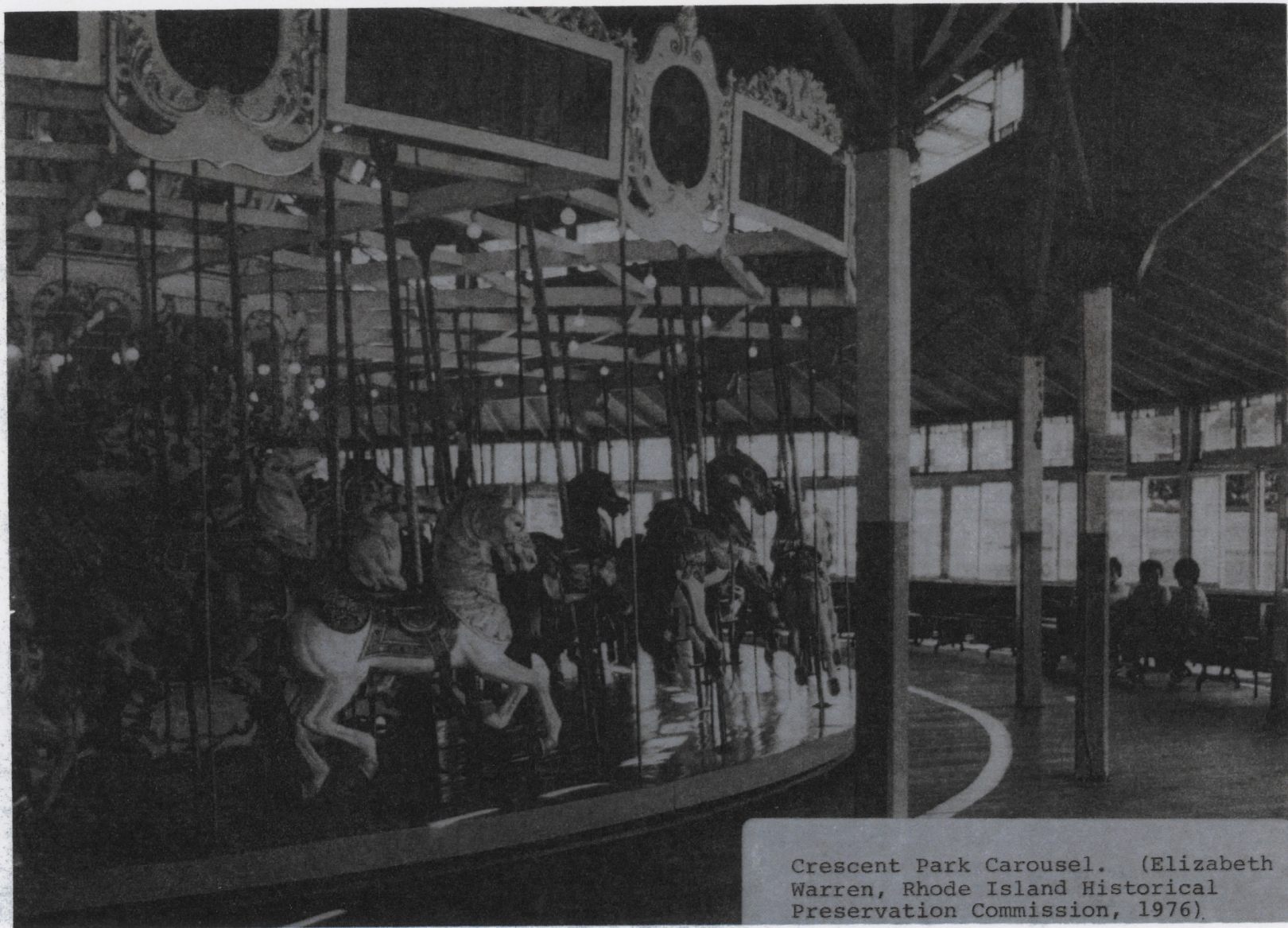
4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

PHOTO NO

1

Exterior view of Carousel, from the west.



Crescent Park Carousel. (Elizabeth Warren, Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, 1976).

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APR 21 1976

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AND/OR COMMON

Crescent Park Carousel

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

East Providence

— VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Providence

STATE

Rhode Island

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

Richard Longstreth

DATE OF PHOTO

September 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

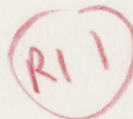
4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Interior: general view.

PHOTO NO

2





Detail of Crescent Park Carousel.
(Elizabeth Warren, Rhode Island
Historical Preservation Commission,
1976)

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS Number 4-21-76

Title: Crescent Park
Carnival

Loc. Providence Co., RI
interior; detail of
horses, organ, center
facade in background

GN ^{3 of 5}

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

MAR 19 1976

DATE ENTERED

APR 21 1978

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Crescent Park Carousel

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

East Providence

— VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Providence

STATE

R.I.

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

Richard Longstreth

DATE OF PHOTO

September, 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

PHOTO NO

3

Interior view: detail of horses, band organ, and center facade in background.

1201.- Crescent Park, R. I.

Circle Swing and Merry-go-round.



Undated early 20th-century view of Crescent Park in its heyday. (Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, 1976)

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS Number 4-21-76

Title: Crescent Park Carousel

Loc. Providence Co., RI

view from N, showing
Rooff's name. plant
on left.

4 of 5

67

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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APR 21 1976

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1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Crescent Park Carousel

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

East Providence

___ VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Providence

STATE

R. I.

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

Richard Longstreth

DATE OF PHOTO ca. 1909

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Copy negative at Rhode Island Historical Preservation Comm.

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

PHOTO NO 4

General view from north, showing Loeff's manufacturing plant on left.
From an old post card, ca. 1909. (Courtesy of Robert Newman)



MAIN PORTION OF GROUNDS, CRESCENT PARK, WITH THE EXHIBITION BUILDING IN CENTRE OF BACKGROUND.

Crescent Park.

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVE

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS Number 4-21-76

Title: Crescent Park

Carousel

cc. Providence Co., RI

view of park before
const. of cupola & dome

5 of 5

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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AND/OR COMMON

Crescent Park Carousel

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

East Providence

— VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Providence

STATE

R. I.

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

DATE OF PHOTO

ca. 1898

NEGATIVE FILED AT Copy negative at: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Comm.

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

PHOTO NO 5

General view of Crescent Park, showing carousel before construction of cupola and dome, from Official Souvenir of the Exhibition of the New England Association of Arts and Crafts . . . (1902).

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Crescent Park Carousel

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN East Providence

___ VICINITY OF

COUNTY Providence

STATE Rhode Island

3 MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE

U.S. Geological Survey

SCALE

1 : 24,000

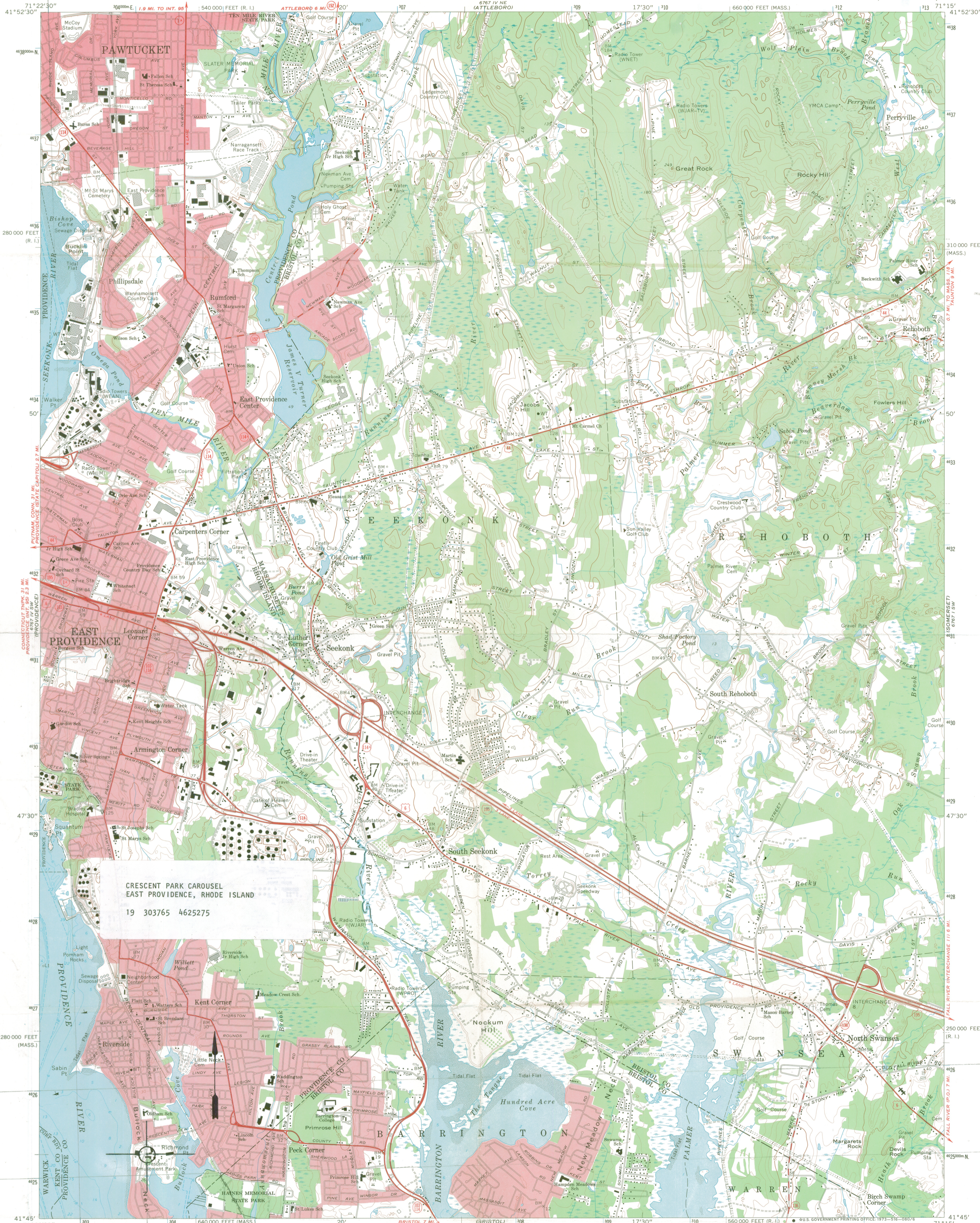
DATE

1971

4 REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

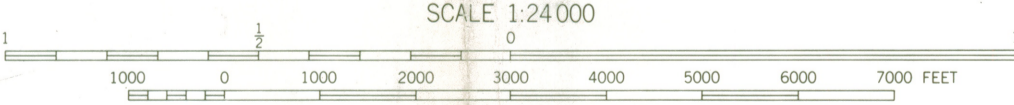
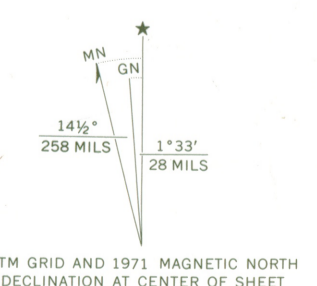
1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES



CRESCENT PARK CAROUSEL
EAST PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND
19 303765 4625275

N 4625275
E 303765

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Revised in cooperation with Massachusetts Department
of Public Works
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planimeter surveys 1935 and 1939
Revised from aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1971
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 278 and
352 (1970). This information is not intended for navigational purposes
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grids based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone, and Rhode Island coordinate system
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 19,
shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



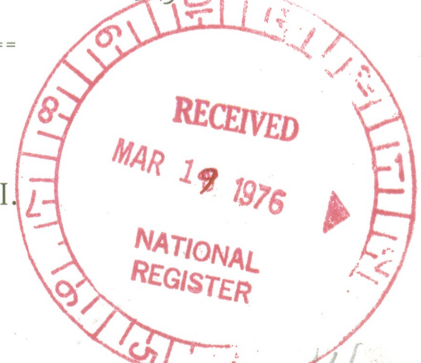
SCALE 1:24,000
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 4.6 FEET

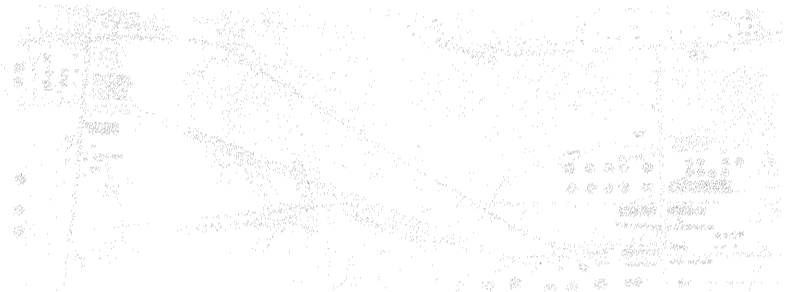


ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

EAST PROVIDENCE, MASS.—R. I.
N4145—W7115/7.5
1971
AMS 6767 IV SE—SERIES V814





Crescent Park



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Old State House
150 Benefit Street
Providence, R. I. 02903
(401) 277-2678

March 16, 1976

Mr. Robert B. Rettig
Acting Keeper of the National Register
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
18th and C Streets, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Mr. Rettig: ^{Bob}

Enclosed is the completed National Register nomination for the Crescent Park Carousel in East Providence, Providence County. The Rhode Island Review Board has reviewed this proposed entry and unanimously approved its nomination. The Crescent Park Carousel is located in Rhode Island Congressional District 1, represented by Mr. Fernand J. St. Germain.

The Carousel is imminently threatened with being sold at auction March 18, 1976, as part of the entirety of Crescent Park. We very much hope that the Carousel will be purchased as part of a total park package so that it can remain in situ. If this is not possible, it is of great importance to the historic value of the carousel and to the state that the Crescent Park Carousel not be moved outside Rhode Island.

We hope to lend every possible support to keeping the Carousel in Rhode Island. For that reason, I would greatly appreciate having the Crescent Park Carousel entered on the National Register as quickly as possible.

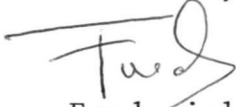
Mr. Robert B. Rettig

Page 2

March 16, 1976

Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966,
as Historic Preservation Officer for the State of Rhode
Island, I hereby nominate the Crescent Park Carousel to
the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "F. Williamson", with a horizontal line above the first few letters.

Frederick C. Williamson
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure

/dn

November 12, 1976

William J. Murtagh
Keeper of the National Register
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Keeper Murtagh,

A number of questions have arisen regarding the status of the National Register listing for the Looff carousel and pavilion at Crescent Park, Rhode Island. In recent months a growing number of Rhode Island residents have attempted, without success, to secure routine information from the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission.

In desperation, some of those questions have come my way, 3,000 miles removed from the scene. I am unable to field those questions, nor can I raise any kind of adequate response from the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission.

For nearly three years now I have had underway intensive research for a biography of the pioneer carousel craftsman, Charles I. D. Looff (1852-1918.) In March of this year a Rhode Island correspondent forwarded a Providence newspaper clipping announcing the impending doom of the Looff carousel at Crescent Park. The news story announced a scheduled auction and outlined the then several month's old study by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, as it attempted to secure National Register listing for that carousel. The news story indicated to me that the Commission had not yet learned to spell Looff's name with much accuracy or consistency. It was evident they needed help.

I telephoned the commission, volunteered to provide them with documentation, and they accepted. I prepared a twenty page presentation for them, complete with documentation notations, and listing more than a score or more local repositories and resources in Rhode Island they had managed to overlook.

November 12, 1976

Queries for the Keeper of the National Register
on the status of the Looff carousel, Rhoverside,
Thode Island -

1. What is the current status of the carousel listing? On what date was it accepted for listing ?
2. What does a listing on the National Register mean in general, and how does it apply to this carousel ? What blanket national legislation may now apply to the carousel ? (Prepared information in pamphlet or brochure form should cover this.)
3. Does a Register listing provide eligibility for any federal preservation funding ? (Prepared information may cover this as well.)
4. Does Register listing provide any protection against moving or dismantling of the carousel ? If so, please provide specific legislation citation, and copies if practicable.
5. How does Register listing differ from national monument or landmark status. (Prepared information should suffice.)
6. Rhode Island citizens need directional help in organizing a preservation campaign for the carousel. Such a campaign should not differ too much in procedure and technique from those undertaken for any historic property. Where may they obtain such "how to do it" information ?
7. Have other carousels received National Register listings? If so, please provide copies of appropriate documentation.

William H. Murtagh
November 12, 1976
Page Two

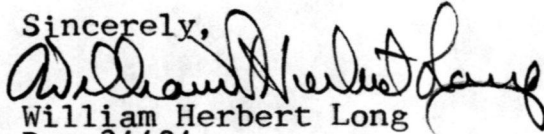
Although that presentation was specifically marked for their own use in Rhode Island, a copy was forwarded to your office. That copy was eventually returned. No "thank you" or even an apology was ever received from Rhode Island.

While preparing that presentation, I ~~once~~ requested that they forward two copies of periodical clippings from their office. The request eventually lengthened to two written requests, two telephone requests and a month's time. Each clipping arrived separately. Each was incomplete.

The demonstrated list of deficiencies could continue. And I have a file full of complaints from others. What all this does is exacerbate already existing problems of historical preservation and education. Apparently the situation in Rhode Island discourages grass roots participation.

The Crescent Park carousel continues in a threatened state. The current ownership sinks deeper into bankruptcy. And although there is a small but growing sentiment for a local "save" campaign, the movement is hampered by lack of local institutional leadership, and especially by lack of information. I am told telephone calls by Rhode Island residents are not returned by the commission. Mail goes unanswered.

I have appended a short list of questions for you, designed to allay laymen's lack of knowledge of Register significance, and allied historical preservation procedural matters. It is unfortunate that you have to be troubled with these questions. However, I do look forward to your prompt personal attention to these already too long delayed questions.

Sincerely,

William Herbert Long
Box 24434
San Francisco, Ca. 94124

DATE REC'D NOV 15 1976

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSE (ATTACHED)

INFORMATIVE MATERIAL SENT

TELEPHONE CALL (ATTACHED)

DATE ACTION TAKEN _____

INITIALS _____

2901 E. LINCOLN ST. DENVER
BOX 3443
WILLIAM HERBERT FINE
DIRECTOR

and your delayed response.
I was to your prompt personal attention to these already
provided with these questions. However, I do look for-
ward to your response. It is unfortunate that you have to be
significantly and added historical preservation proceed-
ings to allow a woman's lack of knowledge of register.
I have appended a short list of questions for you de-

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brock Island.
"Thank you" or even an apology was ever received from
your office. That copy was eventually returned. No
other use in Rhode Island, a copy was forwarded to
Victoria that presentation was specifically marked for

Page Two
November 12, 1976
WILLIAM H. FINER

DEC 6 1976

F. PERKS
11/30
Cole
12/1
Hunt

H34-880

Mr. William Herbert Long
P.O. Box 24434
San Francisco, California 94124

Dear Mr. Long:

✓ Thank you for your letter concerning the Crescent Park Carousel, Providence County, Rhode Island, listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The ^cCrescent Park Carousel was listed in the National Register on April 21, 1976. Listing in the National Register is Federal recognition that a property possesses historic values and is worthy of preservation. Inclusion of a property in the Register ensures that the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is given an opportunity to review and comment upon any undertaking licensed, funded, or executed by a Federal agency that may affect the property. In addition, preservation projects on properties listed in the National Register, in accordance with an approved State Historic preservation plan, can qualify for either acquisition or development grants-in-aid. *EXHAUSTIVE CHECKS WERE SUCCESSFUL.*

Listing has no other effect on the property; it does not affect, in any manner, the range of actions an owner could take, as long as Federal financing is not involved; and it gives no governmental unit any authority or control over the property, its use, or disposition.

✓ Properties listed in the National Register should be moved only when there is no feasible alternative for preservation. If it is proposed that a structure should be moved and the State or Federal agency wishes the property to remain in the National Register during and after the move, the State or Federal agency must submit adequate documentation set forth in section 60.16 (b) of the National Register procedures prior to the move.

We suggest you consult Mr. Russell Keune, Preservation Services Office, The National Trust for Historic Preservation, 740 Jackson Place NW., Washington, D.C. 20006, for information on organizing preservation campaigns to save historic properties such as the Crescent Park Carousel.

We are enclosing copies of National Register forms on other carousels which are presently listed in the National Register and informative

materials which we hope will answer any questions not addressed in this letter. We are also forwarding a copy of your letter to the Rhode Island State historic preservation office so they are aware of your complaints.

We appreciate your interest in historic preservation.

Sincerely yours,

for Charles A. Herrington (Sgd.)

William J. Murtagh
Keeper of the National Register

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Frederick C. Williamson SHPO Rhode Island w/c of inc.
bcc: Regional Director, North Atlantic Region w/c of inc.
001 - Reading
880 - w/c of inc.
FNP:K Burns:yvr 11/26/76

BASIC FILE RETAINED IN 880

February 3, 1977

William J. Murtagh
Keeper of the National Register
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Murtagh,

As Keeper of the National Register I am sure you will be able to answer a number of unanswered questions regarding the Looff carousel at Crescent Park, Rhode Island. As a resident of Riverside, R.I., I am very much concerned for the future of the carousel. Our Historical Preservation Commission here in Rhode Island leaves much to be desired, writing to you seemed the best idea.

My interest in the Looff carousel is more than just a casual one. Charles I.D. Looff was Arthur and Dorothy Simmons grandfather and Raymond Simmons great grandfather. Arthur, Dorothy and Raymond were the owners of Crescent Park until it was sold in 1966 leaving the family for the first time since Mr. Looff created the carousel in 1895. The Simmons family kept hundreds of Looff's documents and pictures dating back to 1801 and it was my job to divide the material into categories, a time consuming but enjoyable task. In March, 1976, an article appeared in our Providence paper describing the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commissions attempt to have the carousel nominated as a National Monument. I contacted Mr. Richard Longstreth of the commission and offered my assistance which he gratefully accepted. The majority of the information the commission had was incorrect and proff of this rested with the documents and pictorial history I had on hand which dated back to the year 1800. Mr. Longstreth spent two long afternoons in my home pouring over the information at hand and taking notes. I also let him borrow several pictures to copy to add to the commissions pictorial history. I did not let him copy any documents and he did not see pictures of Looffs unfinished works as I did not yet have those pictures. Later when I recieved a copy of the nomination papers that were sent to Washington (via an acquaintance not Mr. Longstreth), I was a bit dismayed to see Mr. Joseph Carrolo and Mr. Robert Newman's name as the commissions "biblio refs." and my own name left out. I did not seek recognition in helping the commission but if recognition was mentioned neither Mr. Carrolo nor Mr. Newman could provide such accurate information complete with documentation as proff. To further my annoyance the news that the carousel had been accepted as a National Monument was never released to the news media here and because of this very few Rhode Islanders are aware of it.

The status of the carousel remains a mystery and so does the title of National Monument as this new found honor has never been explained. There is no plaque or decree within the shed that houses the carousel and I wonder if this is standard procedure for all newly acquired National Monuments?

Gail Durfee
26 Stoneham Drive
Riverside, R.I.
Page Two

Perhaps you could avail yourself and answer some questions pertinent to the carousel which would enable me to generate some interest in the citizens of Rhode Island. I would like to start a program to SAVE the carousel from being dismantled and sold or even sold as is and moved out of this state. Another idea I have is to try and acquire city, state or federal funds to buy the parks $4\frac{7}{8}$ and $3\frac{3}{4}$ acres of land to develop into a recreational facility since Riverside has nothing of the kind. The carousel could be run by a non-profit organization. Time is of the essence as the park is already up for sale and I cannot begin without information or guidelines.

- ✓ What does a listing on the National Register mean?
- ✓ What blanket national legislation now applies to the carousel?
- ✓ Is the carousel considered a landmark?

Have any other carousels been nominated and accepted as National Monuments?

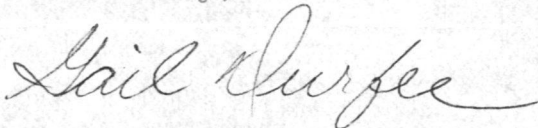
- ✓ Can the carousel be moved or dismantled without approval from your Department or any other department?

Where may I obtain information to organize a campaign to save the carousel and keep it at its present location. Also to whom would I apply for funds to obtain the land Crescent Park now resides on, city, state or federal?

I would be very grateful, Mr. Murtagh, if you could answer this letter as soon as possible and help me out. Time is of the essence as I have only learned this morning that the entire park is up for sale.

I await your personal reply.

Sincerely,



Gail Durfee (Mrs. Edward)
26 Stoneham Drive
Riverside, Rhode Island
02915

COPIES OF THIS DOCUMENT
RECEIVED
BOND
CORREASABLE

RECEIVED
2/9/77

COFFEE TABLE
BOND
NEW
BANKS

COTTON FIBER CONSTANT



H34-880

MAR 21 1977

428-2/18
Cote
3/1/77

Mrs. Gail Durfee
26 Stoneham Drive
Riverside, Rhode Island 02915

Dear Mrs. Durfee:

Thank you for your letter concerning the Crescent Park Carousel, Providence County, Rhode Island, listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Crescent Park Carousel was listed in the National Register on April 21, 1976. This listing is Federal recognition that a property possesses historic values and is worthy of preservation. Inclusion of a property in the Register ensures that the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is afforded an opportunity to review and comment upon any undertaking licensed, funded, or executed by a Federal agency that may affect the property. In addition, preservation projects on properties listed in the National Register, in accordance with an approved State historic preservation plan, can qualify for either acquisition or development grants-in-aid. Explanatory leaflets are enclosed.

Listing does not affect the range of actions an owner could take, as long as Federal financing is not involved; and it gives no governmental unit any authority or control over the property, its use, or disposition.

Properties listed in the National Register should be moved only when there is no feasible alternative for preservation. If it is proposed that a structure should be moved and the State or Federal agency wishes the property to remain in the National Register during and after the move, the State or Federal agency must submit adequate documentation set forth in section 60.16 (b) of the National Register procedures prior to the move. A copy of our procedures is enclosed.

The Crescent Park Carousel is not a national historic landmark. This designation is an honorary distinction, attesting to the national significance of the property. Proposals for this distinction are made to the Secretary of the Interior after comparative analysis and review by independent experts. A leaflet explaining this program is enclosed.

While the National Historic Landmarks Program of the National Park Service does present plaques to properties designated national historic landmarks, the National Register does not have such a program. Enclosed is a fact sheet which our office sends to private property owners along with a sheet with recommended language should you decide to purchase a plaque with private funds.

Mr. Russell Keune, Preservation Services Office, The National Trust for Historic Preservation, 740 Jackson Place NW., Washington, D.C. 20006, may be helpful in providing information on organizing preservation campaigns to save historic properties such as the Crescent Park Carousel. You may also wish to write Ms. Barbara Charles, 510 11th Street SE., Washington, D.C. 20003. Ms. Charles is associated with the National Carousel Roundtable and may have useful advice. Finally, copies of the nomination forms of three other carousels listed in the National Register are enclosed for your information.

We are forwarding a copy of your letter to the State Historic Preservation Officer so he is aware of your concerns. We hope the enclosed information answers all your questions and is helpful to you.

Sincerely yours,
Charles A. Herrington (Sgd.)

for

William J. Murtagh
Keeper of the National Register

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Frederick C. Williamson
Rhode Island SHPO w/c

Mr. Russell Keune
Preservation Services Office
The National Trust for
Historic Preservation
740 Jackson Place NW.
Washington, D.C. 20006 w/c

Ms. Barbara Charles
510 11th Street SE.
Washington, D.C. 20003 w/c

bcc: Regional Director, North Atlantic
Region w/c

001 Reading File
880 w/c

FNP:BURNS:sle:3-15-77

BASIC FILE RETAINED IN 880

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received OCT 24 1980

date entered NOV 28 1980

Continuation sheet 20

Item number 7

Page 21

NAME: Crescent Park Carousel

Other NAME: East Providence MRA

LOCATION: Bullock's Point Avenue

OWNER: City of East Providence
City Hall
Taunton Avenue
East Providence, R.I. 02914

DESCRIPTION:

The Crescent Park Carousel, constructed sometime between 1895 and 1898, stands at the entrance to the midway of Crescent Park, an amusement park that has been closed since 1975. The carousel shed is a one-story, fourteen-sided structure enclosed by an unadorned wood frame infilled with four sliding and four stationary window panels in each bay, with vertical siding below. Four bays (originally several more) contain two sets each of double-folding doors that give access to the interior. The upper portion of each bay contains a tripartite transom filled with stationary window panels that have border panes of colored glass. The structure is covered with a polygonal hip roof broken by a clerestory with four window panels in each bay. The roof originally rose to a peak but sometime before 1909 a cupola with onion dome was added.

Inside, the carousel is a circular structure fifty feet in diameter with a wooden platform surmounted by 62 horses, a camel, and four chariots. The rim and center housing enclosing the drive mechanism are decorated in a florid neo-Baroque style; the housing is topped by a central post supporting a large, gilded, carved wooden eagle. The carousel is larger than the average merry-go-round of the period and is unusual because each animal is different in design. The hand organ was installed shortly after the turn of the century and was manufactured by A. Ruth and Son, a noted German manufacturer of such instruments. Originally, it employed a 94 keyless organ played by air pressure using cardboard books, but this was replaced by a Wurlitzer 165 military band organ roll mechanism. The carousel and band organ were originally powered by steam from the park's central plant but are now operated by a fifteen-horsepower, 550-volt, three-phase electric motor. Light was originally provided by a gas chandelier suspended over the center post (its fittings are still in place); the electric bulbs attached to the posts, carousel sweeps, and central housing had probably replaced the chandelier by the 1920s.

(See Continuation Sheet #21).

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received OCT 24 1980

date entered

NOV 23 1980

Continuation sheet 21

Item number 7

Page 22

DATE: between 1895 and 1898, before 1909

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Crescent Park Carousel is among the finest surviving examples of its type in the country and is one of the most outstanding creations of Charles I.D. Looff (1852-1918), one of America's earliest and foremost carousel manufacturers. Looff, a native of Schleswig-Holstein, emigrated to New York in 1870. Trained as a furniture maker, he spent his spare time on carousel construction before entering the business full-time in 1880, when he opened a plant in Brooklyn. Looff was probably the first man in the United States to both carve the figures and manufacture the frames that carried them. His shop never became very large because he did most of the carving himself and closely supervised the work of the few assistants that he did employ. Looff established a branch factory at Crescent Park, and in 1905, when the Brooklyn shop was forced to close, Crescent Park became the base of his operations. Looff used the Crescent Park Carousel as a display for prospective clients and he ornamented it with every type of figure he was capable of producing in his shop (the shop was attached to the rear of the carousel but has since been demolished). The Crescent Park Carousel is thus extremely unusual, if not unique, in its variety. It is a veritable museum of the work of Looff, who has long been regarded by historians of American folk art as one of the most distinguished practitioners in his field. Also noteworthy is the fact that Looff designed the shed in addition to the figures and the frame supporting them. The Crescent Park Carousel has stood virtually unaltered since Looff moved from East Providence to Long Beach, California in 1910. That this carousel remains intact on its original site is yet another feature which makes it a rare and significant artifact.

ACREAGE: about 3.5 acres

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: Parcel 2, lot 118, assessor's plat 56.

UTM: 19 303765 4625275

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: National

Entered on National Register 21 April 1976

(See Continuation Sheet #22).

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000747



"Richard Greenwood"
<rgreenwood@preservation.ri.gov>

03/23/2009 11:31 AM
AST

To: <Kate_Richards@contractor.nps.gov>
cc: <paul_lusignan@nps.gov>
Subject: Re: Crescent Park Carousel Boundaries

Hi Kate:

I spent some time with the East Providence land records and came up with the following info. on the Crescent Park Carousel history.

When the carousel was first listed on the NRHP and its boundary was given as Plat 56, Lot 118, Lot 118 included the entire amusement park with no subdivisions. Thus the nomination contained a major discrepancy. While it stated less than an acre for the historic resource, the boundaries it set encompassed much more land.

By the time of the MPS nomination in 1983, Lot 118 had been divided into various parcels (though it still remained a single large lot). The carousel was located on Parcel 2 of Lot 118. Parcel 2, which contained 3.5 acres, was transferred to the City of East Providence, which still retains ownership. Consequently, the NR designation in the MPS covered the 3.5 acres of Parcel 2. Since then, the city has redone its assessor's plats and in the new designation the former Parcel 2 of Plat 56, Lot 118 has been renamed Map 413, Block 13, Lot 0001.

For National Register purposes, the substitution of the new lot number for the old one is all that would be needed to update the file. The NHL designation would need to expand the acreage to reflect the current parcel size or develop a new, smaller boundary.

Let me know if this needs any clarification.

Rick

>>> Richard Greenwood 3/19/2009 2:26 PM >>>

Hi Kate:

I have looked into your questions and a complete resolution is still wanting. I have not yet found a copy of the East Providence plat map that would give us the dimensions of Plat 56, Lot 118 which is the parcel used to define the carousel boundary in the original NR, MPS and subsequent NHL nominations. East Providence has renumbered its assessor's maps so that Plat 56/Lot 118 no longer exists. However, the current lot on which the carousel sits (Map 413, Block 13, Lot 0001) is 3.51 acres which matches the c. 3.5 acres that the MPS nomination gave as the acreage of the nominated property.

It may be that the size of Plat 56, Lot 118 grew between 1976 when it was less than 1 acre and 1980 when the MPS said it was 3.5 acres. However, I doubt it shrank between 1980 and the NHL nomination in 1985. Instead I would guess that the NHL info was transcribed directly from the 1976 nomination without benefit of the additional info in the 1980 MPS nomination.

Which leaves us with the latest NR boundaries of 1980 being a 3.51 acre parcel, which is now described as Map 413, Block 13, Lot 0001, instead

of Plat 56, lot 118. The NHL boundary is problematic however. It seems if they want to avoid nominating the open parkland around the carousel, they will need to develop an accurate verbal boundary and not rely on the legal parcel. Otherwise, the acreage is 3.51.

I'll continue to look for the older plat maps to see if they might clarify things.

Rick

Richard E. Greenwood, Ph.D.
Deputy Director
Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
401-222-2078 - office
401-222-2968 - fax

>>> <Kate_Richards@contractor.nps.gov> 3/17/2009 11:41 AM >>>
Hi Rick,

My question for Crescent Park Carousel revolves around the boundaries/acreage for the NR nomination and the NHL nomination.

The original 1976 National Register nomination lists the acreage as less than one acre. The 1980 nomination that came in with the East Providence MRA (and was considered Additional Documentation for the original nomination) lists the acreage as about 3.5 acres.

The National Historic Landmark Nomination (1987) lists the acreage as less than one acre.

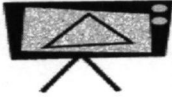
I need a clarification on the acreage/boundaries for both the National Register nomination and the National Historic Landmark nomination and if the two nominations are supposed to have different acreage. I'm trying to determine if I need multiple metadata records or just one for this property. Currently I only have one metadata record that lists the acreage as 0.9.

If you have any questions about my query, I'll be glad to answer them. Thank you,

Kate Richards
Digital Library Production Manager
1201 "Eye" St. NW
Washington, DC 2005
202-354-2264



Richard Greenwood.vcf



Lisa Deline
03/24/2009 11:24 AM
EDT

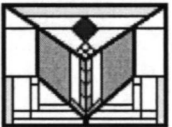
To: Paul Lusignan/WASO/NPS
cc:
Subject: Fw: Crescent Park Carousel Boundaries

Paul:


Since you're now handling Rhode Island... this is a question that Kate was clarifying with Rick Greenwood. See Kate if you have any questions.

Lisa Deline, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
(202) 354-2239
fax (202)371-2229

----- Forwarded by Lisa Deline/WASO/NPS on 03/24/2009 11:23 AM -----



Alexis Abernathy/Contractor/NPS
03/24/2009 11:02 AM EDT

To: Kate Richards/Contractor/NPS@NPS
cc: Lisa Deline/WASO/NPS@NPS, Patty Henry/WASO/NPS@NPS
Subject: Re: Fw: Crescent Park Carousel Boundaries 

Oh goodness, if it mentions the entire parcel in the nomination. That is what it is.

When what the mps done? If that is after 1980 and those acreage is different from the NHL we have a problem.

What I think we need is a letter from the state clarifying that the mps boundaries are accurate for the NR nomination. If they are different from the NHL we will have to have two separate listings.

I hope that is as clear as mud.

Alexis

Alexis Abernathy
National Register of Historic Places
alexis_abernathy@contractor.nps.gov
Work (202)354-2236
fax (202)371-2229
Kate Richards/Contractor/NPS



Kate Richards/Contractor/NPS
03/24/2009 10:20 AM

To: Alexis Abernathy/Contractor/NPS@NPS, Patty Henry/WASO/NPS@NPS, Lisa Deline/WASO/NPS@NPS
cc:
Subject: Fw: Crescent Park Carousel Boundaries

Here's the answer that Rick sent me regarding the acreage for the Crescent Park Carousel.

Kate

----- Forwarded by Kate Richards/Contractor/NPS on 03/24/2009 10:16 AM -----



Paul Lusignan
04/02/2009 12:49 PM
EDT

To: "Richard Greenwood" <rgreenwood@preservation.ri.gov>
cc: Kate Richards/Contractor/NPS@NPS, Patty Henry/WASO/NPS@NPS
Subject: Re: Crescent Park Carousel Boundaries

OK. Just on board with reviewing Rhode Island and ready for some action....

Here is my take on the Crescent Park Carousel boundary issue.

In reading the 1976 nomination verbal boundary description I saw it as a very imprecise documentation. I was particularly drawn to the parenthetical phrase (Section on east side of Bullock Point Avenue approximately 450' south of Crescent View Avenue). I took this to mean that Plat 56 Lot 118 was the general location of the property and that the nominated area was intended as some subset of that lot, not the entire lot. This would be the same as a VBD that started with the Town Range Section and then gave an imprecise smaller area description. We would not assume that the entire Section was intended as the boundary, but some subset. Yes, the nomination gave the acreage as "less than one," but that is often used when documenting a site whose boundaries are less than precise or well detailed. (It's an approximation. If the boundary was intended as the entire official plat & lot we would probably have had a more definitive acreage from the tax records.) That being said, I see the 1976 boundary as an approximation of the physical bounds common to most pre-1980 nominations.

The 1980 Carousel documentation can then be seen as a clarification of the earlier information. Perhaps we could have called it a "boundary increase," but considering the relative imprecise (and contradictory) nature of the 1976 documentation, I think treating it as Additional Documentation was/is correct. Thus, we were provided in 1980 with a more accurate lot citation for the area referred to in 1976 as "section on the east side...450' south..." and a more accurate acreage estimation of that site. There was no actual change in the land area listed, just a more precise clarification of what that area encompassed

The issue of the NHL documentation merely parroting the 1976 documentation without the 1980 clarification does present another problem layer, but one that can be easily fixed. In talking with the NHL staff this would appear to be a case where a technical correction to the NHL documentation could also be performed rather than an elaborate boundary increase/boundary decrease/boundary study project and all of the formal notification and Advisory Board consideration that this would entail. We need to verify if Paul Loether will go along with this first, but it may be a case where we simply put a notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER that we are correcting an older imprecise designation with information already approved by the NPS.

The best scenario would have us directly responding to a letter from the Rhode Island SHPO that sought to 1) amend the 1976/1980 National Register nomination by providing the new parcel, lot and block citation (Map 413, Block 13, Lot 0001) for the listed property and 2) have the NHL boundary match this new information by incorporating the 1980 additional documentation that was erroneously overlooked in 1987. In the end I see no need to have two separate boundaries when the eligible entity and its setting are so clearly in a small defined area.

Kate, I'm not sure how this impacts your current needs, as the NHL as it stands today does provide an acreage of .9, while the NR is 3.5. Once we complete the fix, this would not be the case and the acreage would be consistent at 3.5.

Where have I gone wrong in this approach? If I'm missing something please let me know.

Paul R. Lusignan
Historian
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
(202) 354-2229
(202) 371-2229 fax
"Richard Greenwood" <rgreenwood@preservation.ri.gov>

Removed from National Register on 11/26/06

called ya

Still an NHL

Rick Greenwood

1976 listing

Carousel + shed
Less than one acre

City of E. Prov Assessors Plot: Plot 56 Lot 118
(SECTION ON EAST SIDE OF Bullock Point Ave
Approx 450' south of Crescent View Ave)

Does this
is not to
less than
entire
lot?

1960 ~~STRONG~~ (AD) STRONG DOCUMENTATION
3.5 ACRES Parcel 2 Plot 56
clearly "less than 1 acre" Lot 118
whited out + replaced w/
3.5 acres - clearly intended to ~~be~~ ^{correct}
Detail.

1987 NHL

SAME AS 1976 listing verbatim

1976 listing

Carousel + shed
Less than one acre

City of E. Prov Assessors Plot: Plot 56 Lot 118
(SECTION ON EAST SIDE of Bullock Point Ave
Approx 450' south of Crescent View Ave)

Does
this
meet the
less than
entire
lot?

1980 ~~###~~ ~~(AD)~~ (AD) stronger documentation
3.5 Acres Parcel 2 Plot 56
clearly "less than 1 acre" Lot 118
whited out + replaced w/
3.5 Acres - clearly intended to ~~add~~ ^{correct}
Detail.

1987 NHL

SAME AS 1976 listing verbatim

NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET KP

1 NAME as it appears on federal register: Crescent Park Carousel 2 OTHER NAMES: _____ 3 date of entry: 4-21-76 4 county code: 007

5 LOCATION street & number: Bullock's Point Ave. city / town: East Providence vicinity of: _____ state: RI county: Providence 6 NPS REGION: N. Atlantic

7 OWNER PRIVATE STATE MUNICIPAL COUNTY MULTIPLE FEDERAL (agency name) 8 ADMINISTRATOR: _____

9 EXISTING SURVEYS HABS HAER NHL 10 FUNDED? YES NO 11 CONGRESS. DISTRICT: 1 12 SOURCE of NOMINATION STATE FEDERAL

13 WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES, NAME _____ NO 14 WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? YES, NAME _____ NO 15 ACREAGE: less than 1 16 STATE who prepared form? Richard W. Longstreth
 LOCAL PRIVATE ORGANIZATION

16 CONDITION excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed unexcavated altered unaltered reconstructed excavated original site moved unknown

17 features: INTERIOR SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1 NOT INTACT-0 UNKNOWN-4 NOT APPLICABLE-7 EXTERIOR SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2 NOT INTACT-0 UNKNOWN-5 NOT APPLICABLE-8 ENVIRONS SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3 NOT INTACT-0 UNKNOWN-6 NOT APPLICABLE-9

18 ACCESS YES - Restricted YES - Unrestricted No Access Unknown 19 ADAPTIVE USE YES NO 20 SAVED? YES NO IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT? yes no

21 AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: ARCHEOLOGY - prehistoric-2 ARCHEOLOGY - historic-1 AGRICULTURE-3 ARCHITECTURE-4 ART-5 COMMERCE-6 COMMUNICATIONS-7 CONSERVATION-8 ECONOMICS-9 EDUCATION-10 ENGINEERING-11 ENTERTAINMENT-26 EXPLORATION-12 HEALTH-27 INDUSTRY-13 INVENTION-14 LANDSCAPE ARCH.-15 LAW-16 LITERATURE-17 MILITARY-18 MUSIC-19 PHILOSOPHY-20 POLITICS / GOVT.-21 RELIGION-22 SCIENCE-23 SOCIAL / HUMANITARIAN-24 SOCIAL / CULTURAL-30 TRANSPORTATION-25 RECREATION-28 SETTLEMENT-29 URBAN PLANNING-31 OTHER (SPECIFY) recreation

22 CLAIMS: explain 'first' 'oldest' 'only'

23 functions WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: Carousel CURRENTLY: Carousel 24 dates of initial construction: c. 1895 / 1910 major alterations: done prior to 1900 historic events: c. 1905 gas lights replaced by electricity 25 ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION _____

26 architectural style(s): _____ 27 architect: designer Charles Loeff 28 master builder: _____ 29 engineer: _____

30 landscape architect / garden designer: _____ 31 interior decorator: _____ 32 artist: _____ 33 artisan: _____ 34 builder / contractor: A. Roth & Son - band organ

35 NAMES give role & date PERSONAL: Charles Loeff (1852-1918) one of the earliest and foremost manufacturers of carousels in the U.S. EVENTS: A. Roth & Son - German manufacturer, band organ INSTITUTIONAL: Crescent Park Amusement Park - started by George B. Boyden 1886, one of New England's major parks for several decades, the oldest in continuous operation in R.I.

36 NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP
 Frame ~~is~~ vertical posts and steel tension rods, vertical siding; 1 story, large 14-sided building, polygonal roof with clerestory, ~~and~~ and cupola with onion dome, 4 entrance bays with double folding doors, rectangular window panels; ~~windows~~ ~~for~~ ~~fringe~~ of continuous rectangular windows, each with ~~be~~ ~~colored~~-glass borders; carousel machine with 50'-wide round platform ~~with~~ with 62 horses, 4 chariots, and a camel; A. Roth and Son manufactured organ, ornate Baroque trim and paintings; steam power replaced by electric motor; gaslights converted for electricity, 1920's. Designed and built by Charles I. D. Loeff, early prominent American carousel manufacturer; ~~unique carousel used as display; feature an unusually well-preserved carousel.~~

CRESCENT PARK CAROUSEL

(Resource Name)

76000045

(Reference Number[s])

5/29/87

(Date form completed)

PROVIDENCE

(County)

RHODE ISLAND

(State)

Mark J. Baker

(Completed by)

STATUS:

1. MISSING ___ 2. REMOVED/ DEMOLISHED ___ 3. NHL 4. TR ___ 5. MRA ___ 6. OVER-SIZED ___ 7. NPS - UNDOCUMENTED ___ 8. DOE - OWNER OBJECTION ___ 9. RESTRICTED ___

EXPLANATION:

1. Missing Status: Entire Folder () ; Nomination () ; Map(s) () ; Photos ()
Available on: Microfiche () ; Optical Disk ()

2. _____
(Cause for removal)

_____/_____/_____
(Date Removed)

3. CRESCENT PARK LODGE CAROUSEL AND SHELTER
(NHL Name, if different than NRHP Name)

_____/_____/_____
(Date Designated)

4. _____
(If multi-state/county TR, state/county where filed and location)

(TR or MRA Name)

5. _____
(If multi-state/county MRA, state/county where filed and location)

6. _____
(Location of oversize file)

7. _____
(Current source of partial documentation)

_____/_____/_____
(Target Date)

- COMMENTS: _____
(Where found, or source of replacement)

_____/_____/_____
(Date Found/Replaced)