

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JUL 17 1987

date entered AUG 26 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Herschell-Spillman  
Noah's Ark Carousel - Oregon Historic Wooden Carousels TR  
and/or common Oaks Park Carousel  
Number of contributing resources: 3 and 4 of  
Number of non-contributing resources: 0

2. Location

street & number East end of Sellwood Bridge N/A not for publication  
city, town Portland N/A vicinity of Third Congressional District  
state Oregon code 41 county Multnomah code 051

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Oaks Park Association  
street & number East end of Sellwood Bridge  
city, town Portland N/A vicinity of state Oregon 97202

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. City of Portland Building Permits Department  
street & number 1120 SW 5th Avenue  
city, town Portland state Oregon 97205

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Inventory of  
Historic Properties has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
date 1986  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office - 525 Trade Street SE  
city, town Salem state Oregon 97310

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date 1926

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Oaks Park Carousel is a three-row menagerie machine manufactured by the Herschell-Spillman Company. It measures 48 feet in diameter. The bi-level platform measures 6 feet 9 inches in width, and carries both horse and animal standers. The second level platform carries two rows of horse and animal jumpers, and measures 4 feet 9 inches. All totaled, there are 46 hand-carved wooden animals mounted on brass poles, including a pair each of cats, dogs, zebras, ostriches, mules, pigs, roosters and giraffes. For this reason, the machine is called the "Noah's Ark" carousel. Also on board this machine are four frogs, a stork, a dragon, lion and lioness, a doe, goat and an extremely rare kangaroo. Completing the array are the 19 horses. The carousel animals have glass eyes, except for some of the menagerie figures which have painted carved eyes.

The carousel is decorated with 18 rounding boards and shields studded with cast metal masques of seven different designs. Around the hub, enclosing the drive system of the machine, are 18 lighted scenery panels mounted below the sweeps and 18 lighted panels above the sweeps. The original painted scenes which were on these panels are beginning to reappear through scenes which were painted over them during a long-ago refurbishment.\*

The carousel is housed in its own building situated on the Oaks Park Amusement concourse. The housing specially designed for the machine is an octagonal building of post and beam construction, 75 feet in diameter in its ground plan. A blind, pyramidal-roofed octagonal cupola having board and batten siding surmounts the structure, which is supported by braced posts encircling the perimeter. The metal roofing is a recent replacement. The pavilion is traditional in form and dates from the earliest years of the carousel's operation at The Oaks Amusement Park (1926 onward). It is, therefore, counted as a separately-contributing resource. In fair weather, panels are removed and the base of the building is open to the weather. The Oaks Amusement Park is situated on the east bank of the Willamette River in southeast Portland.

\*Vista House on Crown Point in Oregon's Columbia Gorge appears to have been the subject of one of the scenery panel overpaintings.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

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Owner of land:

World Forestry Center  
4033 SW Canyon Road  
Portland, OR 97221

Attention: Mark Reed

## 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 type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) recreation

**Specific dates** c. 1913

**Builder/Architect** Herschell-Spillman Company

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Oregon Historic Wooden Carousels Theme Resource nomination is comprised of five hand-crafted carousels of American manufacture presently operating in the state of Oregon. The nominated carousels range in date from 1904 to 1926, a period which spans much of the last half of the golden age of carousels (1875–1935) and the heyday of amusement parks. The common characteristics of carousels in the group are wooden platforms, wooden rounding boards, hand-carved animals, and a counter clockwise rotation pattern. Each is now electrically powered, using friction clutch or hydraulic clutch mechanical systems. Collectively and individually, the machines meet National Register Criterion C as well-preserved examples of a recreational genre illustrative of the development of animal carving as a "functional" art form wherein the carvers competed to create the most novel and colorful attractions.

Measuring 48 feet in diameter, the Noah's Ark Carousel manufactured by the Herschell-Spillman Company about 1913 is the only one in the theme group having a bi-level platform. It has been in operation at The Oaks Amusement Park in Portland since 1926, and its housing, a post and beam, octagonal pavilion, was specially fabricated in the traditional form for its present location. The menagerie figures include a rare carving of a kangaroo. Its rounding boards are decorative, scroll-framed landscape panels interspersed with shields studded with cast metal masques.

The Oaks Park Carousel is a superb menagerie machine produced by a notable carousel maker of the early 1900s, and it has been in operation in the Portland area for over 60 years. It is distinctive in that it has on board 10 "pairs" of hand-carved wooden menagerie animals which give it the classification of "Noah's Ark" carousel. Other significant examples of the Herschell-Spillman style in the array of figures are a dragon and doe. The horses which ride on this machine are characteristic models of the style used by the company and include some of the "hinged jaw" variety.

Out of the bankrupt parent company of Armitage-Herschell, the Herschell-Spillman Company was formed in 1901. In 1906, Herschell-Spillman bought the parent company, obtaining its patents, stock and equipment. By 1911, the company was producing both track and jumping action carousels.

In time, the Herschell-Spillman Company changed its style from unadorned steeds to more elaborately carved animals. The Company was noted for its extensive assortment of menagerie animals and was well known for its carvings of frogs, cats, roosters, ostriches and dogs. The company's hub panels and rounding boards were mainly in the form of painted scenes. The Oaks Park Carousel boasts 36 such paintings.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Carousel Art Magazine, Vol. 16, (January-February, 1982).

Dinger, Charlotte, Art of the Carousel (Green Village, New Jersey: Carousel Art, Inc., 1983), 84-101. Herschell-Spillman.

Fried, Frederick, A Pictorial History of the Carousel, (Vestal Press, New York, 1964).

Weedon, Geoff and Ward, Richard, Fairground Art, (Abbeville Press, New York, 1985)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Lake Oswego, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	0	4	2	6	5	1	0	5	1	0	3	1	5	3	1	2	1	0
Zone			Easting						Northing									

B 

Zone			Easting						Northing									

C 

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G 

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H 

Zone			Easting						Northing									

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached sheet

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code

state	N/A	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jean Skinner

organization Portland Carousel Museum date December 4, 1986

street & number 25 SW Salmon Street telephone (503) 241-2560

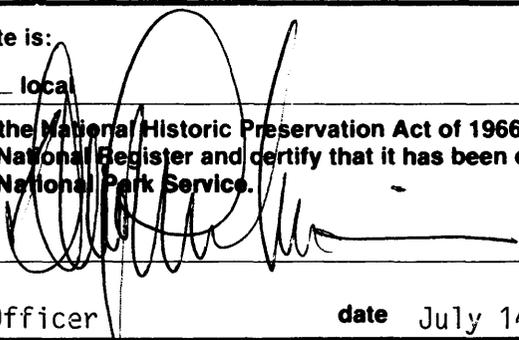
city or town Portland state Oregon 97204

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  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 Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date July 14, 1987

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
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The output of Herschell-Spillman Company, spanning the years 1901 to 1920, included a line of fine portable carousels as well as some larger and more elaborate three-row park machines.

Oaks Park was opened in 1905 as a venture of the Oregon Water, Power and Transportation Company. The Herschell-Spillman carousel was placed in operation there in 1926. Throughout the years, the Bollinger family, which owned and operated the park from 1925 until recently, followed the tradition of exhibiting the carousel in an octagonal pavilion. Since the pavilion is 60 years old it is considered a separately contributing historic feature.

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## **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

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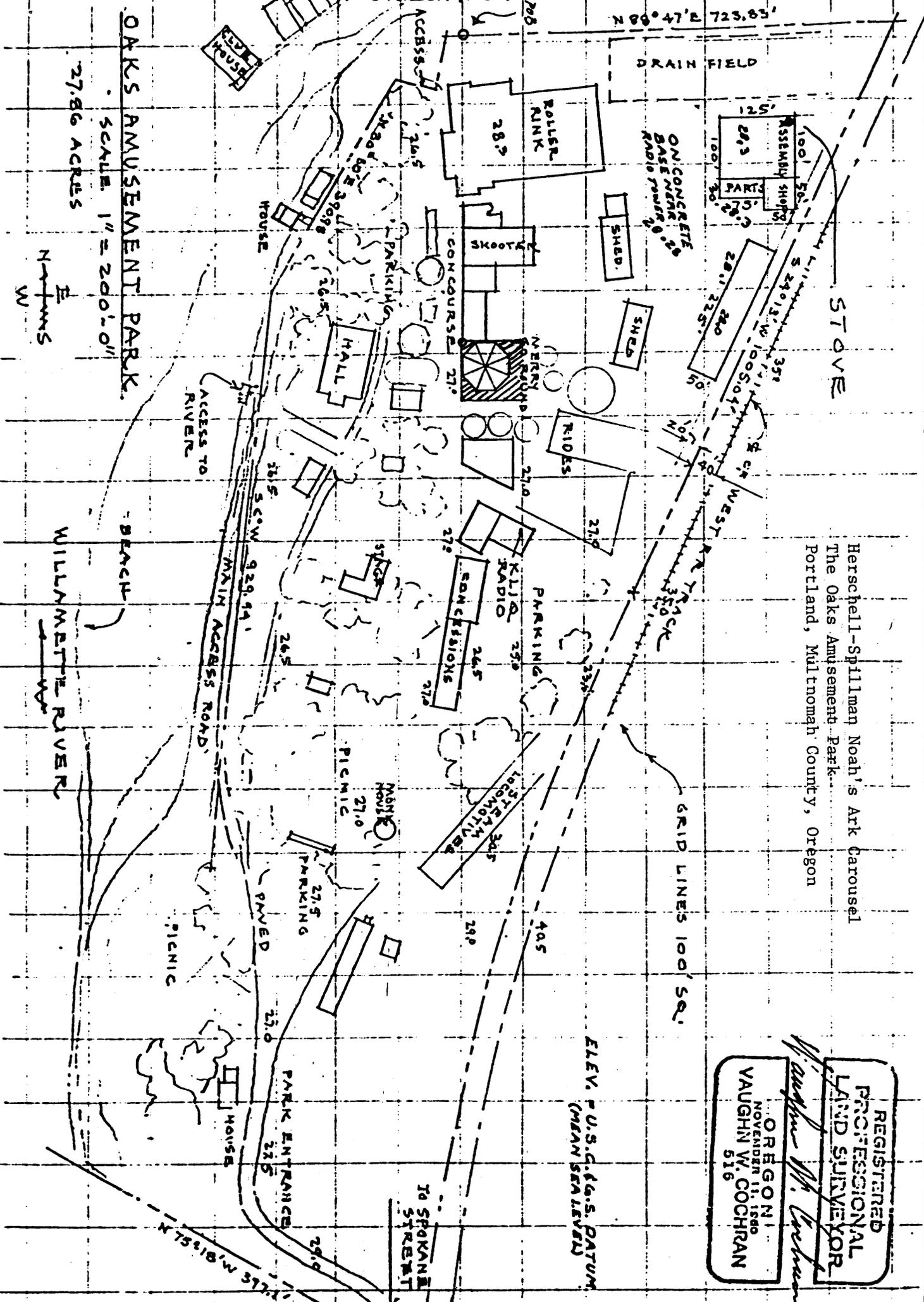
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The nominated area is 9,500 square feet located within the Tax Lot 43, NE¼ of Section 22, Township 1S, Range 1W, Willamette Meridian, to include the carousel and its historic exhibition building. The area is more particularly described as follows: Beginning at the point of intersection of the north boundary line of Oaks Park Amusement Center and the east edge of the main north-south concourse, thence southerly 500 feet to the true point of beginning; thence east 95 feet, thence south 100 feet, thence west 95 feet to the east edge of the main concourse, thence north 100 feet along said edge or border to the true point of beginning, in Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

Herschell-Spillman Noah's Ark Carousel  
 The Oaks Amusement Park  
 Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon

REGISTERED  
 PROFESSIONAL  
 LAND SURVEYOR  
 OREGON  
 NOVEMBER 11, 1960  
 VAUGHN W. COCHRAN  
 516

ELEV. U.S.C. & G.S. DATUM  
 (MEAN SEA LEVEL)



OAKS AMUSEMENT PARK

SCALE 1" = 200' 0"

27.86 ACRES

N 75° 18' W 372.5'

N 89° 47' E 723.83'

DRAIN FIELD

STOVE

ON CONCRETE  
 BASE NEAR  
 RADIO NUMBER 2

ROLLER RINK

SKOOTY HOODS

CONCOURSE

HALL

RIDES

PARKING

SANCTIONS

PICNIC

BEACH

WILLAMETTE RIVER

GRID LINES 100' SQ.

PICNIC

PARKING

PICNIC

PARK ENTRANCE

HOUSE

TO SPOKANE STREET

N 75° 18' W 372.5'

ACCESS TO RIVER

MAIN ACCESS ROAD

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