



*The*  
***Carousel***

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**SPECIAL ISSUE:**  
**The Murphy Brothers**  
**and their Carousels**

Manufacturers and Proprietors of Carousels; Timothy and Bartholomew

# The Murphy Brothers

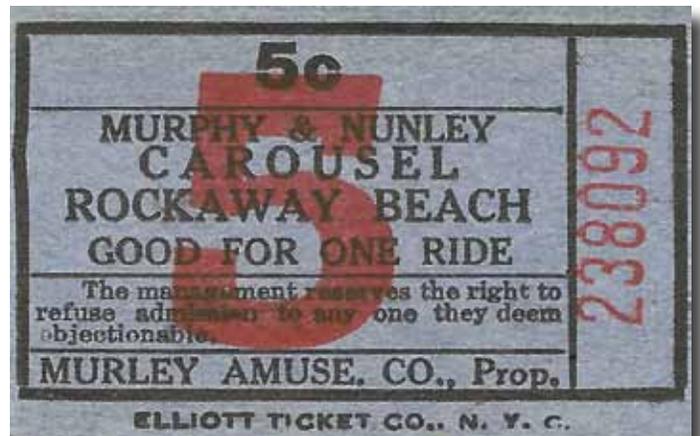


*Murphy's Carousel at Golden City, Canarsie, New York in 1914.* Brian Merlis Collection

**By William Benjamin, Ph.D. and Barbara Williams**

*Special to The Carousel News & Trader*

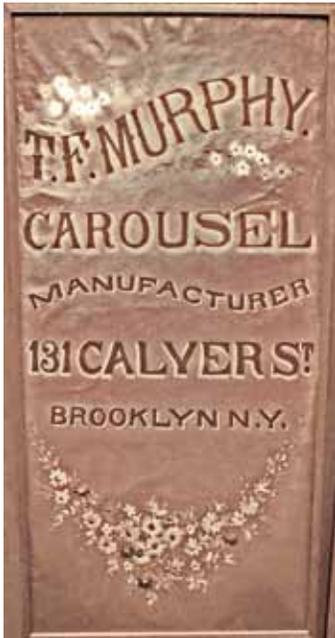
Timothy and Bartholomew Murphy are often associated with various aspects of the carousel and amusement industry during the first half of the 20th century. Timothy had an early working relationship with Charles Looff, was a well known builder and operator of carousels and was also a partner with William Nunley in various New York City area amusement parks. Bartholomew is best known as an owner/proprietor of a number of Louisiana carousel installations. This article is an attempt to present the most complete accounting of the role of the Murphy brothers in the carousel industry over a period that spanned more than 50 years.



*Murley Amusement Company ticket for Rockaway Beach carousel ride.* William Benjamin collection

## Murphy Family History and Business Relationship with William Nunley

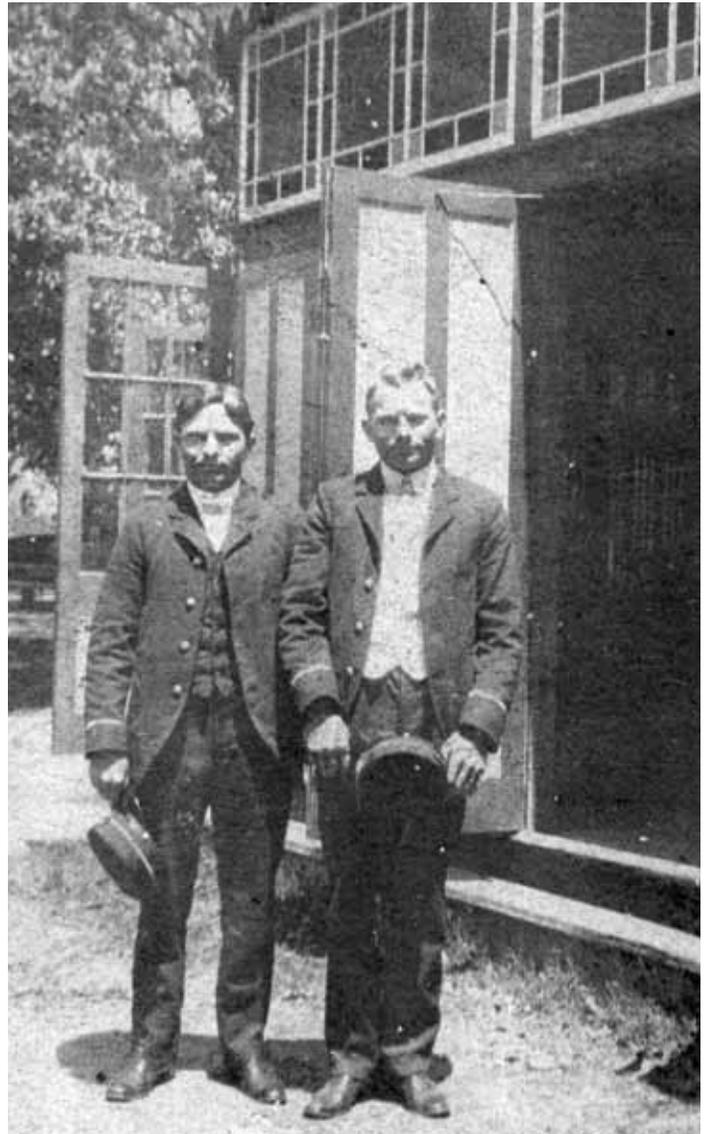
The earliest connection we have found of the Murphys with the carousel business comes from Mrs. John Timothy Murphy, Bartholomew's daughter-in-law. It was provided by Beau Bassich, who is associated with New Orleans' City Park Murphy carousel. According to Mrs. Murphy, Bartholomew and Timothy began working for Charles Loeff around 1886 at the ages of 15 and 13, respectively. Frederick Fried in his book, *A Pictorial History of the Carousel*, indicates that Timothy was Charles Loeff's carving shop foreman when Loeff's carving shop moved from New York City to Riverside, Rhode Island<sup>(1)</sup>. Fried also indicates that Timothy was put in charge of Crescent Park, Riverside, RI, and was given a



*Panel from an unknown Timothy Murphy carousel. Gray Tuttle photo*

one quarter interest in the park. This association apparently worked-out poorly and resulted in the firing of Timothy. However, Fried indicates that Timothy subsequently won a lawsuit for his interest in the park<sup>(1)</sup>. This separation from Loeff was perhaps the seminal event that led Timothy to establish his own carousel manufacturing business.

Timothy Frederick Murphy was born on October 2, 1872<sup>(2)</sup>. Timothy, together with his mother Mary Elizabeth (age 44) and 5 siblings; Bartholomew (born about 1871), Bridgette (1874), James (1877), Hannah (1878) and Mary (1880) immigrated from Cork, Ireland and arrived in New York on



*Timothy (left) and Bartholomew Murphy outside of the Audubon Park carousel building in 1909. Courtesy of The Historic New Orleans Collection, accession # 1977.78.3 LF 24*



the boat Scythia on July 27, 1882<sup>(3)</sup>. Timothy's father, Thomas James Murphy (born July 25, 1838) was not included on the passenger list and most likely arrived at an earlier date<sup>(4)</sup>.

***Murphy's 4-row Savin Rock carousel. It looks to be in the same building as the 3-row shown on page 14.***

Reprinted with permission from *Savin Rock Amusement Park*, by Edith Reynolds. Available from the publisher online at [www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com) or by calling 888-313-2665.

**What is likely one of the Murphy's carousels at Savin Rock Proper. It is a stationary Loeff like those at Roger Williams and Slater Parks.**

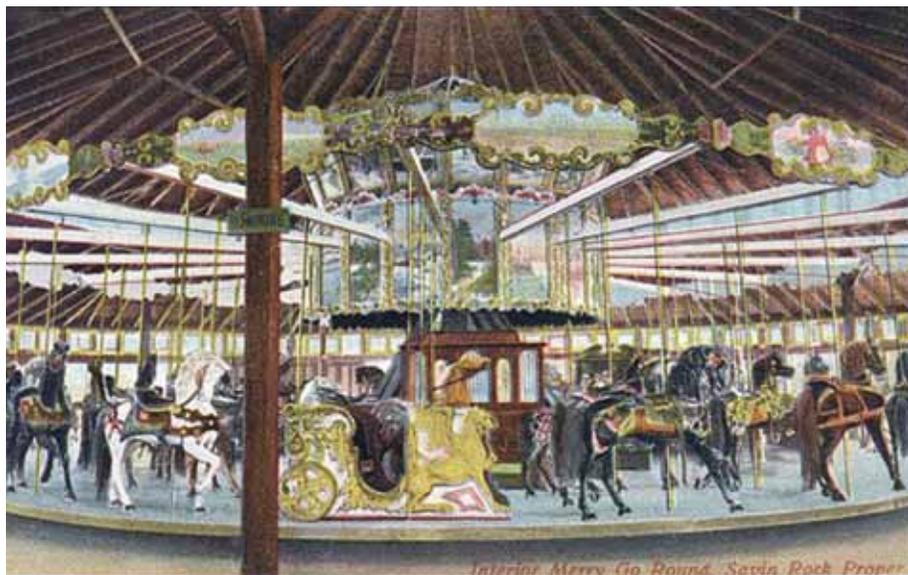
Barbara Williams Collection

**Bartholomew Murphy, left, and Theodore Graff, the Murphys' painter. (Below center)**

Courtesy of the Historic New Orleans Collection, accession #1977.78.4, and Carlos and Judy Sardina

United States Census records from 1900<sup>(5)</sup>, 1910<sup>(6)</sup> and 1920<sup>(7)</sup> provide additional insights into Timothy Murphy's early life and carousel business. In all three census records, Timothy's residence is within the Borough of Brooklyn. Timothy, along with James, listed their professions as "Wood Carvers" in the 1900 census. It isn't known if Timothy was working for Loeff at this time. However, since Loeff moved his factory from New York City to Rhode Island in 1905<sup>(8)</sup> this is certainly possible. By 1910, Timothy's profession is listed as "Manufacturer Carousels" and in 1920 as "Builder Outdoor Amusements". The 131 Calyer Street address shown on the carousel panel is the address of a residence that was built in 1901. This was likely Timothy Murphy's home address at that time. By 1918, Timothy's address is listed as 544 8th Street, Brooklyn<sup>(2)</sup>. There is no evidence in any of the historical records that suggests he was ever married. According to Beau Bassich, of the the New Orleans City Park Improvement Association, Timothy died in 1955 in Deal, NJ. An obituary was published for "Timothy Murphy" in *The Carousel News and Trader* in 1990<sup>(9)</sup>. We believe that this obituary was for Bartholomew's son, John Timothy Murphy.

According to Bartholomew's census records, he



had moved to New Orleans by 1910<sup>(10)</sup>. He listed his occupation as "Manufacturer of Amusement Supplies". Bartholomew married Mary McCartney in 1915<sup>(11)</sup> and they had a son, John Timothy, later that year. In 1930, Bartholomew showed his occupation as "President Amusement Company"<sup>(12)</sup>.

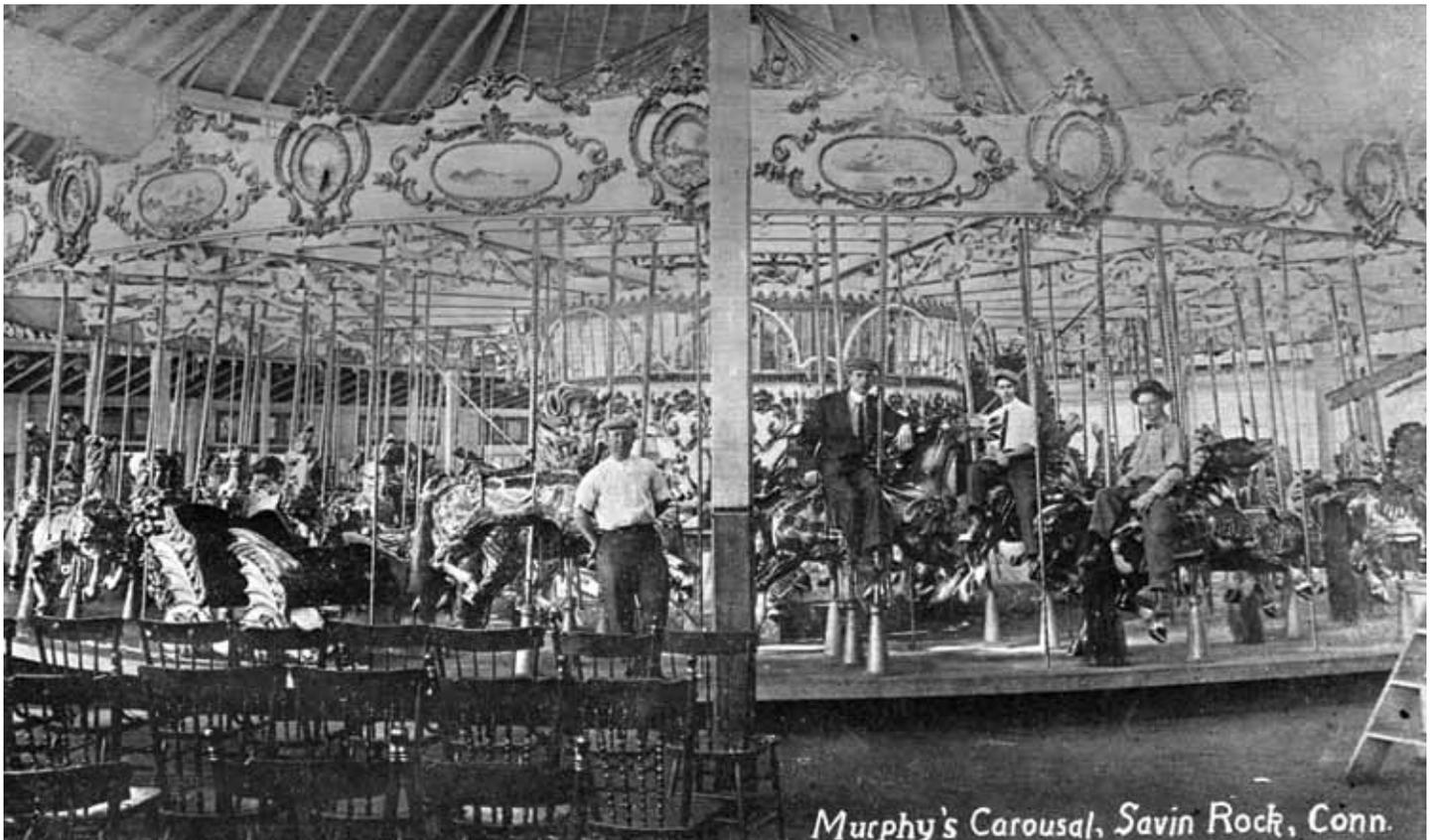
As described in detail later in this article, Timothy was a partner with William Nunley in at least one New York City area amusement park. The Murley Amusement Company, possibly a contraction of the Murphy-Nunley names, is shown as the proprietor of the Murphy & Nunley Carousel at Rockaway Beach on a vintage 5 cent carousel ticket. In addition, a piece in the *New York Times* from 1919 under "New Incorporations" includes The Rockaway Whirlpool Company, for the purpose of operating amusement devices. The new company, located at 544 8th St. Brooklyn, Timothy's home address listed above from 1918, was funded with \$20,000 and included partners W. Nunley, T.F. Murphy, and J.F. McGlyan<sup>(14)</sup>. According to Gray Tuttle's copy of the family's write-up of an obituary for William Nunley<sup>(15)</sup>, Murphy partnered with Nunley from 1904 until 1946. Nunley subsequently partnered with long-time friend, Norman Russell until Nunley's death in 1951<sup>(15)</sup>.

Since brothers Timothy and James indicated that they were carvers, we can't help but wonder if they were the creators of a style of horse that is seen on some of the Murphy carousels featured in this article. However, some have the mirrored starburst glass inserts which are a Loeff trademark. We have referred to them as being "unknown" in origin.

**An old Savin Rock map shows a Murphy carousel in a setting by itself. It appears to be this carousel (left).**

Photo courtesy of Carlos and Judy Sardina





One of Murphy's Savin Rock carousels. It appears to be all jumpers. Fred Dahlinger photo

## New England Parks and Carousels

### Savin Rock, West Haven, Connecticut

Savin Rock is located along the west shore of New Haven Harbor. The history of Savin Rock is well documented in the book, *Savin Rock Amusement Park*, by Edith Reynolds<sup>(16)</sup>. The amusement park at the site flourished from the late 1800s until about World War I. Timothy Murphy was not only in the food and game concession business at Savin Rock<sup>(17)</sup>, but owned the Nikelet theatre at Savin Rock, and in 1908 installed a carousel in their Hippodrome building<sup>(18)</sup>. Based on post card images, it appears that Murphy had two different carousels at Savin Rock that were placed in the same building, so one likely preceded the other. One carousel was a 3 row and the other was a 4 row. The 3 row had only jumpers, while the 4 row had both jumpers and standers and almost identical rectangular mirrors with a "picket fence" top border in the inner upper housing. It is not clear which of Murphy's Savin Rock carousels went to Lighthouse Point in East Haven, and Lake Compounce, in Bristol, both in Connecticut. There do not seem to be any matches between the 3 and 4 row carousels pictured here and those two carousels.

We have learned much additional information about the Murphy brothers' early business and activities at Savin Rock from Peter J. Malia, a historian from Connecticut and author of the recently published book, *Flying Horses: The Golden Age of American Carousel Art* (available at [www.connecticutpress.com](http://www.connecticutpress.com) as well as Amazon). Peter has spent considerable time interviewing Harold Hartmann and Donald G.

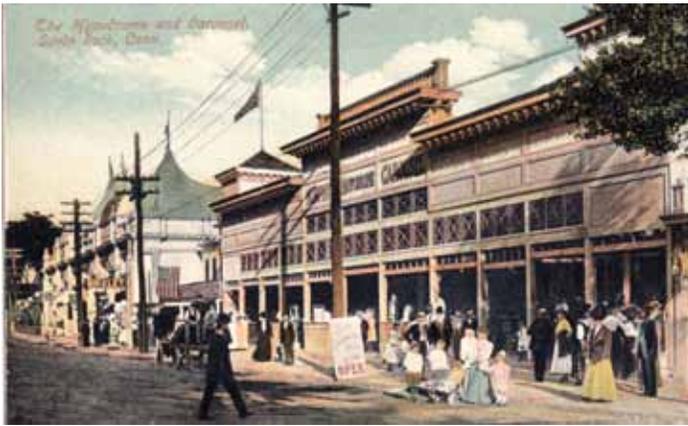
Cameron. Mr. Hartmann is the curator of the Savin Rock Museum in West Haven, CT, and was the lead mechanic at Savin Rock for many years during which time he knew Timothy F. Murphy personally. Mr. Cameron is the grandson of George Cameron, an early Murphy business partner at Savin Rock, and an independent historian specializing in amusement parks.

George Cameron was the owner of the Sea View Hotel at Savin Rock beginning in about 1900. According to Donald G. Cameron, the Murphys stayed at the hotel "in season" beginning in 1906-1907 before building the Hippodrome complex. Donald indicates that the Hippodrome, carousel,



George Cameron's Hotel Sea View, in-season residence of the Murphy brothers at Savin Rock in 1906 and 1907.

William Benjamin collection



**Murphy's Savin Rock Hippodrome building. The Nikelet theatre sign, toward the far left, has yellow lettering.**

Barbara Williams collection

and Murphy's Long Pier (later renamed Liberty Pier) were built on property owned by his grandfather and that he has a title to the complex showing that it was built in 1908. His grandfather was a financial backer of the venture but was left "holding the bag" in 1919 when the business faltered. According to Donald and a period newspaper advertisement, the concession was managed by Bartholomew Murphy. From his accounting, the Murphys also owned one or more carousels (one at Savin Rock's White City), in addition to those in the Hippodrome. Bartholomew's son, John Timothy, also had some involvement in the Savin Rock operation.

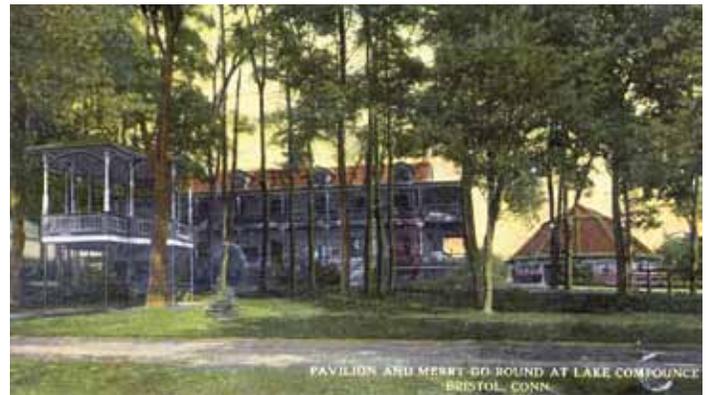
Harold Hartmann, now age 90, was the lead mechanic at Savin Rock beginning in the 1940s and met Timothy Murphy and his nephew, John Timothy, on many occasions. Harold indicates that Timothy was "quite the shaker and mover at Savin Rock," a smooth talker, a "wheeler dealer" who was always making deals and on the lookout for carousel figures. "Murphy would be busy converting a ride (to jumpers) in the morning and running it in the

**"The Murphys over-extended themselves at Savin Rock", says Harold [Hartmann]. "No sooner did they build that big pier and the Hippodrome, but a storm took about a third of the pier away." In regard to their concessions and food services, "They really didn't have enough business to pay for it all."**



**Scene of Beach Street, Savin Rock.**

William Benjamin collection



**This Lake Compounce postcard is postmarked 1912, the year the carousel building was constructed.**

Barbara Williams collection

afternoon. He was always looking for replacements." When asked if Timothy had an Irish brogue, Harold said, "I think so, but it was sixty years ago, so I can't say for sure."

"The Murphys overextended themselves at Savin Rock", says Harold [Hartmann]. "No sooner did they build that big pier and the Hippodrome, but a storm took about a third of the pier away." In regard to their concessions and food services, "They really didn't have enough business to pay for it all."

Harold confirms that a carousel from the Hippodrome was moved to Lighthouse Point. He also says that the Murphys vacated the Hippodrome a short time after World War I, at which time it was converted into a dance hall called Roseland. The last time Harold saw Timothy was in the 1940s.

"He was pretty old then and I thought he retired."

Peter J. Malia has also found that both Timothy and Bartholomew are listed in the

*West Haven Business Directory* as individuals and under Amusement Resorts, "Murphy Bros (flying horses) Beach [Street] opp. Grove [Street]. W Haven" from 1913 to 1919. It isn't clear why they weren't listed earlier.



**Compounce's new carousel building in 2004.**

National Carousel Association, Jean Bennett photo



**Above - Lake Compounce horses in old park paint in 1983. Barbara Williams photo. Right - A pair of Compounce horses in the "unknown" style. National Carousel Association, Jean Bennett photo**



**Lake Compounce, Bristol, Connecticut**

The park at Lake Compounce dates to 1846 when Gad Norton built a trail around the lake, installed picnic tables, allowed boating and swimming and built a gazebo along the shore for band concerts<sup>(19)</sup>. Shortly thereafter, various amusement attractions were installed.

A casino with a restaurant and ballroom was built in 1895. A carousel previously located at Savin Rock was purchased

from Timothy Murphy in 1910 and opened at Lake Compounce on Memorial Day, 1911<sup>(19)</sup>. Many additional amusements including a roller coaster and a miniature railroad were subsequently added.

The Norton family continued to run the park until 1986 when it was then sold to the Hershey Corporation. **Lake Compounce 1970s logo.**



Two years later, Hershey sold the park and from 1986-1996 the park changed ownership four times. In 1996 the park was purchased by The Kennywood Entertainment Corporation which made major investments in upgrading the park. In 2009, the park, along with other Kennywood park properties, was acquired by Palace Entertainment<sup>(19)</sup>. Lake Compounce is currently the oldest continuously operating amusement park in the United States.



**Lake Compounce. Stein & Goldstein horses usually do not have forelocks. John Caruso photo**



**Creature chariot at Lake Compounce. National Carousel Association, Jean Bennett photo**

*The Lighthouse Point carousel in 1972 (right). Murphy sold the carousel to the New Haven Parks Commission in 1928 for \$8,500. The carousel paid for itself within two years as the ride netted \$5,096 in 1929 and \$4,600 in 1930.\**

*\*Annual Reports of the Ride Commission of Public Parks, courtesy of Peter Malia.*

Barbara Williams Collection



### **Lighthouse Point Park, East Haven, Connecticut**

The Murphy carousel at Lighthouse Point Park is reported to have been constructed in the Murphy Brothers workshop in 1911<sup>(19)</sup>. As mentioned, it appears that the carousel was originally placed in Savin Rock. It was installed at its current location in 1916<sup>(20)</sup>.

According to the National Register of Historic Places application, Murphy sold the carousel to the New Haven Parks Commission in 1928 for \$8,500. The Lighthouse Point carousel paid for itself within two years after Murphy sold it to the city of New Haven. It netted \$5,096 in 1929 and \$4,600 in 1930. 41st and 42nd Annual Reports of the Ride Com-

mission of Public Parks, courtesy of Peter Malia.

After continuous operation from 1928 to 1977, the building was boarded up and the carousel was dismantled and placed into storage<sup>(20)</sup>. In 1980, initiatives were established that included both public and private funds that enabled the restoration of the building and the carousel. Within 5 years, the carousel was up and running and continues to operate at Lighthouse Point Park. The carousel and its pavilion were placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983<sup>(20)</sup>.



**Lighthouse's Loeff camel.** John Caruso photo



**A Lighthouse Point horse of the "unknown" style.** John Caruso photo



**Bridgeport's original carousel building. On the reverse – August 3, 1910 – “Dear Sis, I could not resist sending you a picture of our blessed Steeplechase boardwalk (Marked with an “X”). Pleasant thoughts may come to mind. Your loving sis, Bea.”** Barbara Williams collection

### **Pleasure Beach, Bridgeport, Connecticut**

The development of the 37 acre island park was initiated by circus giant, P.T. Barnum. He passed away in 1891, but the development continued and the park opened in 1892<sup>(21)</sup>. Many amusements including a roller coaster, carousel, miniature train, skating rink and an arcade were established at the site<sup>(21)</sup>. The early years were marked by poor transportation to the island which limited attendance. The park was also plagued by numerous fires<sup>(22)</sup>.

The Bridgeport Board of Park Commissioners purchased the park in 1919<sup>(21)</sup>. Two classic Miller and Baker dome roof buildings were erected in about 1922; one to house Murphy's carousel and a second to house an S.B. Weisberger scrambler. The Miller-Baker amusement building company took over the lease of the park in 1921<sup>(22)</sup>. Articles in issues of *The Billboard* indicate that Murphy installed a miniature train from Caroga Lake at the park in 1944<sup>(23)</sup> and a carousel relocated from Asbury Park, NJ, in 1954<sup>(24)</sup>. It isn't known if this carousel was a replacement for a preceding Murphy carousel at the site.



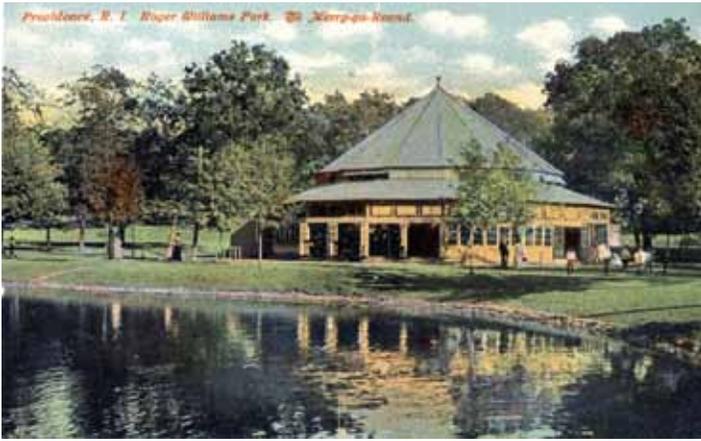
**August 18, 1907 – A fire broke out under the occupied bleachers and spread quickly at George C. Tilyou's Steeplechase Island, Pleasure Beach, Bridgeport<sup>(26,27)</sup>.** Barbara Williams collection



**Carmel armored stander from the Bridgeport carousel (above). Below – Two Carmels, upper and lower, and an early Illions. They are on display at the Beardsley Zoo carousel in Bridgeport. Manny Dragone photos**

The park continued operations into the 1960s at which time attendance had dropped considerably. The carousel closed in 1968 and the horses were put into storage<sup>(21)</sup>. Through public initiatives, funds were raised for restoration but were never allocated by the city or state to rebuild the carousel at a new site. An effort to prevent the sale of the figures at auction in 1992 was initiated by the Friends of the Bridgeport Carousel. Grants were obtained for the construction of a new carousel pavilion that was completed in 1995 and which now houses a Fabricon carousel<sup>(25)</sup>. The original carousel figures are on display in the carousel building at the Beardsley Zoo in Bridgeport. They can be seen in the video, *The Lost Stable* at <http://www.savepleasurebeach.com/>, a present-day, sentimental journey to the remains of Steeplechase Island, in particular, the carousel building.





**Roger Williams Park has the only all metal historic carousel building.** Barbara Williams collection

### Roger Williams Park, Providence, Rhode Island

Early history of the Roger Williams Park and carousel can be found in archives of *Annual Reports of the Board of Park Commissions of the City of Providence, RI*. 1891-1908<sup>(28)</sup>. In 1871, land for the park was deeded to the city by Betsey Williams in honor of her ancestor Roger Williams. Between 1890 and 1898 a deer park and menagerie, museum, casino, boat house and wharf were constructed. By 1907, the park consisted of nearly 432 acres.

Reference to the carousel is first found in 1896. "CARROUSAL. A new building, eighty feet in diameter with steel frame and corrugated iron roof, has been erected by permission, and attraction furnished by flying horses, has proved to be popular to the young people who visit the park during the warm weather. The City receives a percentage of the gross receipts for the privilege granted and the further receipts from the same have been highly satisfactory." Annual receipts for the city between 1898 and 1904 ranged from about \$700 to \$900. We don't know the "percentage of the gross receipts" that the city received but assuming the rides were 5 cents, if the city received 10% of the gross receipts, the number



**The Murphy carousel at Roger Williams Park is without lighting.** Barbara Williams collection

of rides would have numbered about 160,000 per season. The Annual Report from 1906 first mentions a renewal of a contract with John H. Walker. It isn't known precisely when Walker began running the carousel concession.

An article in a 1985 issue of the *Providence Journal* is based on an interview with Rosemarie Tomasso, whose father purchased the carousel from John Walker in 1928. She indicates that her father and a partner bought "the old Murphy carousel that John H. Walker had operated at the park since the late 1800s"<sup>(29)</sup>. A photograph belonging to Arthur Simmons, great-great grandson of Charles Loeff, of what appears to be the same carousel at Roger Williams Park in the Rhode Island issue of *Carousel Art*, #24, 1984, shows a signature panel that reads, "John H. Walker, Providence, R.I.". Tomasso further indicates this about the 68 figures; "In 1938, they decided to replace the aging Murphy carousel. They heaped the horses, dogs, lions, zebras and chariots outside for anyone who wanted an ornament"<sup>(29)</sup>. The carousel was replaced with a PTC carousel, #44, in the original 19th century building

John H. Walker bought and installed a circa 1895 Loeff carousel at Slater Park in 1910<sup>(30, 31)</sup>. Even though we have not found evidence that it is the case, the Walker/Murphy partnership may possibly have extended to Slater Park in nearby Pawtucket.

Roger Williams Park's carousel looks to be a stationary 3 row Loeff. A goat can be seen in the Simmons picture. The zebra in the postcard may be just that, or a roached-maned horse painted like a zebra.

**The remains of the Miller-Baker carousel building at Pleasure Beach in the 1990s. The building was leveled in 2009.**

Gerri Patroni photo





**White City was home to the Murphy carousel as well as PTC 59. The carousel building is behind the chutes.**

Barbara Williams collection

**White City, Worcester, Massachusetts;  
Budd Lake, New Jersey**

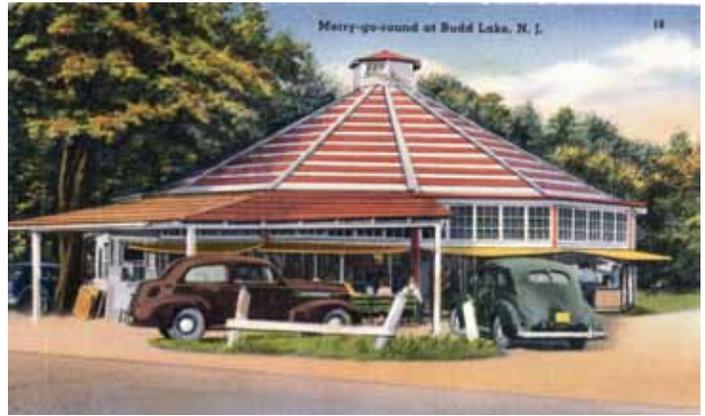
A carousel with Looff horses was installed by Timothy Murphy at White City, Worcester, Massachusetts in 1902<sup>(32)</sup>. In 1907, Murphy partnered with Irvin E. Sharpe in the amusement business at White City. Six years later, they moved the carousel to the east side of Lake Quinsigamond (Lincoln Park?) when Sharpe installed additional rides at the new location. By 1934, during the Depression, when “there weren’t even nickels for wooden horses”, the carousel was put into storage. In 1937, the carousel was brought out of storage and installed at Budd Lake, New Jersey<sup>(32)</sup>.

In 1957, a fire “of undetermined origin early Sunday morning destroyed the Budd Lake Merry Go Round....” It started at 3:30 AM, apparently in the living quarters for Sharpe, adjacent to the carousel. He was visiting family in Brooklyn for Thanksgiving at the time and escaped harm, but the carousel was a total loss as were the living quarters, a refreshment stand, storage shed, and Sharpe’s 1949 “seda-<sup>n</sup>”. Also lost in the fire was a truck full of old records dating back to Sharpe’s early days in the amusement business. Sharpe and Murphy had built carousels and amusement rides before quitting the business twenty years prior<sup>(33)</sup> which would have been in about 1937.

Sharpe, along with his wife Teresa

***The Budd Lake carousel  
looks to have early  
Looff horses.***

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**Sadly, the Murphy carousel at Budd Lake burned in 1957. Below – A decorative ticket for the railroad line that went to Lake Quinsigamond’s White City and Lincoln Park.**

Barbara Williams collection

Langhill Sharpe, operated the carousel at Budd Lake continuously during the summers. In cold weather, Sharpe re-decorated and repaired carousels and other amusement games. The loss of the carousel marked the end of what



was once a popular amusement spot at Budd Lake<sup>(33)</sup>.

At the time the article was written in 1957<sup>(33)</sup>, from which the Budd Lake information this is extracted, Murphy is deceased. After the fire, Sharpe left Budd Lake, saying he would join one of his children – son, George, Brooklyn;

daughter Georgane Smith, Queens, or Florence Rutherford, Brooklyn.

It is interesting to note that in the Lighthouse Point, New Haven, Connecticut carousel’s application for the National Registry of Historic Places, an Irving Sharpe is mentioned as having painted the horses as far back as 1929. The name is a slight variation of Irvin Sharpe. Was this Murphy’s Budd Lake partner?





Barbara Williams collection

View of Ward's Kiddieland Park and carousel, 1950s.

## New York Parks and Carousels

### Ward's Kiddieland, Coney Island, New York

The name Ward is associated with Coney Island going back as far as the 1870s. William Ward owned a block-long beachfront parcel at Coney Island that had Ward's Baths, a coaster, carousel and a kiddiepark<sup>(34)</sup>. A descendant, Ward's Kiddieland, (1950-1980)<sup>(35)</sup> was the location of the Murphy carousel that was bought by Walt Disney for expansion of a Dentzel carousel he bought in Canada at Sunnyside Park in Toronto for installation at Disneyland<sup>(36)</sup>.

Brian Morgan's article in the National Carousel Association's *Merry-Go-Roundup*<sup>(36)</sup>, gives a detailed account of the making of the Disneyland carousel. It reads, in part, under The Murphy Horses, "Disney had always planned a four-row, all-jumper, all-horse carousel like the one at Griffith



John Caruso photos

Above – A Carmel armored horse. Right – A Stein & Goldstein, left, and Carmel, right, all from the Ward's Kiddieland Murphy carousel, now at Disneyland, Anaheim, CA.



Ward's Kiddieland Park Ticket, front and back.



Park (Los Angeles, California). However, the first carousel he bought – the Murphy carousel from Ward's Kiddieland at Coney Island – was a mixed four-row, 56 animal carousel with 40 jumpers, 15 standers, one lion, and two dragon chariots.

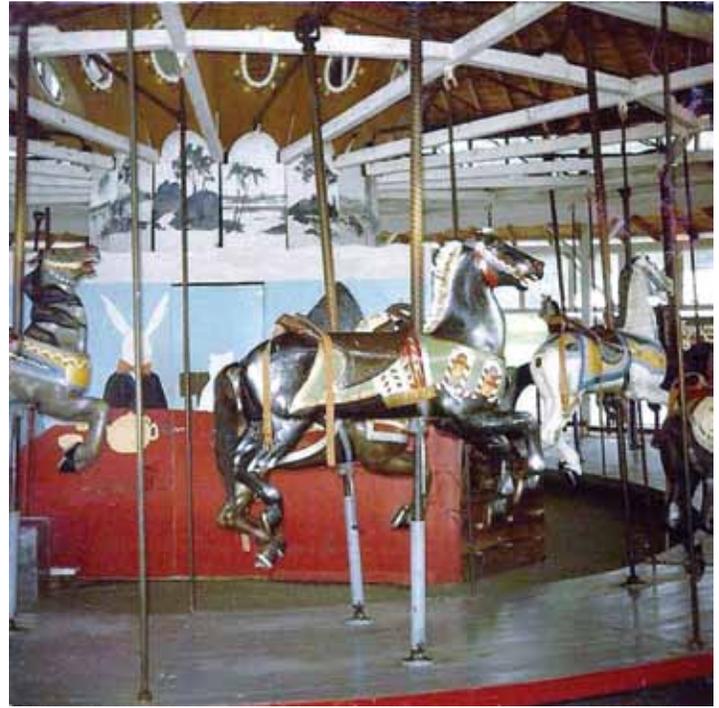
The snapshots sent to Disney in November 1953 (see Morgan's article) showed that the carousel was mostly Carmel. Other photos showed a rare Carmel lion, a number of pretty Stein & Goldsteins, including roached-mane, outside row jumpers and some very elegant Illions.

The carousel must have been lovely in its early days. Unfortunately, it had not been properly cared for.

When Disney bought it, the horses – which he called the "Murphy horses" – had some damage, including dry rot. They were poorly painted, and layers of paint hid the quality of the carvings. The carousel reportedly had only one owner before Ward's Kiddieland purchased it in about 1947; it was offered to Disney for \$6,000<sup>(36)</sup>.

To see all of the individual horses on the Disneyland carousel go to – <http://www.findingmickey.squarespace.com/king-Arthur's-carrousel-horses>.





**The Kaydeross carousel shortly before the park closed in 1987 (above and right). Richard Concepcion photos**

**Kaydeross Park, Saratoga Springs, New York**

There are two accountings of the locations of the Illions carousel, placing it at Kaydeross at different times.

1. National Carousel Association Census – Forest Park, Ballston Lake – 1904 - 1930; Round Lake, Ballston Lake – 1932 - 1943; Kaydeross – 1943 - 1987

2. *Saratoga Springs – A Historical Portrait, Images of America*, Arcadia Publishing<sup>(37)</sup> – Rexford, Clifton Park – 1906 - 1911; Forest Park, Ballston Lake – 1911 - 1932; Lakeside Park, Round Lake/Maltaville – 1931 - 1947; Kaydeross – 1947 - 1987

When the Illions carousel arrived at Kaydeross Park in either 1943 or 1947, the park was heading into some ups and downs. In January of 1947, there is a roller rink, Whip, carousel, arcade, restaurants, concessions, a bathing beach

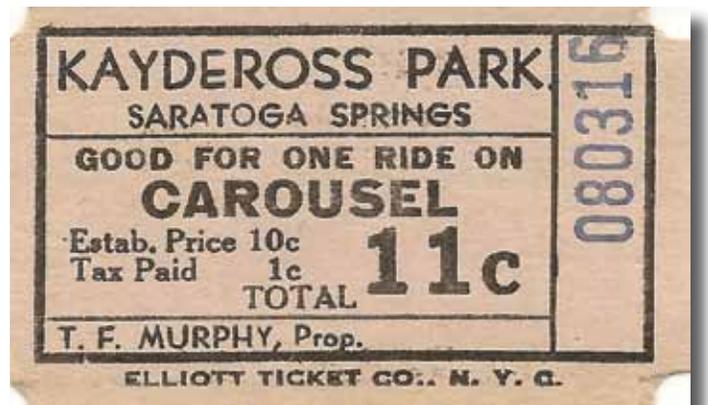


**Kaydeross Park's carousel was modest but treasured by the quaint community of Saratoga Springs. Barbara Williams collection**



with speed boats and a picnic grove. "Seeks big rides" was advertised in *The Billboard* magazine that month<sup>(38)</sup>.

By early 1952, a caterpillar and kiddie boats have been added<sup>(39)</sup>. But, in March 1960, a tilt-a-whirl, caterpillar, Ferris wheel and a carousel are advertised as being for sale<sup>(40)</sup>. At



**Timothy Murphy was a proprietor of the Kaydeross carousel. William Benjamin collection**



John Caruso photos

**The now restored 2 row Saratoga Springs Illions carousel has 28 jumpers.**

the same time a Wanted Ad for an Adult Merry Go Round for Brown's Beach, a 13 acre parcel used as an amusement park for nearly a half of a century at Saratoga Springs<sup>(41)</sup> appeared in *The Billboard*<sup>(42)</sup>.

Kaydeross finally closed in 1987. "The popular park has just celebrated its Diamond Anniversary. The land has been sold for development and Kaydeross Park is closing its gates forever." read the 1987 Norton auction catalog for the October 2nd and 3rd auction of Kaydeross, minus the carousel<sup>(43)</sup>. It was destined to be sold separately at auction by Guernsey's on September, 26, 1987. Minutes before the auction, the community of Saratoga Springs came to an agreement with the carousel's owner/land developer, the city, and the auctioneer. The carousel was sold to the city of Saratoga Springs for \$150,000<sup>(44)</sup>. Admirably, the Save the Carousel group had raised \$131,000 towards the purchase of the carousel<sup>(45)</sup>.

### Coney Island/Prospect Park, New York

A Murphy-Saratoga carousel, perhaps another of Murphy's partnerships, was installed in 1946 at West 8th and Surf Avenue by the McCullough brothers, well-known owners and operators of carousels at Coney Island<sup>(46)</sup>. This carousel was moved to Prospect Park in 1952<sup>(47)</sup>.



**Coney Island's Cyclone roller coaster, Wonder Wheel and Parachute Jump Ride are seen in this postcard that shows the location of the McCullough-owned Murphy-Saratoga Surf Avenue carousel. Barbara Williams collection**



**A third row jumper at Saratoga Springs with a bat wing saddle.**

At Prospect Park, McCullough added a 4th row of animals from a carousel he bought near Lake Ontario that had an ID plate that read, "Henry Paul"<sup>(48)</sup>. It is not known who Paul was<sup>(48)</sup>. The menagerie animals were E. Joy Morris figures, originally from the Philadelphia Toboggan Company



**The Murphy-Saratoga/Prospect Park carousel in 2007. John Caruso photo**



*The Stein & Goldstein jumper with the draped sash (center) on the Murphy-Saratoga carousel was also on the Ward's Kiddieland carousel that Walt Disney bought and incorporated into the carousel at Disneyland. It was not used on the carousel, however. It is seen on page 146 of "Painted Ponies".*

Barbara Williams collection

carousels that were at Pittsburgh, #'s 23, 24 and 25<sup>(49)</sup>. These animals consisted of deer, a tiger, ostrich, kangaroo, giraffes, goats and a lion<sup>(48)</sup>. All but the lion, giraffe and a deer were removed and sold when McCullough converted the carousel back to being a 3 row<sup>(49)</sup>. Eventually, McCullough gifted the carousel to Prospect Park<sup>(49)</sup>. For photos of the carousel's Morris animals see *The Carousel News & Trader*, Volume 6, #10.

At the present, in Prospect Park, NY, the carousel is 3 rows with Carmel horses and the three PTC menagerie figures. There are 36 jumpers and 18 standers. The National Carousel Association describes the carousel as a Mangels-Carmel<sup>(50)</sup>.

Sherman's Amusement Center, Caroga Lake, N. Y.



*View of Sherman's Amusement Park, Caroga Lake, NY.*  
William Benjamin collection

### **Sherman's Amusement Park, Caroga Lake, New York**

At the turn of the century, an amusement area was established at Caroga Lake, located in New York State's Adirondack State Park, and it rapidly became a popular summer vacation spot<sup>(51)</sup>. In 1920, Frank Sherman built a dance pavilion, added a carousel, Ferris wheel, shooting gallery, and other rides, games and eateries<sup>(52)</sup>. Sherman's "Yellow" Popcorn and soft ice cream were especially favored among the summer folk who filled the cottages and lakeside hotels<sup>(51)</sup>. Alcohol was not permitted until the 1970s and only ballroom dancing was allowed<sup>(52)</sup>.

Early in the 1920s Caroga's stationary Looff menagerie carousel was converted to jumpers by Timothy Murphy<sup>(53)</sup>. At the time of the conversion, a couple of Carmels joined the Looff lions, giraffes, a camel and a rare teddy bear<sup>(53)</sup>. As discussed in the Bridgeport, Connecticut section, it has been established that Murphy had an association with Caroga Lake in that he installed some miniature train rails from Caroga at Bridgeport<sup>(54)</sup>. It is not known if his involvement



*The Murphy-Saratoga carousel at Coney Island in 1950.*  
Barbara Williams collection



**The Caroga Lake carousel building remains shuttered.**

Photos above and below: Tony Ermie, carogatimes.com

with Caroga's carousel extended beyond the conversion.

In 1980, tragedy struck at Sherman's when the dance pavilion and restaurant burned. Money was needed to rebuild. For that purpose, that year, the animals from the carousel were brokered to Gray Tuttle who sold them individually<sup>(53)</sup>. The carousel building and the carousel frame remained at Caroga Lake.



**Stained glass encircles the carousel.**

After the departure of the original animals, the carousel, with assistance by Gray Tuttle, was out-fitted with Theel metal castings of Looff, Parker and Spillman animals<sup>(52)</sup>.

In 1989, the now foreclosed amusement park was acquired by new owners who invested heavily in renovations. The carousel was restored as was the building with new, fanciful, stained glass windows<sup>(52)</sup>. By 1998, the carousel and other rides at Caroga Lake were only available for rental at private parties<sup>(51)</sup>. According to a post at Flickr, under Sherman's Amusement Park Arcade, the park finally closed after a fatal accident on the carousel, no date given<sup>(55)</sup>. In 2009, the Caroga Lake property was put up for sale and it is still for sale at the time of this writing<sup>(56, 57)</sup>. The arcade has

been moved to the History Museum to join an ice house, cobbler's shop, general store, farm house and an exhibit barn<sup>(58)</sup>.



**A complete overhaul of the carousel under new ownership in the 1980s included a stripped and refinished platform. The carousel has aluminum replacement animals.**



**Above - Several of the Caroga Lake figures were in the 2010 Guernsey auction, including this horse. Below - Timothy Murphy converted some of Caroga's stationary horse to jumpers. Bottom - A trio of early Looff standers at Caroga Lake. Photos above and below: Gray Tuttle**



been moved to the History Museum to join an ice house, cobbler's shop, general store, farm house and an exhibit barn<sup>(58)</sup>.



Photo: Tony Ermie, carogatimes.com



*Rockaway's  
Nunley-Murphy  
carousel,  
showing Carmel  
jumpers and a  
Stein & Goldstein  
stander.*

Barbara Williams collection

**Nunley/Murphy Carousels**  
**Rockaway, Long Island, New York**

Rockaway Beach is located on the south shore of Long Island in the New York City borough of Queens. A new railroad station built in the early 1900s brought visitors for the summers, weekends and day trips and soon Rockaway became known as "New York's Playground"<sup>(59)</sup>.

In 1901, William S. Smith installed his Hurdler's Carousel, with jumping horses, on the northwest corner of Seaside Avenue and the Boulevard, billing it as the "Largest in the World". The carousel burned in 1911. On this site, in 1914, William Nunley installed a "giant carousel with jumping horses" with other amusements and refreshment stands inside the pavilion<sup>(59)</sup>.

**Rockaway's Carousel History**

**1880s** – Carousel to America by German immigrant, Frederick A. Schildt - man-powered, then animal powered, finally steam-powered. Burned in 1882<sup>(64)</sup>.

**Post 1892 fire** - Meissner carousel from Germany. Lasted until the 1920s<sup>(59)</sup>.

No date - New Schildt carousel<sup>(59)</sup>.

**1897** – Oliver J. Mousette, Canadian – built "giant" carousel. Burned 1902<sup>(59)</sup>.

**1901** – William S. Smith - Hurdler's carousel. Burned 1911<sup>(59)</sup>.

**1914** – Nunley's at site of Hurdler's<sup>(59)</sup>.

**1926 - 1963** – Dentzel, now at Six Flags, Arlington, TX<sup>(65)</sup>.

**1955 - 1965** – Dentzel, now at Please Touch Museum, Philadelphia, PA. (Fred Fried's carousel)<sup>(66)</sup>.

**Mr. Gold's Carousel** – Make unknown, competitor of Nunley's and the Playland Dentzel<sup>(66)</sup>.

In 1937, the Seaside amusement section where the Nunley carousel was located was demolished in order to build the Shorefront Parkway<sup>(60)</sup>. It was a formidable project designed to expand access to Staten Island through the Rockaway peninsula via bridges and the parkway<sup>(61)</sup>.

Nunley ended up relocating his carousel several times at Rockaway. Business was going well at the last site until Nunley died unexpectedly of a stroke in 1951. The park closed and the rides were auctioned<sup>(59)</sup>. The carousel was moved into storage at Nunley's Kiddieland in Baldwin, Long Island, New York<sup>(62)</sup>.

In 1946, a somewhat successful attempt was made to revive the Rockaway amusement area that the Parkway had destroyed. But, by the 1950's, the area had evolved from a summer resort to urban living with bridges transporting commuters<sup>(61)</sup>. Today, Rockaway is a popular beachfront area with surfing as a big draw<sup>(63)</sup>.



*Rockaway's 1901 Hurdlers carousel would burn in 1911, to be replaced with Nunley's carousel in 1914.*

Barbara Williams collection



**William Nunley stands in front of his South Beach carousel. The other man is identified as Ed Farrell.**

Courtesy of the Collection of the Staten Island Museum

### South Beach, Staten Island, New York

By the early 1900s, summer homes were being built at Staten Island's South Beach<sup>(67)</sup>. In 1906, the Happyland amusement center opened, attracting 100,000 visitors on weekends through the early 1900's<sup>(68)</sup>. There was even a special train that ran from the ferry terminal to Happyland<sup>(69)</sup>. The amusement park thrived through the teens and twenties<sup>(70)</sup>. William Nunley's boardwalk carousel pavilion at South Beach was built in 1918 in the proximity of Happyland<sup>(71)</sup>.

Unfortunately, as early as 1917, South Beach suffered from water pollution and swimming had become unsafe<sup>(70)</sup>. The next negative impact was the Depression, a fatal blow for many amusement parks. By now, the resort town had become the suburbs. In 1935, the construction of a new boardwalk, a Works Progress Administration project (WPA), replaced the old amusements, boardwalk and beachfront cottages. The intention was to connect South Beach and Midland Beach for a beachfront revival and to make the area more like Rockaway Beach<sup>(68, 69)</sup>. In 1955, there was another setback. Concessions and businesses were forced to close to make way for a new park that was never built<sup>(71)</sup>.

**Right – South Beach Advertisement from "The Brooklyn Daily Eagle", New York, July 1, 1913. William Benjamin collection**

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, JULY 1, 1913.

# GO SOUTH BEACH TO SOUTH BEACH

STATEN ISLAND

FOR THE SUMMER OR DAYS OUTING

25 Minutes from Foot of Bay Ridge Avenue (69th Street)

The coolest, most beautiful Beach, within 25 minutes from foot of Bay Ridge Ave. (69th Street)—a breezy sail on Municipal Ferries.

Splendid hotels, cafes, restaurants; fresh sea foods, seasonable delicacies at very moderate prices.

Vaudeville shows, music, cabaret, music pavilions and every amusement feature.

Ocean bathing pavilions on white sand beach. Fine fishing and boating facilities.

**Easy and Pleasant to Get There**

**A Joy to Stay There**

You Never Have to Stand on South Beach Cars

Seats for All Always

COME TO SOUTH BEACH FOR A GOOD TIME

- VAUDEVILLE
- MOVING PICTURES
- ROLLER COASTER
- DANCING
- MERRY-GO-ROUNDS
- PALM GARDEN
- FINE RESTAURANTS
- SPLENDID HOTELS
- BRASS BANDS

- FINE BATHING
- FISHING
- BOATING
- SAILING
- WATER CAROUSELS
- SCENIC RAILWAYS
- FERRIS WHEELS
- PHOTOGRAPHERS
- SHORE BURNERS



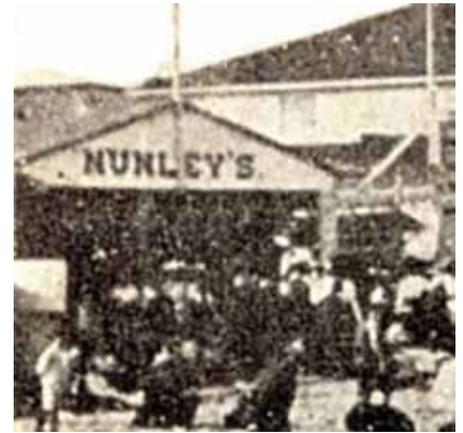
*What may be the Baton Rouge Murphy carousel when stationary. The horse center, right, was in the Baton Rouge figures stored at Pontchartrain. Note the St. Bernard dog on the left.*



Photo Courtesy of Rol and Jo Summit – Flying Horses



South Beach, S. I.



The front of Nunley's carousel building, far left, faced out onto the boardwalk at South Beach.

Barbara Williams collection

By the 1970s, the amusement areas were mostly gone; the last one closed in 2006<sup>(67)</sup>.

Today, the newly restored boardwalk at South Beach, known as the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Boardwalk (Roosevelt started the WPA), is a 2½ mile stretch with picnic grounds, baseball fields, handball, and other outdoor recreation activities, including the Ocean Breeze fishing pier<sup>(70,72)</sup>.

Staten Island was also home to PTC 14 (Midland Beach on the Boardwalk)<sup>(71)</sup> and an Allan Herschell carousel at South Beach's Children's Amusement Park<sup>(73)</sup>.

### Broad Channel, Queens, New York

Broad Channel is twenty blocks long, four blocks wide. It is the only inhabited island in Jamaica Bay, a neighborhood of the borough of Queens. It is connected to the mainland by bridges<sup>(74)</sup>. The residential community occupies the lower third of the island and the upper two thirds is the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge<sup>(75)</sup>. Many of the modest houses are built on stilts with the bay or man-made canals as backyards<sup>(75)</sup>. There are about nine hundred permanent residences at Broad Channel<sup>(76)</sup>.



Left - Three generations at the Broad Channel carousel, Queens, NY. Right - The horse and the dragon are European figures. The carousel also had Carmel horses. Barbara Williams collection

A seemingly unlikely location for a carousel, Nunley's was at Broad Channel along with a kiddie boat ride and an arcade<sup>(77)</sup>. They were on the Southwest corner of Cross Bay Boulevard and West 20th Road<sup>(75)</sup>.

Widowed Miriam Nunley downsized the Nunley-owned parks by putting the Broad Channel property up for sale in 1955. In 1956, the property sold to the Broad Channel Day Camp<sup>(78, 79)</sup>. The Broad Channel carousel ultimately ended up at the Willowbrook State School in Willowbrook, New York. The carousel mysteriously vanished in the 1970s and was replaced with a metal, 2 row carousel which is no longer there<sup>(80)</sup>.

According to Savin Rock historian, Don



*Above – European giraffes, Carmel jumpers, 1st and 2nd rows, European horse, 3rd row. Richard recalls fragments of a band organ in the center area. Top, right – The young man is leaning on a Carmel horse. Right – A row of European figures on the Willowbrook carousel. Richard Conception was able to take these pictures by riding the public bus into the grounds of the Willowbrook School. The gate to the rides was open. According to Richard, the young men in the pictures were loitering at the carousel.*

Richard Conception photos, 1976

Cameron, some of the Murphy family members resided at Broad Channel. Harold Hartmann, who knew Timothy Murphy at Savin Rock, recalls that John Timothy Murphy, Timothy's nephew, talked about family living at Canarsie. Both of these locations had carousels under the Nunley/Murphy partnership.

**Golden City, Canarsie, New York – Baldwin, New York – Garden City, New York, Nassau County Museum Row, New York**

Golden City Amusement Park, at Seaview and Canarsie Road along the Jamaica Bay shoreline, opened to the public on May 30, 1907<sup>(81, 82)</sup>. Twenty five thousand people



Advertisement for Golden City Park. Brian Merlis collection

were in attendance, greeted by 140,000 electric lights<sup>(82)</sup>. On paths of ground-up clam and oyster shells, visitors to the park made their way to the funhouse, roller coaster, circle swings, caterpillar, arcade, skooter, Tunnel of Love, Whip and an aeroplane ride<sup>(81)</sup>. It would seem likely that the park had a carousel at the beginning in 1907, but that is unconfirmed.

The park suffered a blow in 1909, when a fire reduced Golden City from a "beautiful Palace of Pleasure to a gruesome heap of ashes" <sup>(82)</sup>. In 1912, with Golden City "in shambles", it was bought by Irving and Jack Rosenthal, young showmen entrepreneurs, who added boxing as an attraction, first amateur then professional, and were soon making more money from it than the amusement park <sup>(83)</sup>.

Golden City is said to have had two carousels, one referred to as Nunley's, one Murphy's. At oldcanarsie.com, Murphy's carousel is said to be a Stein & Goldstein that later moved to Baldwin, New York. Nunley's carousel is not described. It is not known if Nunley and Murphy formed a partnership at Golden City, leading to the shift in how the



**The grand entrance to Golden City park, 1907.**

Brian Merlis collection

Stein & Goldstein was referenced. It was installed at Golden City in 1912 which coincided with the Rosenthal park ownership change<sup>(81)</sup>, perhaps an upgrade made by the park's new owners.

Another devastating fire at Golden City occurred in 1934<sup>(81)</sup>. The Rosenthal's gave up the park that year<sup>(83)</sup>. Golden City was torn down in 1939. The amusement park was supposed to be rebuilt elsewhere, but the Civic Association issued an injunction, preventing that from happening, not wanting to invite "bad elements" to Canarsie<sup>(81)</sup>.

In 1939, Nunley's carousel was moved to Baldwin, New York, where it was installed at 850 Sunrise Highway<sup>(83)</sup>. Nunley's Amusement Park had a roller coaster, kiddie boats, pedal cars, a Ferris wheel, spinning tubs, kiddie cars and planes, the carousel and a miniature golf course. There was also Nunley's restaurant with hamburgers, hot dogs and other amusement park-type food<sup>(84)</sup>. In 1954, Miriam Nunley added a Schiff Ferris wheel, a Herschell Sky Fighter and a



**A parade assembles in front of the Golden City carousel building that was moved to Baldwin.** Brian Merlis collection



**At Golden City, the other carousel building most-likely housed Murphy's Carousel. The windows appear to match those seen in the interior view on page 11.**

Brian Merlis collection

100 unit arcade. That year, the home on the property belonging to the Lercari brothers, Stephen, Lou and Jack, was razed to make way for 300 additional parking spots<sup>(85)</sup>. Stephen Lercari had been hired by the Nunley's in the 1940s as a mechanic for the carousels in Brooklyn and Long Island. His brothers worked the parking lots. "It was after the war and you didn't know what you wanted to do and we happened to get into this.", said Stephen Lercari<sup>(86)</sup>.

In 1964, the Lercari brothers bought the Nunley amusement park and ran it until 1995, when they decided to retire<sup>(87)</sup>. "Nunley's Carousel and Amusements, a fixture on Sunrise Highway in Baldwin for 56 years, closed its doors today. So, today, despite, the rain that put all but one ride and a few games out of commission, people streamed in. They paid homage to the whirling cylinders in the Tubs O' Fun ride, played 10 cent Skee Ball and popped in quarters to hear the words of the strange mechanical lady called Grandma who "Predicts Your Future" from inside a glass



**Nunley's carousel, kiddie boat ride and Ferris wheel at the Sunrise Highway location in Baldwin, in the 1970s.**

Richard Conception photo



**Left - A third row stander on Nunley's Carousel. Right - Nunley's Stein & Goldstein outside row horse seen in the 1970s photo below.** John Caruso photos

case. But, mostly they rode the carousel...<sup>(86)</sup>.

The amusement park closed, the land was sold to Pep Boys. Public outcry played a pivotal role in preventing the auction of the carousel which stood to reduce it to parts. The county legally seized the carousel. Taken out of the auction of the amusement park contents, in 1998, the Supreme Court arrived at an amount of \$854,400 to be paid to the Lercaris for the carousel<sup>(87)</sup>. Now restored, Nunley's carousel is at the Cradle of Aviation Museum, Long Island Museum Row, Garden City, New York. Nunley's carousel re-opened to the public on May 2, 2009 amidst a gala celebration<sup>(88)</sup>.

Billy Joel's Waltz No. 1 (Nunley's Carousel) was written in 2001 by the Long Island native pop composer/singer as a tribute to this much-loved carousel<sup>(87)</sup>. Nine year old Rachel

Obergh started "Pennies for the Ponies" as a fund-raiser for the carousel with a goal of \$2,000 (200,000 pennies). By late 2009, \$94,000 had been raised by this heartwarming project<sup>(88)</sup>.



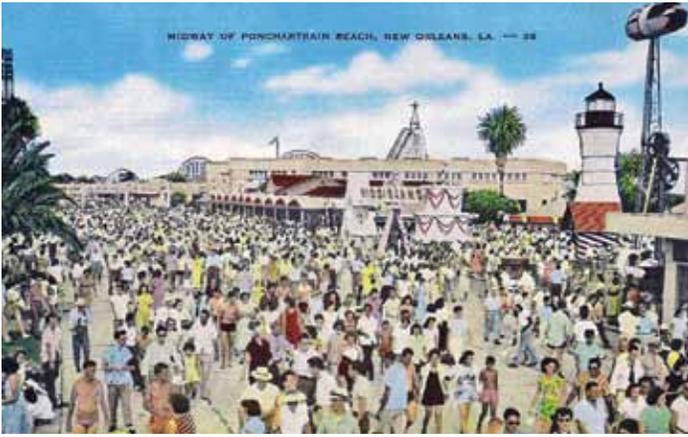
**Metal sign advertising Pontchartrain Beach.** Kindly provided by Randall Rudd.



**Stein & Goldstein jumper in the 1970s. The carousel has fluorescent lighting on the sweeps.** Richard Concepcion photo

## **Louisiana Parks and Carousels**

We have found evidence for the association of either Timothy or Bartholomew Murphy and both "Murphy Brothers" with three carousels each installed at one or more locations in Louisiana beginning in the early 1900s. As indicated below, Timothy made the initial contacts to establish carousels in that area. However, based on Bartholomew's census records and subsequent involvement, it is clear that he established his residency in New Orleans by 1910 and was most likely primarily responsible for the Louisiana carousel operations by that time and going forward.

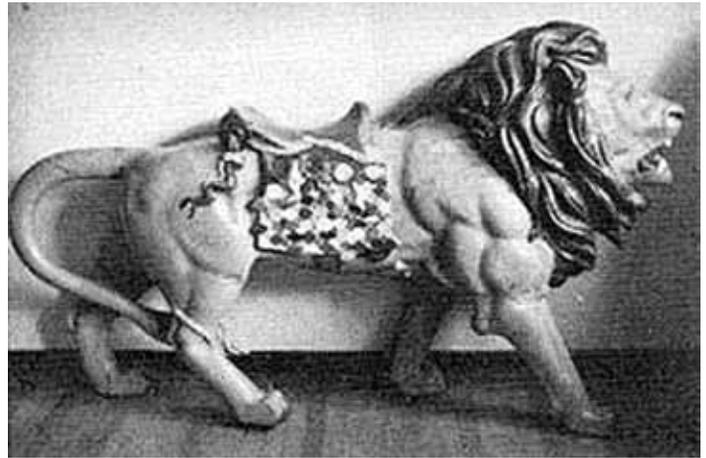


*Pontchartrain Beach Midway.* William Benjamin collection

**Audubon Park, New Orleans, Louisiana;  
Pontchartrain Beach, New Orleans, Louisiana;  
Bogota, Columbia**

Audubon Park was established in 1898. Previous to that time, the site had been host of the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition in 1884<sup>(89)</sup>. The 340 acre park, designed by John Charles Olmsted, designer of New York City's Central Park, and named for ornithologist, John James Audubon, is located between the Mississippi River and St. Charles Avenue<sup>(89)</sup>. Early amusements included a carousel, a miniature railway and a large public swimming pool<sup>(89)</sup>.

In 1900, the Audubon Park Commission desired to re-

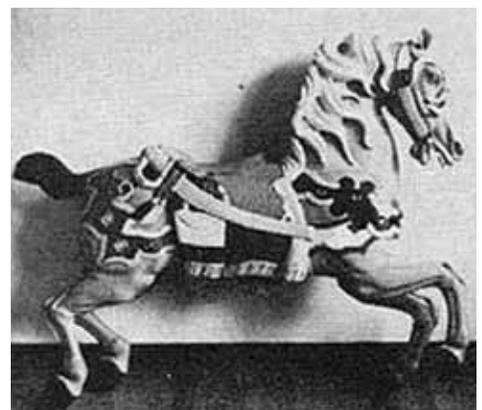
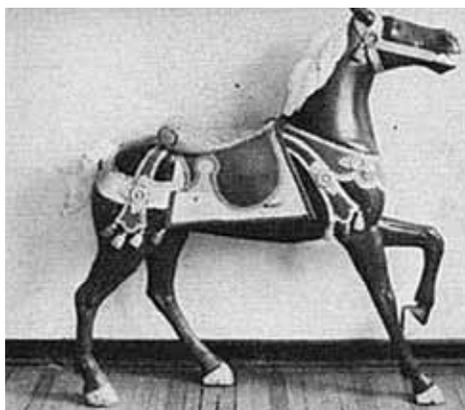
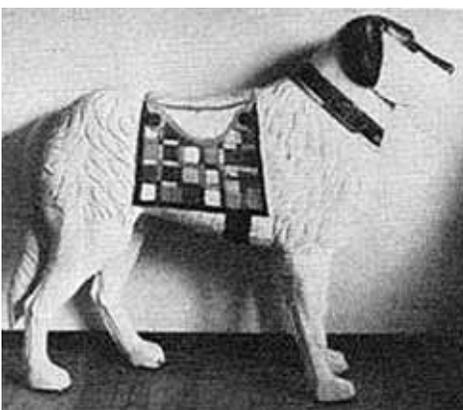
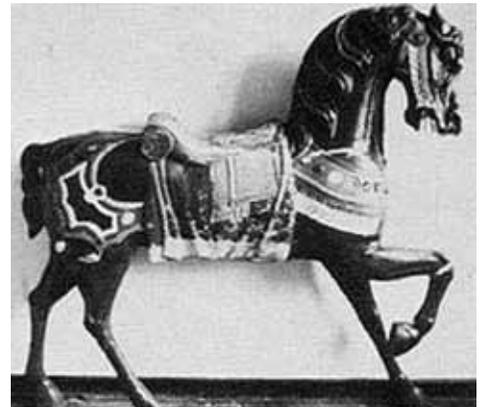
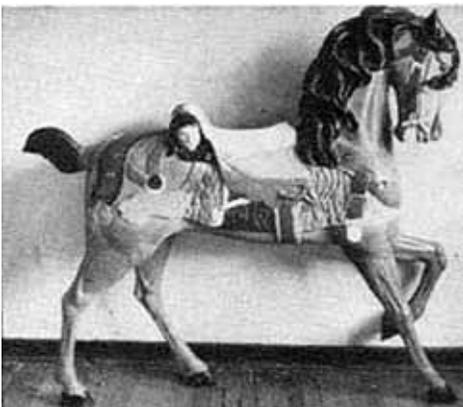


*Judging by the trappings, the Bogota Carmel lion is seen in the historic picture of Theodore Graff right.*

Courtesy of Guernsey's, New York and Len Luiso

place an existing carousel at the park, owned by a Mr. Straub<sup>(90)</sup>. In February of that year, John Walker, owner of the carousel at Roger Williams Park, in Providence, Rhode Island, presented photos, drawings and plans of his carousel to the commission in the hopes of obtaining the privilege (lease) for the replacement "Flying Horses"<sup>(91)</sup>. Mr. Straub's lease was temporarily extended while the commission decided who to pick for the concession<sup>(92)</sup>.

In April of 1901, Timothy Murphy was granted the lease and construction on the carousel building began with Mur-



*Pictures from the 1986 Guernsey's auction catalog of the Bogota Murphy carousel. Upper left, Loeff or unknown make; upper center, Carmel armored; upper right, unknown make; lower left, Loeff dog that seems to be missing the side of its face; lower center, early Loeff; lower right, Loeff.* Courtesy of Guernsey's, New York and Len Luiso



**The Historic New Orleans Collection identifies the man holding the lion as being Theodore Graff, the Murphys' painter. We see a resemblance between this man and Bartholomew Murphy. This may be a reversed image. Photo courtesy of The Historic New Orleans Collection, accession #1977.78.5 LF 24<sup>(106, 107)</sup>**

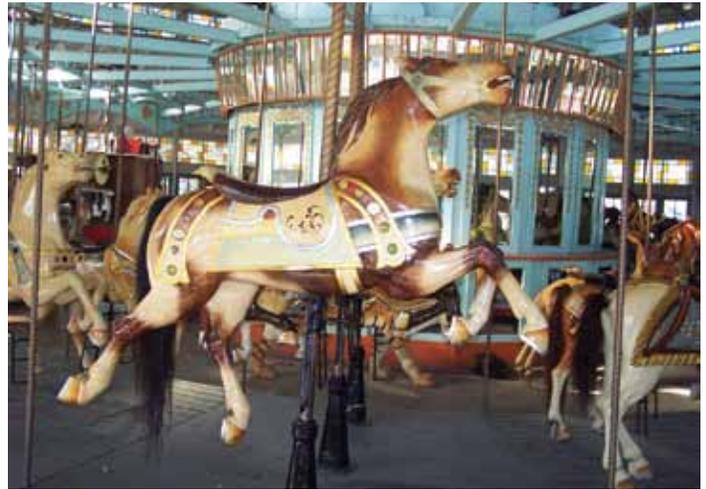
phy overseeing the daily operation<sup>(93)</sup>. In May, Murphy received 50 head of horses and dogs. The carousel opened to the public in late May. Curiously, the carousel pictured in a newspaper ad in the Picayune announcing the opening of the carousel is the same image of the Roger Williams Park Walker-owned carousel seen on page 19 in this article<sup>(94)</sup>

In 1904, the Audubon Park Commission was considering moving the carousel and nearby concessions within the park. The Murphys agreed if the band stand was also moved. They stated they would be willing to make necessary repairs to the carousel if their lease was extended beyond the remaining two years<sup>(95)</sup>. In 1907, the decision to move the carousel was finalized and the Murphy's lease was awarded for five years<sup>(96)</sup>. Before moving to the new building, "rocking horses were installed to replace those fixed on the platform"<sup>(97)</sup>. A new band organ arrived for the April move<sup>(98)</sup>. BA (Bartholomew Albert) Murphy is listed as being the owner of the carousel<sup>(99)</sup>.

With the Murphys' lease due to expire in January 1911, new bids were sought in October of 1910<sup>(100)</sup>. In 1912, a Dent-



**Boating in City Park, New Orleans, Louisiana in 1910. Barbara Williams collection**



**Outer row Loeff Jumper at City Park. Beau Bassich photo**  
zel menagerie carousel was installed at Audubon Park<sup>(101)</sup>. The Murphy carousel was most likely bought by Harry Batt, Sr. and used at Pontchartrain Beach before being sold and shipped to Bogota, Columbia, South America in 1938.

Pontchartrain Beach amusement park opened in 1928 across Bayou St. John from the previous location of Spanish Fort. Harry Batt, Sr. became the sole proprietor of the park in 1934 when the original owners were forced into bankruptcy due to the Depression<sup>(102, 103)</sup>. The park was subsequently relocated once again to the lake end of Elysian Fields Avenue in early 1939<sup>(104)</sup>. The Carmel/Murphy carousel that Batt operated at the original Ponchartrain Beach site was not moved to the final location of the park but instead, was sold in 1938 and placed in Bogota, Columbia<sup>(102)</sup> and later auctioned by Guernsey's in 1986. Batt purchased an Illions carousel in New York<sup>(105)</sup> and operated it at the Elysian Fields Avenue location beginning in 1939 and continuing until 1983, when the park closed and the carousel was broken up<sup>(102)</sup>.

### **City Park, New Orleans, Louisiana**

City Park is located along Bayou St. John. Property for the park was donated to the City of New Orleans by John McDonough in 1850<sup>(108)</sup>. In 1891, the City Park Improvement Association (CPIA) was formed to establish funding



**Outer row Loeff Jumper at City Park. Beau Bassich photo**



**The City Park carousel got a new floor and platform following the tragedy of Katrina.** Beau Bassich photo

for park improvements<sup>(108)</sup>. Today, the park encompasses a total of 1,300 acres, making it one of the largest urban parks in the nation.

City Park's original carousel was under a tent and owned by a Louis Gabord/Gabour<sup>(101, 109)</sup>. His lease was due to expire in 1905. In 1902, Timothy Murphy, perhaps representing both brothers,<sup>(110)</sup> submitted three different proposals



**Looff giraffe on the City Park carousel.**  
Photo courtesy of Rol and Jo Summit – Flying Horses



**Inner row Carmel jumper at City Park.** John Caruso photo

for the concession to operate a carousel at City Park, but Gabour's bid was renewed<sup>(110)</sup>. In 1904, John Walker, now a "former employee" of Timothy Murphy, expressed interest in the City Park carousel concession<sup>(111)</sup>. At the same time, the Murphys rebid and the carousel lease was awarded to BA Murphy<sup>(110)</sup>.

According to Kathleen Barach<sup>(112)</sup>, Bartholomew Murphy was issued a building permit in February, 1906 for a carousel in City Park. In September of that year, the President's report to the members of the New Orleans City Park Improvement Association reported that: "Mr. B.A. Murphy was given the right to build a handsome pavilion for a Carousel and to use it for a period of five years, but upon the completion of said pavilion it became the Park's property"<sup>(112)</sup>. According to Beau Bassich<sup>(110)</sup>, in 1911, Bartholomew Murphy turned down the right to operate the carousel through 1928. However, in 1913, the *Daily Picayune* reported that Murphy still had the carousel lease<sup>(113)</sup>. Furthermore, Barach indicates that Bartholomew gave up his lease option for the pavilion and sold the carousel to the Crescent Amusement Company in 1928<sup>(112)</sup>. It was then that the carousel was moved to a new location within the park<sup>(114)</sup>. Thus, Bartholomew likely retained the lease until 1928.

Although damaged by hurricane Katrina, the Murphy carousel reopened on November 23, 2007, in time for its 100 year anniversary<sup>(115)</sup>.



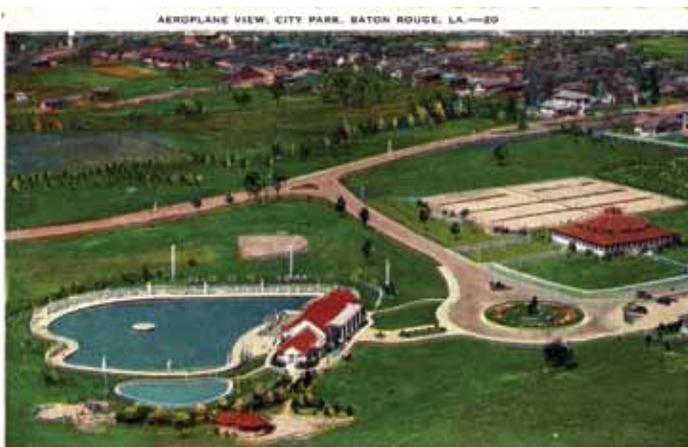
*Spanish Fort had a large, classic-style carousel building, seen behind the circular swing ride. Barbara Williams collection*

**Spanish Fort Amusement Park (also Fort St. John), New Orleans, Louisiana; City Park (City-Brooks Park), Baton Rouge, Louisiana; storage at Lake Pontchartrain Beach, New Orleans, Louisiana**

In the 1700s the Spanish government built a fort on the property, located on Bayou St. John near the lakefront of Lake Pontchartrain. The fort was first called Fort St. John of the Bayou but eventually became known as Old Spanish Fort<sup>(116)</sup>. The land was purchased from the U.S. government in 1823 by Harvey Elkins, who constructed a hotel on the site that operated until 1878. The land was then purchased by Moses Schwartz, who further developed an amusement park, casino, theater and dancing pavilion<sup>(117)</sup>. According to the early post card shown, Spanish Fort was known as the "Coney Island of New Orleans". A fire destroyed many of the buildings in 1906. Rebuilt, from 1906 until it closed in 1926, Spanish Fort was operated only as an amusement park. Major rides included a carousel, Ferris wheel and roller coaster.

Previously, little was known about Spanish Fort's carousel. We now know it was built by Murphy<sup>(117)</sup> and we know about its subsequent locations.

City Park in Baton Rouge dates back to the early 1920s. In 1927, the carousel and pavilion was installed by Bartholomew Murphy<sup>(118)</sup>. Barach and Mrs. JT (John Timothy)



*A large, square carousel building is seen at Baton Rouge Park, New Orleans, Louisiana. Barbara Williams collection*

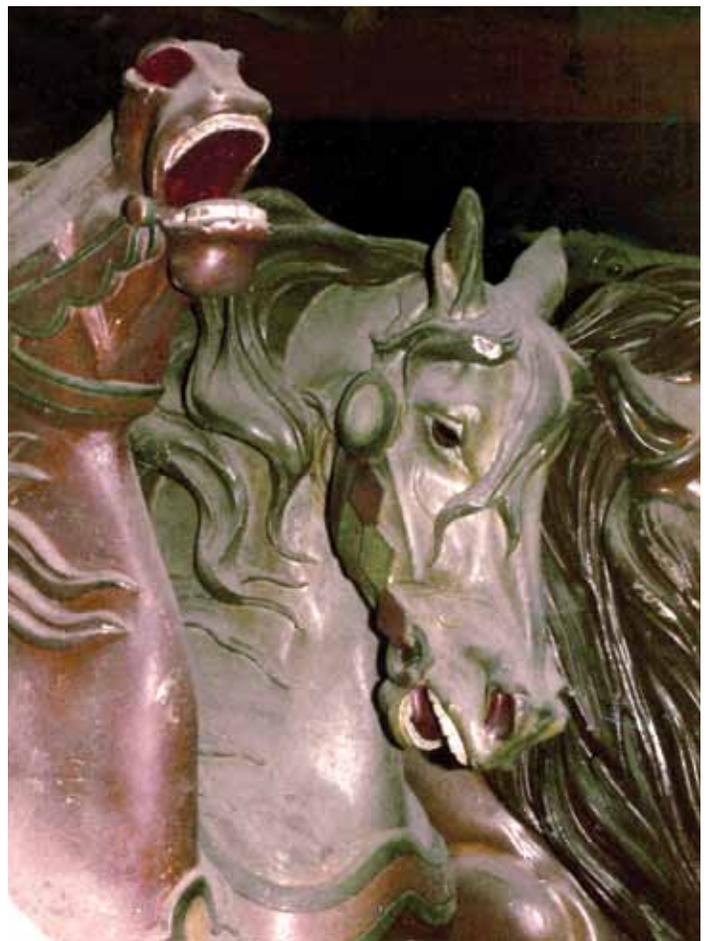


*The dusty Baton Rouge figures in storage at Pontchartrain, above and below.*

Photos courtesy of Rol and Jo Summit – Flying Horses

Murphy, wife of Bartholomew's son<sup>(101, 112)</sup> indicate that it was relocated by Murphy from Spanish Fort. A swimming pool was opened in 1928 and a small zoo was added in the 1930s<sup>(118)</sup>. A golf course that dates to the 1920s is still present. In 1944, Bartholomew Murphy lost his lease for the carousel and put it into storage<sup>(112)</sup>. This was the last carousel that he operated. He sold the carousel to Harry Batt, Sr.

Bartholomew Murphy passed away on Labor Day, 1947 from leukemia<sup>(112)</sup>.





**More dusty Baton Rouge figures at Pontchartrain. A good look at the Carmel lion above, and two Looff dogs, left. Photos courtesy of Rol and Jo Summit – Flying Horses**

Bernard-type stationary dogs, a Carmel zebra, and ten primitive Looff jumpers and standers. There was no mechanism, just some center area art. According to the National Carousel Association's census, several of the figures are presently located on the New Orleans City Park carousel<sup>(119)</sup>.

According to Carlos Sardina, who bought the Lake Pontchartrain Illions carousel and the figures from the Baton Rouge carousel that had been in storage at Pontchartrain, the Baton Rouge animals were all in very old paint with slightly worn saddles. There was a Carmel armored horse, a Carmel lion (see *Painted Ponies*, pages 161 and 172), two Looff St.



**Carmel Zebra from the Baton Rouge carousel. There is one coat of paint over the original on the body, duplicating what it underneath. The paint on the trappings appears to be original. Photo courtesy of Lourinda Bray**



**Baton Rouge Carmel with a spectacular mane. Photo courtesy of Carlos and Judy Sardina**



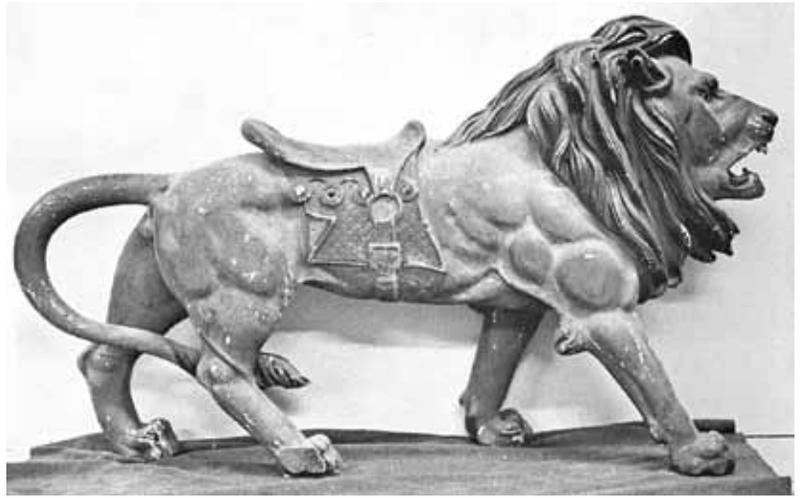
*Armored Baton Rouge Carmel in very early paint.*



*Baton Rouge Carmel in original paint.*



*Baton Rouge stander, (above left). This style horse appears on the Lighthouse Point, Lake Compounce and City Park Murphy carousels. A full shot of the Baton Rouge Carmel lion, (above right). Carlos and Judy Sardina photos*



### **“Murphys’ Carmel Lions”**

A Carmel lion with an uplifted head is seen in the pictures of the 4 row Murphy carousel at Savin Rock, Connecticut, the Nunley-Murphy carousel at South Beach, Staten Island, New York, and Murphy’s carousel at Ward’s Kiddieland, Coney Island, New York. In Emmy Donahue’s article about the Prospect Park carousel<sup>(120)</sup>, a similar Carmel lion is pictured that had been on the carousel when at Coney Island and after it moved to Prospect Park. That’s four different carousels, all associated with Murphy.

At first glance, the Ward’s Kiddieland lion<sup>(121)</sup> and the Prospect Park lion appear to be the same figure. The lions in the South Beach and Savin Rock photos have their trappings covered and are not as easily seen.

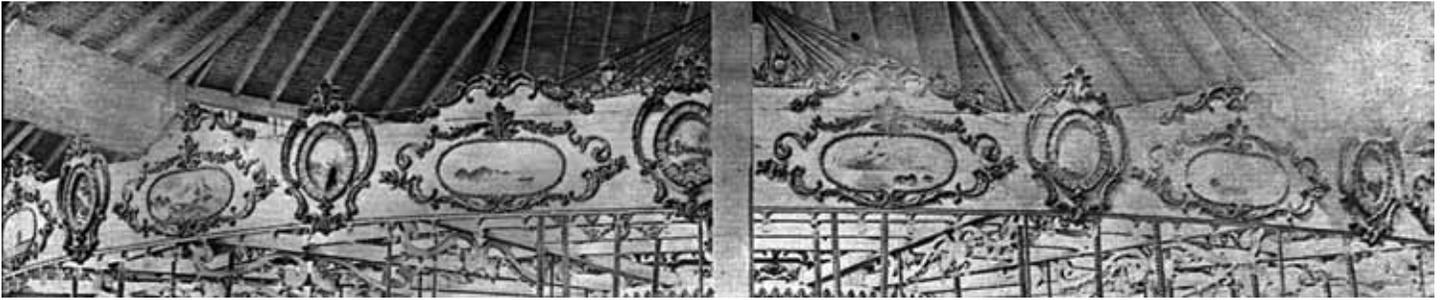
With as many carousels as Murphy and the Nunley-Murphy partnership had, interchanging figures for repairs and repainting is easy to imagine. The lion, undoubtedly a



*The Coney Island/Prospect Park lion. Gray Tuttle photo*

# SUMMARY OF MURPHY BROTHERS' CAROUSELS

Carousel Location	Characteristics	Citation(s) Linking to the Murphy Brothers
Connecticut, West Haven, Savin Rock – 3 carousels	3 row. Stationary, Looff. 3 row. Jumpers only, Carmel. 4 row. Jumpers and standers, Carmel.	Jack White Dahlinger postcard. <i>Savin Rock Amusement Park</i> , by Edith Reynolds. Arcadia Publishing.
Connecticut, Bristol, Lake Compounce	3 row. 49 horses; 22 standers, 27 jumpers. Looff, Carmel, Stein & Goldstein.	<a href="http://www.lakecompounce.com/lake-compounce-park-history.php">www.lakecompounce.com/lake-compounce-park-history.php</a> . National Register of Historic Places application
Connecticut, East Haven, Lighthouse Point Park	4 row. 69 horses; 23 standers, 56 jumpers, a camel, Looff and Carmel.	The New England Carousel Museum, <i>The Magnificent Carousels of Connecticut – Past and Present</i> . <i>The Carousel News and Trader</i> . July, 2010
Connecticut, Bridgeport, Steeplechase Island, Pleasure Beach	4 row. Carmel, Illions, Stein & Goldstein.	Stephanie Reitz, <i>Time Passes Pleasure Beach – Lawmakers Uninterested in Rebuilding Bridge</i> . <i>The Hartford Courant</i> . August 4, 2002. <i>The Billboard</i> , November 11, 1944.
Rhode Island, Providence, Roger Williams Park	3 row. Standers only. Horses, goat, zebra, Looff.	Felice J. Freyer, <i>Fun with 'the merry-go-round lady'</i> . <i>Providence Journal-Bulletin</i> . August 12, 1985.
Massachusetts, Worchester, White City New Jersey, Budd Lake	3 row. Looff.	S.D. Donahue, <i>Merry Go Round at Budd Lake, N.J. Awakens Lake Quinsigamond • Memories – Sharpes, Now Wed 50 Year, date unknown • Ran Same Ponies Here in 1907, Centennial Journal, date unknown</i>
New York, Coney Island, Ward's Kiddieland	4 row. 56 horses. Carmel, Stein & Goldstein, Illions.	Brian Morgan, <i>Disneyland: The Coney Island Connection, Merry-Go-Roundup, Volume 20 #2, Summer 1993</i>
New York, Saratoga Springs, Kaydeross Park	2 row. Jumpers only. 28 horses. Illions.	T. F. Murphy listed as the proprietor on Kaydeross carousel ticket.
New York, Coney Island New York, Brooklyn, Prospect Park	Varies with location and date.	<i>Uno, Coney Island, NY, Billboard, May 11, 1946</i> Lisa Pisano, <i>Forgotten No Longer: Carousels of Staten Island, Carousel News &amp; Trader, Vol. 9 #3, March 1993</i>
New York, Caroga Lake, Sherman's Amusement Park	Looff stationary converted to jumpers by T. Murphy who added several Carmels to the Looff lions, giraffes, elephants, camel and teddy bear.	Gray Tuttle
New York, Long Island, Rockaway	4 row. 74 horses. 71 Carmel, 2 Dentzel, 1 Stein & Goldstein.	"Murley" ticket
New York, Staten Island, South Beach	4 row. Carmel, Stein & Goldstein.	Lisa Pisano, <i>Forgotten No Longer: Carousels of Staten Island, Carousel News &amp; Trader, Vol. 9 #3, March 1993</i>
New York, Queens, Broad Channel	3 row. 48 horses, 2 chariots and 2 boats. Carmel and European.	Included due to business relationship of Murphy and Nunley.
New York, Canarsie, Golden City, New York, Baldwin New York, Garden City, Nassau County Museum Row	3 row. 41 horses (30 jumpers and 11 standers) and 1 lion. Stein & Goldstein and Dentzel horses.	<a href="http://oldcanarsie.com/golden_city_park">oldcanarsie.com/golden_city_park</a>
Louisiana, New Orleans, Audubon Park Pontchartrain Beach Columbia, Bogota	3 row. Carmel and Looff, Menagerie including a lion and dogs. Standers and Jumpers.	Kathleen Barach. <i>The Last Carousel: City Park, New Orleans. 1991.</i> • Len Luiso, <i>Long Way Around. The Carousel News and Trader. November 1997.</i> Beau Bassich
Louisiana, New Orleans, City Park	3 row. Carmel and Looff, Menagerie including a lion, giraffe, camel. Standers and Jumpers	Kathleen Barach. <i>The Last Carousel: City Park, New Orleans. 1991.</i> • Beau Bassich
Louisiana, New Orleans, Spanish Fort Amusement Park (also Fort St. John) Louisiana, Baton Rouge, City Park (City-Brooks Park)	Probably 3 row. Carmel and Looff, Menagerie including a lion, dog. Relocated from Spanish Fort. Unknown due to being disassembled and in storage. Figures included a Carmel armored horse, zebra and lion, two Looff St. Bernard-type stationary dogs and ten primitive Looff jumpers and standers.	Information provided at <a href="http://neworleanscitypark.com/guides/markers.pdf">http://neworleanscitypark.com/guides/markers.pdf</a> indicates this was a Murphy platform. Cynthia V. Campbell, <i>City-Brooks Park re-opens with grand flourish</i> . <i>2the advocate.com</i> , WBRZ, Louisiana Broadcasting LLC and The Advocate, Capital City Press, LLC. Carlos Sardinia • Beau Bassich



**Filigree bas relief on the trim of the Savin Rock, New Haven, Connecticut carousel. Fred Dahlinger photo**

showpiece, could have been an exciting addition as it was moved from carousel to carousel to entice customers when new seasons began. However, upon close inspection, it is evident that we are seeing at least two different lions. On the Ward's lion, the cinch strap that goes under the belly is at the low point of the drape of the scarf. The cinch is not anywhere near the bottom of the drape on the Coney/Prospect lion. Next, on the Ward's lion, the first circle in the chain at the folded ends of the rear hanging scarf, one whole circle is seen. On the Coney/Prospect lion, that first circle is partially covered by the scarf. There are differences in the folded ends of the scarves between the two lions as well as variations in their manes. The tendrils of hair are similar, but they are not exactly the same.

With more careful scrutiny of the manes, perhaps it will be possible to determine if the lions in the pictures of Savin Rock and South Beach are one and the same and if they are the Ward's or the Coney/Prospect lions, or are each unique. Were there two, three or four lions?

### Comments about Murphy Carousels and Rims

Murphy carousels would be categorized as assemblies, like those made by Frederick Dolle and M.D. Borrelli in that parts from different sources were put together to form whole carousels. While some carousels in this article are designated as being "Murphys" due to an association with Nun-

ley, as opposed to having come from the Murphy shop, they are pieced-together machines that are made up primarily of Loeff, Carmel and Stein & Goldstein figures. Exceptions are Nunley's carousel at the Cradle of Aviation Museum which was built by Stein & Goldstein and the Saratoga Springs Illions carousel.

The variety of features seen here on Murphy carousel rims include filigree bas relief (Savin Rock), small decorative mirrors (Lighthouse Point), a cornice-topped tin rim



**The cornice-topped tin rim at Lake Compounce, Bristol, CT. National Carousel Association, Jean Bennett photo**



**Decorative mirrors used on the trim at Lighthouse Point, New Haven, Connecticut. John Caruso photo**



**Rockaway's Nunley-Murphy carousel rim.** Barbara Williams collection. (Lake Compounce), straight-bordered scenery panel sections with no decorative artwork (Rockaway) and an abstract design like no other (City Park, New Orleans). The only information we found about the source of the frames comes from Harold Hartmann, who says the Murphys got some of their "mechanisms" from the Mangels factory.

### Conclusions and Open Questions

The success of our searches for information about the subjects of our previous articles – the Sulzer's Bopp/Looff carousel, Frederick Dolle and M. D. Borrelli – inspired us to take on another little-known topic: the Murphy Brothers. This one proved to be more challenging than the preceding projects.

In our previous historical carousel industry research, we found important new information from primary sources such as census and military service records and newspaper advertisements. Thus, we made a considerable effort to locate the census records for the Murphy brothers. We had evidence that either Timothy or Bartholomew might have a residence in New Orleans due to the number of Murphy carousels located in that area. That lead paid off in our ability to find Bartholomew's census records beginning in 1910.

The search for Timothy's records was much more difficult, since we didn't know if he had established a residence in New York City, Rhode Island, or Connecticut. In addition,

the Murphy name is extremely common in the Northeast United States. After several months of diligent searching we finally located his residence in Brooklyn and gained valuable information about his family and career.

The various business partnerships added to the difficulty of trying to understand exactly what roles the Murphys had. With William Nunley and Timothy Murphy, there were two separate corporations, but Murphys positions are not known. We have included Nunley carousels in this article with the thought that Murphy was involved with them in some manner.

A family man, Bartholomew settled in as owner/operator of Murphy-built carousels in Baton Rouge and New Orleans, Louisiana.

Timothy's involvement in the carousel business was more expansive. It appears he did a conversion, from stationary to jumpers, of the Caroga Lake carousel. William H. Long claimed Murphy converted the Sulzer's Bopp/Looff carousel<sup>(107)</sup>. The Kolbs, owners of Sulzer's carousel, indicated it was PTC that did the conversion. The cones on the converted carousel would suggest Murphy may have been involved. If he did two conversions, it's possible he did others. Murphy partnered with Irvin E. Sharpe at Budd Lake. He and John H. Walker contracted to build the Audubon Park carousel. He likely teamed up with John Walker at Roger Williams Park and possibly at nearby Slater Park.

The Murphy-Saratoga union is credited with providing the McCullough's with the Surf Avenue and West 8th Street Coney Island carousel.

Timothy and Bartholomew Murphy were integral to the carousel business. They constructed and operated carousels at diverse locations spread out over several states. They had a known association with Looff and possibly Carmel, judging by the number Carmel figures on Murphy carousels. Stein & Goldstein figures were on some Murphy carousels, but we found nothing

**1906 Bartholomew Murphy carousel, City Park, New Orleans, Louisiana.**

National Carousel Association, Jean Bennett photo





**Above left - Is this an unknown Murphy carousel? The cones would suggest so. The horses are Loeffs. The chariot is an Illions, according to Rol Summit. Above right - Another possible Murphy carousel with a replacement canvas rim. Barbara Williams collection**

about a business relationship with them. The Murphys were scavengers, buying up figures and carousel parts, perhaps from ill-fated machines – carousels that had partially burned or whose owners lost their leases.

We are very fortunate to have surviving Murphy carousels at Lighthouse Point, East Haven, Connecticut; Lake Compounce, Bristol Connecticut; Congress Park, Saratoga Springs, New York; Prospect Park, Brooklyn, New York and City Park, New Orleans, Louisiana.

This project started out like our others. It was a topic about which we pretty much knew nothing. There were Murphy-made carousels, but what exactly did that mean?



**A Baton Rouge early Loeff horse that may have been a Murphy conversion. Carlos and Judy Sardina photo**

**The tall cones at the platform for the jumpers seem to be a consistent characteristic of Murphy-made carousels. This is the Prospect Park carousel. John Caruso photo**



Roland Hopkins photo

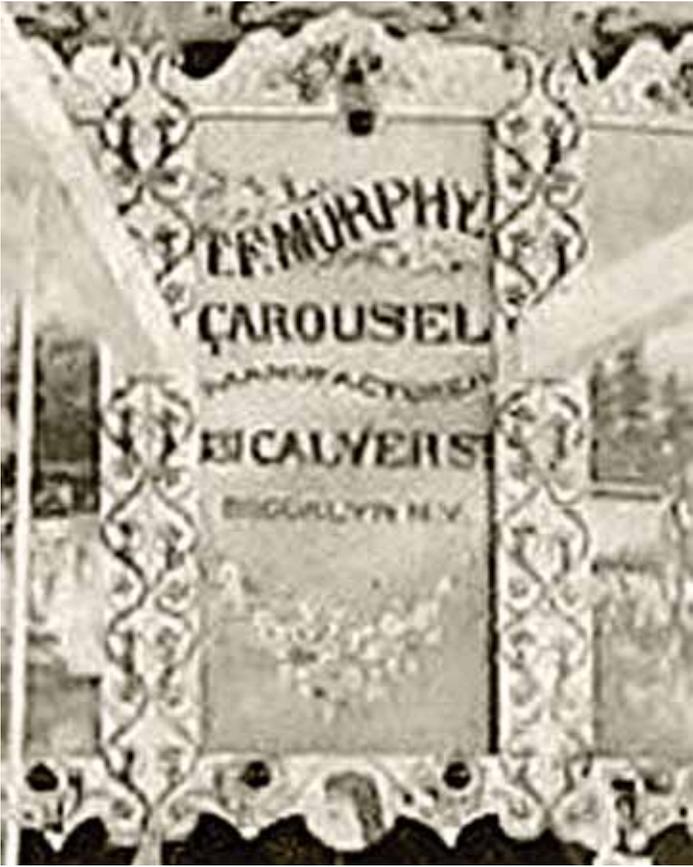
**1911 Murphy Lighthouse Point Carousel, New Haven, CT. Both the carousel and building are recognized historic landmarks.**

And, where were the Murphy carousels? As we started to search, we began to discover more and more Murphy-associated carousels. So, we decided to divide them up for

more extensive research. Bill took the Louisiana and New England carousels. Barbara focused the Nunley-Murphy, New York and New Jersey carousels. And, once again, as with our Dolle and Borrelli carousel projects, Bill undertook the, more difficult than expected, task of searching census data in order to locate the Murphy brothers, providing us with a look at them as businessmen and the family itself.

It is likely that we have not located all of the carousels constructed or converted by the Murphy brothers. There is undoubtedly more to know about Timothy and Bartholomew and their carousel ventures. According to Beau Bassich, John Timothy, Bartholomew's son, himself had a son – named Timothy.

Perhaps this article will reach the Murphy family and we will have the opportunity to be further enlightened.



**Enlargement of the signature panel on the Murphy carousel thought to be Baton Rouge, seen on pages 26-27. Photo Courtesy of Rol and Jo Summit – Flying Horses**



**The Dentzel lion on Nunley's Carousel while in Baldwin in the 1990s. Emil R. Lucev, Sr. photo**



**Horse in the photo of what may be the Baton Rouge carousel on pages 28-29, seen center and right.**

Photos courtesy of Carlos and Judy Sardina

In researching the Murphy brothers, we drew from many sources for information. We have to hope that those sources are reliable. As information gets passed along it can become distorted. Misinformation is often etched in stone as fact. We hope what is presented in this article is as close to being accurate as it can be.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the contributors to this project – (In ABC order) Arcadia Publishing, Beau Bassich, Jean Bennett, Donald Cameron, John Caruso, Barbara Fahs Charles, Richard Concepcion, Fred Dahlinger, John De Majo, Charles Denson, Tony Ermie, Harold Hartmann, The Historic New Orleans Collection, Len Luiso, Peter Malia, Brian Merlis, Brian Morgan, National Carousel Association, Jerry Patrone, Rol and Jo Summit, Carlos and Judy Sardina, Staten Island Museum, Gray Tuttle.

Photoshopping by Jordan Williams.

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Roland Hopkins photo

**Lake Compounce, Bristol, Connecticut.**

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