

NOV 03 1989

2065

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Allan Herschell/Herschell-Spillman Carouselother names/site number "Over-the-Jumps" in War Memorial Park

2. Location

street & number War Memorial Park Midway☐ not for publication N/Acity, town Little Rock☐ vicinity N/Astate Arkansascode 05county Pulaskicode 119zip code 72204

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

☒ private☐ public-local☐ public-State☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

☐ building(s)☐ district☐ site☒ structure☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

Noncontributing

11 buildings11 sites11 structures11 objects11 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/ANumber of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 1

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this
☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Cathryn A. Byrd
Signature of certifying official10-30-89
DateArkansas Historic Preservation Program

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register.☐ See continuation sheet.☐ determined eligible for the NationalRegister. ☐ See continuation sheet.☐ determined not eligible for the

National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.☐ other, (explain:) _____Entered in the
National RegisterDelores Lyne12/1/89

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture: Work of Art

Recreation and Culture: Fair

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture: Work of Art

Recreation and Culture: Fair

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Carousel with sculpted wood
Horses

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation

walls

roof

other wood

Cast-iron

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

☒ See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1

Summary. The forty vertical jumping horses on Little Rock's "Over-the-Jumps" carousel in War Memorial Park were created by woodcarvers from three Allan Herschell Carousel Factories, and most of them date to c. 1920 (the date of the extant wooden sectional platform to which they are attached is more difficult to date though its original pieces were certainly manufactured by one of the Herschell factories also). The horses of the cropped-mane (Trojan or Roman) type are distinctively Allan Herschell horses (there are two on "Over-the-Jumps"). The other steeds are attributable to wood carvers of both the Herschell-Spillman Company and Spillman Engineering Company (Traub). However, there is no evidence indicating that Allan Herschell sculpted any of the horses himself. The horses of "Over-the-Jumps" are attached to a "hybrid" machine that is referred to as a carousel. In actuality, the track upon which the horses are attached is a machine described in midway catalogs of the 1960's as a "caterpillar," which had aluminum seats. Over the years, the track that was original to the horses deteriorated, and the horses and platform were saved and attached to a caterpillar track. This new track, however, duplicates the shape and effect of the original track and the wood platform, wheels, and sweeps are largely original to the earlier mechanism.

Elaboration. The diameter of the "Over-the-Jumps" carousel is 40 feet, with a center pole. Sweeps (tie-bars extending from the riding platform to the center pole) are alternately painted red, yellow or blue. The stationary walking platform surrounds the mobile riding platform, and both are constructed of wood planks. The riding platform is sectioned into five-foot segments (twenty-four segments in all) with one wooden wheel between each segment (twenty-four wheels). Each wheel between segments is approximately twenty-four inches in diameter, with thick wooden spokes, a cast-iron hub, and a cast-iron rim. Each wheel is covered with a wood well above the riding platform, but wheel movement can be seen from the walking platform level. Each segment carries two gallopers or one chariot, with one chariot occurring between each set of ten horses. Beneath the riding platform is a cast-iron undulating track (not original) along which the wheels of the riding platform move the horses in an up-and-down galloping motion. Stepped rounding boards on the edge of the riding platform are approximately six inches above the walking platform, to assist riders in mounting the riding platform. Steeds are mounted on the riding platform with triangular stands with stirrups and tie-bars between each horse in a pair. The wooden prancers are also secured to the riding platform with a steel cable. An electric motor powers the carousel.

All forty horses are hand-carved wooden jumpers; two of the forty are Arabian (roached, cropped-mane) in style, typical of other Allan Herschell carousels, while the thirty-eight others have rounded, carved tails and manes. All horses are either in jumping position with some legs extended or tucked. There are at least five styles of distinctively carved horses arranged randomly around the carousel, each displaying its creator's original interpretation.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

The faces of all horses on the carousel are artistically carved with emotionally charged expressions to maximize visual tension and urgency--to add excitement to the brief relationship of each rider to his/her steed. When viewed from different angles, an array of agitated expressions is created among the horses which must be closely observed to detect similarities between them. Mouths are open--teeth exposed--champing at rings and bits (painted). Heads are cocked, with stretched and tensed muscle structures emphasized in the jaws and neck of each horse. Nostrils are flared and painted red, and glass eyes of two hues (although some are painted) are carefully placed to increase the intensity in the expression of each face. An observant rider will notice two ear styles, both laid back, but tensed at different angles. The exposed teeth and curled-back lips of each horse add to the terror and agitation in each expression.

The bodies of the horses are muted in color (either dapple gray or cream) and are heavily caked in years of paint with deep weathering cracks, which adds an exciting contrast to the bright accessory of each jumper. Sculptured manes are painted in contrasting color variations of the body color of each galloper (i.e., light gray with dark-gray-to-black variations as accents and a cream color with value variations of the same hue in brown).

Complementary colors were used to decorate saddles, cartouches and bridles that adorn each horse. Each steed's trappings appear to be different from the rest, although they are simply repeated randomly (depending upon the assembler) around the carousel. The jumpers are fitted with decorative cut-glass jewels and carved flowers, eagle heads, shields and swords around the neck and at the shoulders of each. Bridles are shaped variously--some straight and some plain, while others have decorative curves. Some have fabric-like ruffles that punctuate the musculature of a jaw.

The site where the carousel found a permanent home is Little Rock's War Memorial Park. Presently 202 acres, War Memorial Park (historically called "Fair Park") was purchased by the Arkansas State Fair Commission in 1868 from William B. Wait and served as the State Fairgrounds until 1924, when it was acquired by the City of Little Rock to be developed as a municipal park. The landscape architectural firm of Pearse and Robinson of Chicago, Illinois, was commissioned to develop a master plan at the time, which included the present layout of golf course, zoo, midway (constructed 1929) and stadium locations. A golf clubhouse, swimming pool and bath house were added in the 1930's by Works Progress Administration (WPA) construction workers. The stadium was added in 1948 (designed by Bruce A. Anderson, architect). President Harry Truman presided at the 1949 ceremonies in the new stadium when the park was renamed "War Memorial Park;" however, the name "Fair Park" remains the identifying vernacular title to many citizens who remember the early twentieth century. A carillon located at the Jonesboro Street entrance was added to the park as a bicentennial project in 1976, emphasizing

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3

the park's continuing significance in the history of Little Rock, capitol city of the State of Arkansas.

The wood frame, domed structure which shelters the carousel is of later construction (late 1940's) and was designed locally. It is not associated with any of the Allan Herschell companies and thus is not included within this nomination.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☐ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Art

Architecture

Period of Significance

1920-1935

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Armitage-Herschell/Herschell-Spillman

Carousel Factory

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

☒ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

☒ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A 15 561330 3845130
Zone Easting Northing

C

B
Zone Easting Northing

D

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

☒ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This boundary includes all the property historically associated with this resource and its significance.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Ann Anderson/Kenneth Story, Architectural Historian

organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date October 16, 1989

street & number 225 E. Markham Street, Suite 300 telephone (501) 371-2763

city or town Little Rock state Arkansas zip code 72201

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Summary. Allan Herschell's vertical jumpers and the "Over-the-Jumps" carousel in Little Rock's War Memorial Park to which they are attached survive as a rare collection of wooden sculptures carved by the artisans of his company, one of the earliest carousel manufacturers in the United States. They are rendered even more significant by their continued attachment to the largely-original sectional wooden riding platform which allows it unique motion. An assessment by experts of the Allan Herschell Carousel Factory Museum in North Tonawanda, New York, reveals that "Over-the-Jumps" is comprised of Allan Herschell horses but manufactured by three of his companies (in succession): Allan Herschell Company, Herschell-Spillman Company, and Spillman Engineering Company. Therefore, some of the wooden horses are earlier than others, although they are all of the same vintage (c. 1920's).

Elaboration. The "merry-go-round" originated in the 12th century, when Arab marksmen played a game wherein they rode horses in a circular pattern and threw clay balls that contained scented water at one another. During the Crusades, Spaniards and Italians brought the game back to their homelands and called it "carrosello"--little war (Huddleston). By the 17th century, the carousel was used as a training device for young horsemen. Suspended from rotating beams, wooden steeds carried jousters, who practiced spearing rings with short lances to increase marksmanship. In 1662, Louis XIV hosted one of the greatest carousel games in Paris for his friend, Louis de la Valliere. The Place du Carroussel in Paris was so named for this event, when hundreds of knights participated in the games by riding through this square spearing objects with their lances. This event inspired a Paris model maker to create a prototype child's toy with horses and menagerie animals nailed around a crude axle. From his model, larger carousels were constructed which were large enough for children to sit upon and spear brass rings affixed to the perimeter of the machine (Huddleston).

The first carousel was brought to the United States in 1847 by Michael Dentzel, a German immigrant and wheelwright by trade. The first model was a person- or horse-powered model (Fried).

By the time carnivals reached their height in popularity at the close of the 19th century, several companies began manufacturing operations in the United States to share in this profitable amusement. Such was the situation when Allan Herschell incorporated in 1880 with James Armitage (an Englishman), as the Armitage-Herschell Company (Fried).

Allan Herschell was born in Arbreath, Forfarshire, Scotland, on April 27, 1851, and immigrated to the United States with his parents on August 14, 1870. It was his intention to farm, but he had fewer farming skills than he needed to be successful and therefore turned to business during the years of the Industrial Revolution in the United States. He built his first factory in North Tonawanda, New York, in 1873--The Tonawanda Engine and Machine Company--but a series of

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

fires and mishaps delayed the company's success. In 1883, Herschell married Ida Spillman, sister of his business partner, James Armitage. In 1883, his first steam-powered carousel came off the assembly line. The first carousel was sold to a carnival owner and he built another within two years. He sold the second machine for \$1,000 in New Orleans, Louisiana, and then crafted another, the sale of which catapulted him into business.

The wooden, hand-carved and painted carousel horse is considered a "rare breed" today and is a first indication that a carousel is historic. Prior to 1928, Allan Herschell's fiery chargers were handmade from applewood, basswood or poplar by skilled woodcrafters, who became harder to find and to employ in the golden age of the machine. These same craftsmen painted each steed carefully and meticulously with old paint that still contains mercury, arsenic and lead, as well as other toxic solvents and chemicals. This information enables experts to analyze and date carousel animals, once the original paint is detected, often under layers of newer paint. The process of detecting original paint, removing newer layers and preserving the historic object is both time-consuming and expensive. However, according to carousel preservationists, the protection--if not the restoration--of the original paint adds to the integrity and the historical value of carousel animals as folk art pieces (Ragan). Horses on "Over-the-Jumps" appear to have layers of weathered paint and probably extant paint underneath that may have been applied by the hands of the earliest Allan Herschell artisans.

Eventually, cast aluminum equines became the standard, weather-resistant breed of carousel horses, and Allan Herschell was the largest manufacturer (approximately 155,000) after 1928 (Fried). The wooden bodies of late Allan Herschell horses were made up of wood which had been glued together and carved by machine knives at 14,000 r.p.m., following the contours of the master design of earlier wooden horses (c. 1950). These powerful carving machines produced the bodies of four horses simultaneously at the rate of one per hour. The bodies were then sanded by machine and fitted with metal heads, tails and legs; the entire body was then painted and varnished in production-line fashion (Link-Belt News).

The Herschell-Spillman Company built the first "transportables," portable carousels that could be set-up and torn-down with a minimum of time and effort. These models travelled a midway circuit and could be transported in wagons or by train in the late 19th century. Individual components were compact: horses were designed to pack together in a minimum amount of space (heads and legs were tucked) to facilitate transportation. They were also characterized by plainly-carved trappings as opposed to ornate appliques with gold paint and glitter. In an interview in 1951 for the Tonawanda News, John Wendler (born in 1870), then president of Herschell-Spillman, related that in 1892, only one model was produced by the company--a forty-foot, two-abreast track machine that sold for \$2,400. By 1913, the Herschell-Spillman two-abreast was the most advanced model

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

made. It could be acquired in 1913 with either steam power, gasoline engine or electric motor. The horses on "Over-the-Jumps" were originally mounted on one of these track machines.

The Allan Herschell Company occupied the same plant building from 1881-1958, where each new horse had its first test run under the old Herschell roundhouse (Dorang). In 1960, operations were moved from North Tonawanda to Buffalo, New York, when the Allan Herschell Company became a division of the Lisk-Savory Corporation, the nation's leading manufacturer of merry-go-rounds and carnival rides. Watson Bray, vice-president and general manager of Lisk-Savory, noted in 1962 that more than 2,000 Allan Herschell carousels had been manufactured by his firm and were scattered around the world. The oldest one serviced by the Company that year was built in 1908. According to a census by the National Carousel Association, only 150 historic carousels are extant in the United States and by some accounts, even fewer (Weller/Traub). The Allan Herschell Carousel Factory, 180 Thompson Street, North Tonawanda, New York, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The greatest threats to such historic wooden art and structures are fire and deterioration due to weathering. Carousel horses of the vintage of the "Over-the-Jumps" horses have been "pieced-out" to museums and private collectors, commanding prices as large as \$15,000, depending upon the quality of some distinctive steeds. Historic carousels with hand-carved wooden horses have been purchased in recent years within a cost range of \$630,000-1.4 million (Scanlon and Hinds). Little Rock's Allan Herschell horses and carousel are intact, representative resources from the "golden age of the carousel" (1875-1935)--the peak of the amusement park attraction in the United States. This carousel meets National Register Criterion C as a rare, well-preserved example of a functional yet creative art form and mechanical system developed specifically for this purpose.

"Over-the-Jumps" has been privately owned since it was first purchased. Its current owner is Loyd Choate.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- _____. "Wendler Sees Home Made Merry-Go-Round," Tonawanda News, April 7, 1951, p. 1-4.
- Choate, Loyd. Interview with Mary Ann Anderson, February, 1989.
- Dorang, Bob. "Wood Carving is a Lost Art at North Tonawanda Plant," Buffalo Evening News, 1958.
- Fried, Eunice J. "Merry-Go-Round Magic," Old Things, July, 1965.
- Fried, Eunice J. "Merry-Go-Round," Ford Times, March 31, 1965.
- Hinds, Anne. "Miracle in Holyoke," Merry-Go-Round, Winter, 1988. National Carousel Association, Milwaukie, Oregon.
- Holmes, John, Executive Vice President and General Manager, Arkansas Livestock Show Association, Little Rock, Arkansas. Interview with Mary Ann Anderson, April, 1989.
- Huddleston, James. "The Magic Merry-Go-Round," Pageant Magazine, 1957.
- Little Rock, Arkansas, City of, and Allison, Moses and Redden, Architects. Masterplan for War Memorial Park, 1989.
- Ragan, Rosa. "Saving Original Paint on Carousel Animals and Pieces," Merry-Go-Roundup, Winter, 1988. National Carousel Association, Milwaukie, Oregon.
- Traub, Don, Curator, Allan Herschell Carousel Factory Museum, North Tonawanda, New York, Interview with Mary Ann Anderson, April 13, 1989.
- Weller, Steve. "Merry-Go-Rounds 'Round the World," Buffalo Magazine, July 17, 1967.
- Widger, Ed, Historian, Chance Enterprises. Interview with Linda Joslin, February, 1989.
- Winchester, James H., "Merry-Go-Rounds Made Indiana Promotor Wealthy," Muncie, Indiana News, August, 1958.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is the outer circumference of the carousel track, located in the amusement midway of the War Memorial Park in Little Rock, Arkansas, and at a point 50 feet west of Midway Drive and 400 feet north of the intersection of Midway Drive and War Memorial Park Drive. War Memorial Park is located in the north half of Section 6, Township 1 North, Range 12 West, of the Little Rock, Arkansas Quadrangle. The boundary forms a circle with a diameter of 40 feet.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Herschell--Spillman Carousel

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Pulaski

DATE RECEIVED: 11/03/89 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/14/89
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/30/89 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/18/89
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89002065

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 12/1/89 DATE Entered in the
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

 count resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

 historic current

DESCRIPTION

 architectural classification
 materials
 descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

 summary paragraph
 completeness
 clarity
 applicable criteria
 justification of areas checked
 relating significance to the resource
 context
 relationship of integrity to significance
 justification of exception
 other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

 acreage verbal boundary description
 UTMs boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

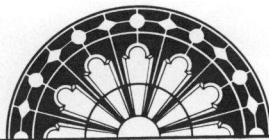
 sketch maps USGS maps photographs presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Phone _____

Signed _____, Date _____



NOV 03 1989

ARKANSAS
HISTORIC
PRESERVATION
PROGRAM

October 27, 1989

Carol D. Shull
Chief of Registration
United States Department of the Interior
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1100 "L" Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

RE: Allan Herschell/Herschell-Spillman
Carousel
Little Rock, Pulaski County

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the nomination for the Allen Herschell/
Herschell-Spillman Carousel. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has
complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification
requirements in the nomination process.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathy Buford
State Historic Preservation Officer

CB/KS/lss

Enclosures





ALLAN HERSCHELL / HERSCHELL-SPILLMAN CAROUSEL

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY M. A. ANDERSON

MARCH, 1989

NEGATIVES ON FILE AT AMPP

VIEW OF WAR MEMORIAL PARK TOWARD
CAROUSEL (NORTH), ALONG MIDWAY



The Carousel **HERSCHELL-SPILLMAN CO.**

IN THE 1920'S IS THE ONLY ONE LEFT IN USE TODAY
THIS CAROUSEL HAS BEEN ON THIS SPOT SINCE 1943.
BEFORE THAT YEAR IT MADE THE CIRCUIT INCLUDING THE
ARKANSAS STATE FAIRS.

ALLAN HERSCHELL / HERSCHELL-SPILLMAN CAROUSEL

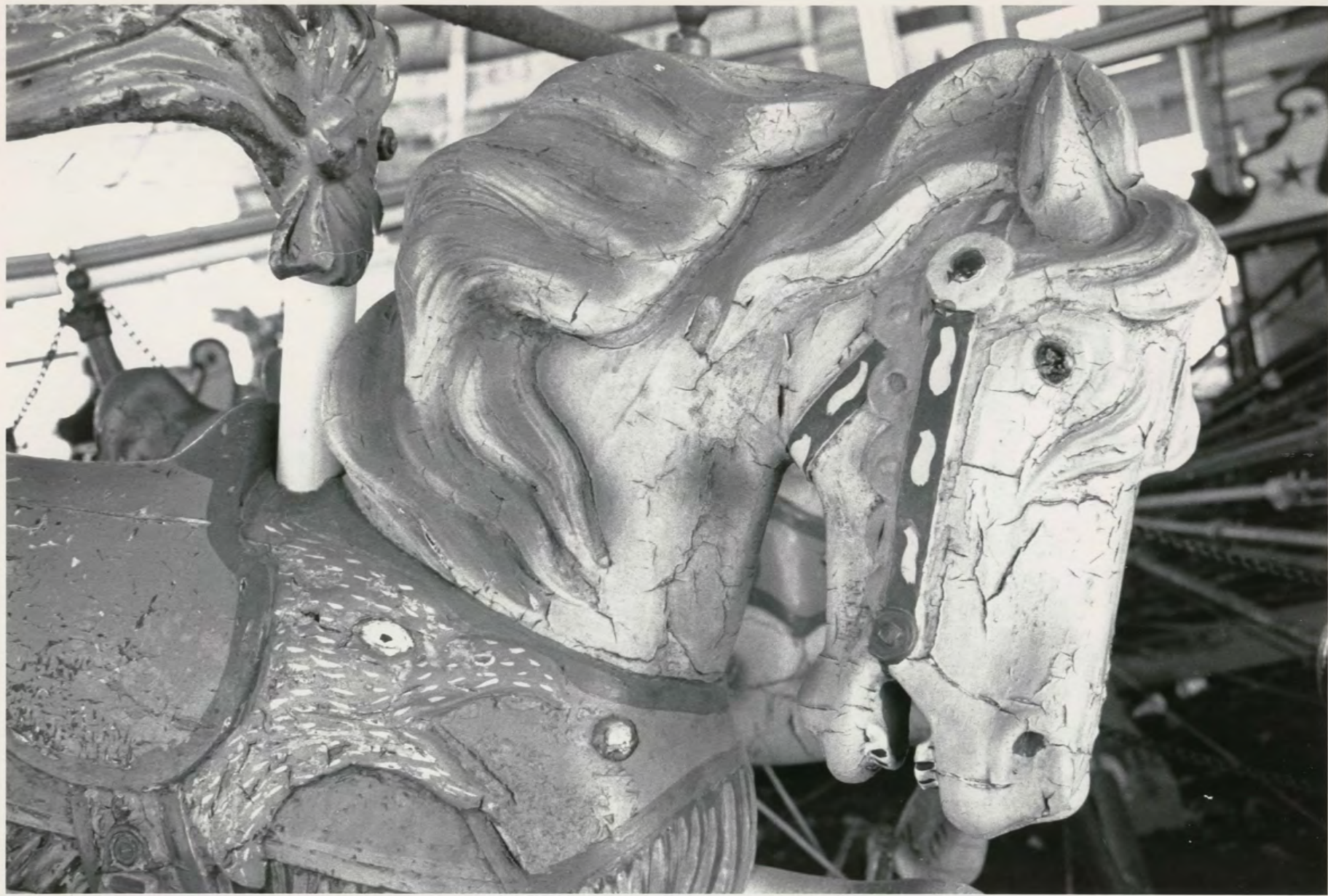
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY M. A. ANDERSON

MARCH, 1989

NEGATIVES ON FILE AT AHPP

DETAIL OF SIGN AND RIDING PLATFORM
(TOWARD WEST).



ALLAN HERSCHELL / HERSCHELL-SPILLMAN CAROUSEL

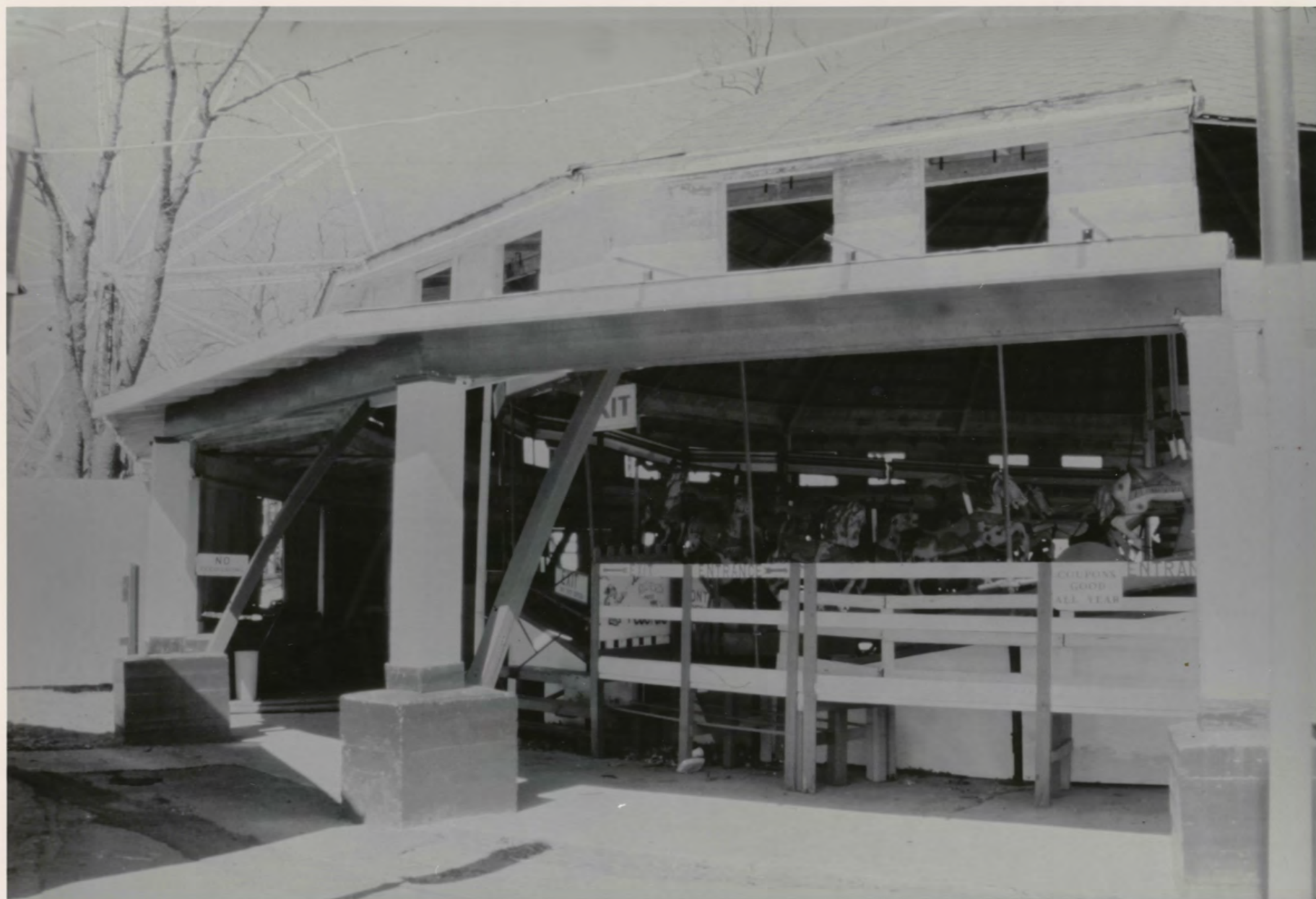
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY M. A. ANDERSON

MARCH, 1989

NEGATIVES ON FILE AT AHPP

DETAIL OF CAROUSEL HORSE



ALLAN HERSCHELL / HERSCHELL-SPILLMAN CAROUSEL

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY M. A. ANDERSON

MARCH, 1989

NEGATIVES ON FILE AT AHPP

VIEW OF CAROUSEL WITHIN DOMED SHELTER,
TOWARD SOUTH (DETAIL)



ALLAN HERSCHELL / HERSCHELL-SPILLMAN CAROUSEL

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY M. A. ANDERSON

MARCH, 1989

NEGATIVES ON FILE AT AHPP

VIEW TOWARD NORTHWEST OF CAROUSEL
IN DOMED SHELTER



ALLAN HERSCHELL / HERSCHELL-SPILLMAN CAROUSEL

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY M. A. ANDERSON

MARCH, 1989

NEGATIVES ON FILE AT AHPP



ALLAN HERSCHELL / HERSCHELL-SPILLMAN CAROUSEL

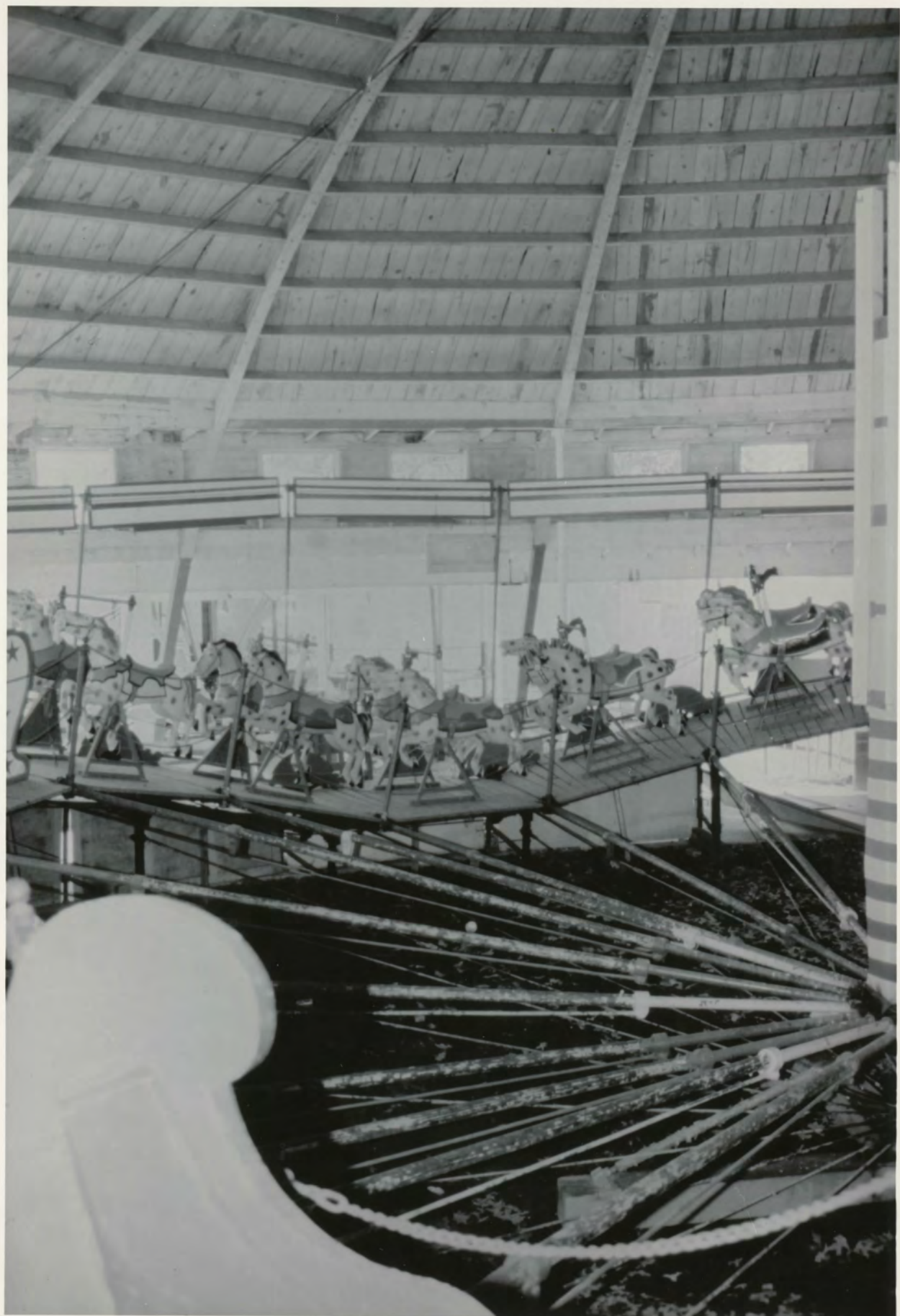
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY M. A. ANDERSON

MARCH, 1989

NEGATIVES ON FILE AT AHPP

VIEW OF OPERATING MECHANISM



ALLAN HERSCHELL / HERSCHELL-SPILLMAN CAROUSEL
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS
PHOTOGRAPHED BY M.A. ANDERSON
MARCH, 1989
NEGATIVES ON FILE AT AHPP
VIEW OF CAROUSEL SHOWING SWEEPS



ALLAN HERSCHELL / HERSCHELL-SPILLMAN CAROUSEL

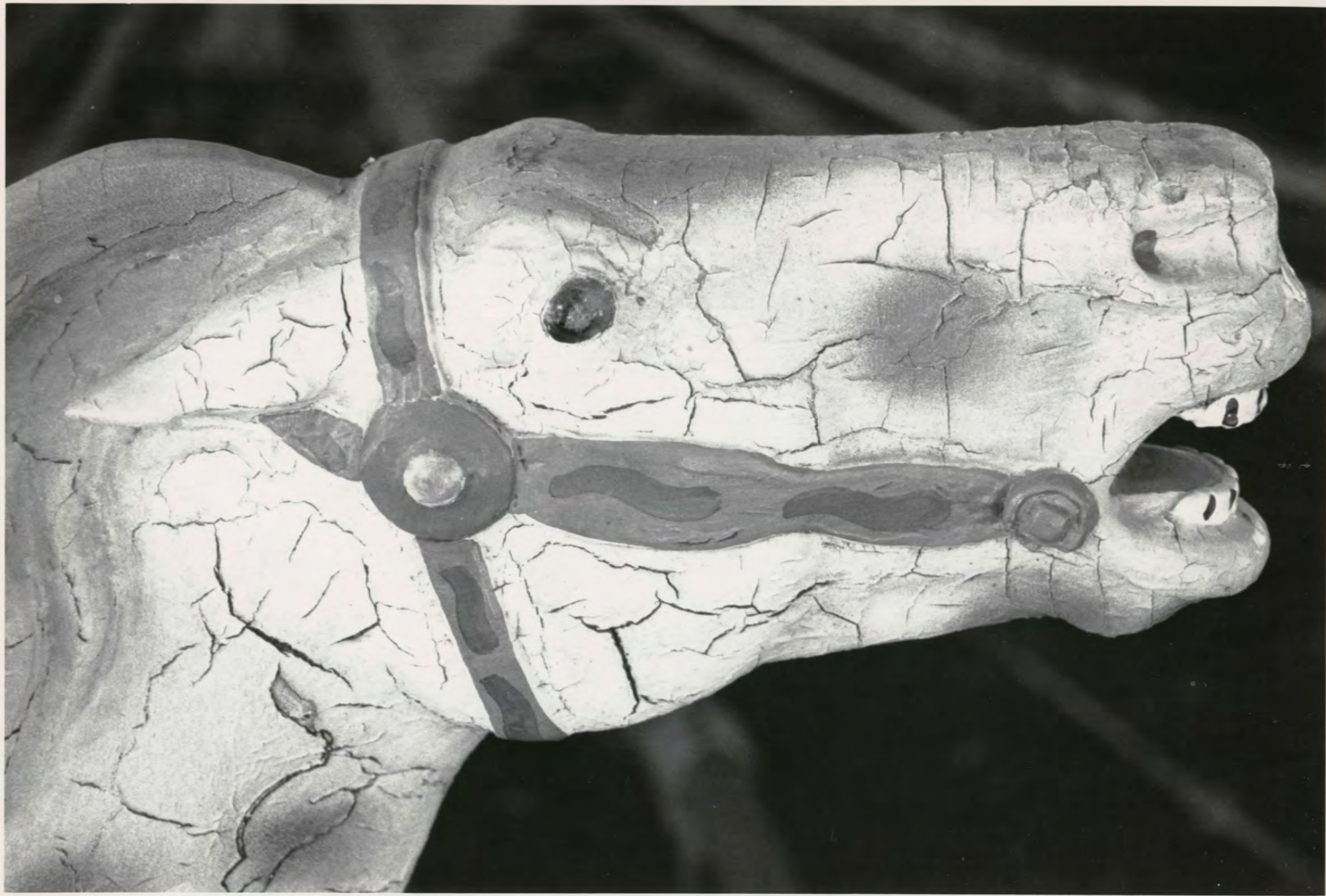
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY M. A. ANDERSON

MARCH, 1989

NEGATIVES ON FILE AT AHPP

VIEW OF TURNING MECHANISM



ALLAN HERSCHELL / HERSCHELL-SPILLMAN CAROUSEL
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS
PHOTOGRAPHED BY M. A. ANDERSON
MARCH, 1989
NEGATIVES ON FILE AT AHPP
DETAIL OF HORSE'S HEAD



ALLAN HERSCHELL/HERSCHELL-SPILLMAN CAROUSEL

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY M. A. ANDERSON

MARCH, 1989

NEGATIVES ON FILE AT AHPP

DETAIL OF CAROUSEL HORSES SHOWING
DECORATIVE TACK



ALLAN HERSCHELL / HERSCHELL-SPILLMAN CAROUSEL

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY M.A. ANDERSON

MARCH, 1989

NEGATIVES ON FILE AT AHPP

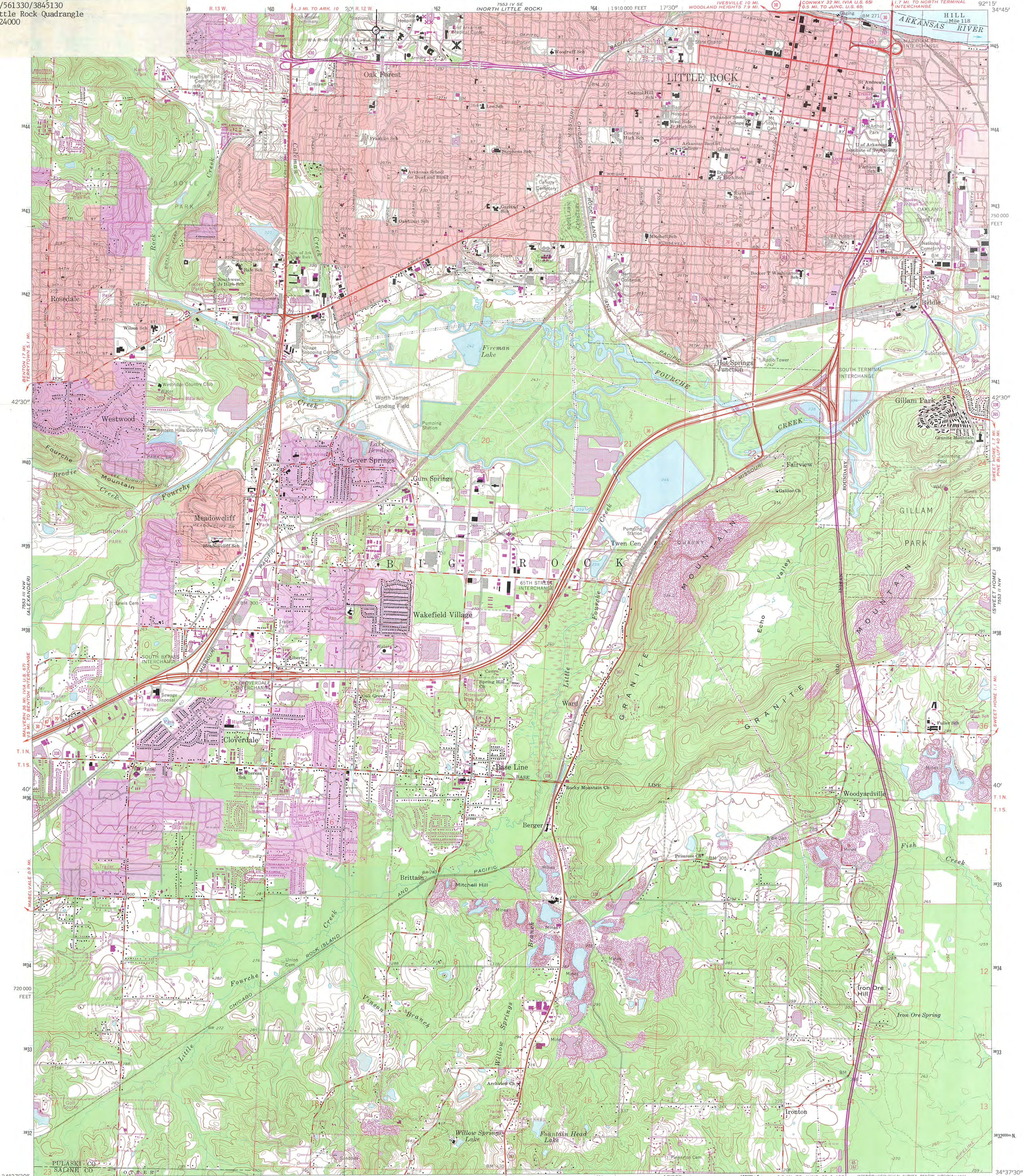
DETAIL OF TWO HORSE TYPES

(ROUNDED MANE AND CROPPED MANE)

Herschell-Spillman Carousel
Little Rock, Arkansas
Pulaski County
15/561330/3845130
Little Rock Quadrangle
1:24000

METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING
COMMISSION OF PULASKI COUNTY

LITTLE ROCK QUADRANGLE
ARKANSAS
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

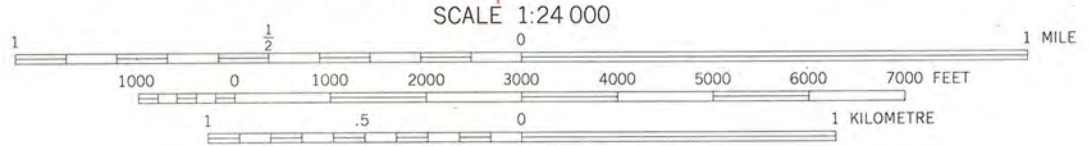
Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1960. Field checked 1961

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Arkansas coordinate system, south zone
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 15, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1970 and 1975. This information not field checked
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 5-FOOT CONTOURS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND ARKANSAS GEOLOGICAL COMMISSION, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72204
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
○ Interstate Route ○ U.S. Route ○ State Route

LITTLE ROCK, ARK.
N3437.5—W9215.7.5

1961
PHOTOREVISED 1970 AND 1975
AMS 7553 III NE—SERIES V884

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page 1



SUMMARY

The Herschell-Spillman Carousel was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on December 1, 1989, with statewide significance. At the time, the nomination stated that the carousel was “a rare collection of wooden sculptures carved by artisans of his [Allan Herschell’s] company, one of the earliest carousel manufacturers in the United States. They are rendered even more significant by their continued attachment to the largely-original sectional wooden riding platform which allows its unique motion.”¹

Subsequent research revealed that the Herschell-Spillman Carousel is the last remaining example of a Spillman Corporation “Jumps” model, and likely one of only five examples originally produced.² As a result of the new information about the Carousel, and the rarity of the resource type, the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program seeks to increase the Herschell-Spillman Carousel’s level of significance from statewide to national.

ELABORATION

The Over-the-Jumps Carousel in Little Rock is one of fewer than 180 intact wooden carousels of the more than 5,000 carousels that once operated in the U.S., and has been associated with both public recreation and cultural enrichment in Arkansas since the 1920s.³ The Over-the-Jumps style of carousel made its initial appearance at the Aurora Exposition and Fair in Aurora, Illinois, on the C. A. Worthem World’s best Shows, 15 August 1924.⁴ The Carousel in Little Rock was produced c. 1926 by the Spillman Engineering Corporation in North Tonawanda, New York. It was initially a traveling carousel and made appearances at the Arkansas State Fair as part of a circuit of amusement rides.⁵ Research has revealed that it is the only surviving example of an undulating track carousel manufactured by Spillman Engineering Corporation. In addition, it is probable that no more than five Over-the-Jumps machines were produced.⁶

The diameter of the Over-the-Jumps is 12.2 m (40 ft.) with a center pole. According to the sales catalog, “space required is 56 feet, 4 to 5 hours time for erecting; for space on a show train, it can be carried on three 18-foot wagons.” The stationary walking platforms surround the mobile riding platform, and both are constructed of wood planks. The riding platform is sectioned into 1.5 m (5 ft.) segments (twenty-four in all), with one wooden wheel between each segment (twenty-four wheels). Each wheel between the segments is approximately 61 cm (24 in.) in diameter, with thick wooden spokes, a cast-iron hub and a cast-iron rim. Each wheel is covered with a wood well above the riding platform “to protect the ladies’ dresses from any

¹ M. Anderson and Ken Story. “Herschell-Spillman Carousel, Pulaski County, Arkansas.” National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. From the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 1989, p. 8-1.

² Rick H. Parker and Peter L. Sixbey. *Jeffrey: Horse of a Different Color*. Found in: Dorge, Valerie and F. Carey Howlett (eds.). *Painted Wood: History and Conservation*. Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, c.1994, pp. 383, 386.

³ Parker and Sixbey, p. 383.

⁴ Parker and Sixbey, p. 386.

⁵ Parker and Sixbey, p. 383.

⁶ Parker and Sixbey, pp. 383, 386.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page 2

grease that is frequently collected by wheels from the track.” Each segment carries two horses or one chariot, with one chariot occurring between each set of ten horses. Beneath the riding platform is a cast-iron undulating track, along which the wheels of the riding platform move the horses in an up-and-down galloping motion. Horses are mounted on the riding platform with triangular stands.⁷

The original forty vertical jumping horses on the Over-the-Jumps are typical of those produced by the Spillman Engineering Corporation in the 1920s. The horses were generally more elaborate than their predecessors; jewels were added and intricate relief carvings appeared. Identifiable features of Spillman horses include long heads; small, high-set eyes; pointed rumps; full, wavy manes; intricate ornamentation; high cantles and pommels; large nostrils; jewels; and figures in relief. The sides of the horses were elaborately carved.⁸

The Herschell companies used basswood for most of the construction, although some animals were made with poplar. The wood was planed smooth and glued up into boxes in a technique referred to as coffin construction. After assembly, each box was roughed out to approximate the form of the body part. Master sketches of each animal being carved were kept on the walls of the factory. Each animal was drawn life-size. The factory carvers worked on the various components. Production was greatly increased with the introduction of a duplicating process that used a pantographic cutting apparatus, which could rough out four bodies at once.⁹ Skilled artisans completed the work by chiseling out details and hand carving important features. The animals were then taken to the paint shop. Very little information exists on the various color schemes and decorations that were used.¹⁰

Many woodcarvers employed by America’s carousel industry were very sophisticated not only in technical ability but in their understanding of design and art in general. Most received training through apprenticeships beginning at an early age. As with any other art form, no single label accurately describes or defines carousel art. The degree of artistic sensibility in carousel figures ranges from the very naïve to the highly sophisticated.¹¹

In 1942, the carousel was placed in Little Rock’s War Memorial Park under an already existing pavilion that was adapted to shelter the carousel. It would continue to operate there until 1991.¹² The one-of-a-kind undulating track carries forty hand-carved wooden horses and four chariots. Thirty-eight of the horses were

⁷ Parker and Sixbey, pp. 385-386.

⁸ Parker and Sixbey, p. 387.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Parker and Sixbey, p. 388.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Parker and Sixbey, p. 386.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page 3

produced by the Spillman Engineering Corporation.¹³ Two of the original forty Spillman carousel horses were removed from the carousel in the 1960s and those horses were replaced with two Allen Herschell "Roman" or "Trojan" style horses.

In 1991, a non-profit group, Friends of the Carousel, Inc., formed to save the carousel from an out-of-state purchase. After purchasing the carousel, the organization donated a historic easement on the carousel to the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. In 1992, the Friends contracted with Parker Restoration and Conservation Services to examine Over-the-Jumps for evidence of original factory paint schemes. Proposals already received from carousel restoration firms recommended the removal of paint to the bare wood prior to repainting, so the Friends wished to document the original scheme. A cursory examination revealed many layers of park paint covering the horses, but very little serious structural damage. The paint layers were in poor condition and covered with a thick, clear coating, possibly polyurethane varnish. Flaking, tenting, and crazing paint, abrasions, and paint loss were common problems on most of the horses. Despite these problems, the condition of the horses looked very promising. Several were randomly chosen for elementary tests, and a basic examination was undertaken to search for early decoration beneath the park paint. Dry scraping seemed successful in revealing the earliest coatings. Because it seemed possible to recover much of the factory paint scheme, the Board of Directors of the Friends elected to conserve all original surfaces.¹⁴

At present, 35 horses and 3 of the 4 chariots have been conserved. Original paint and decorations has revealed a unified scheme for both horses and chariots, supporting the theory that the carousel was created as a unit. The track remains untreated at this time. Once restoration/conservation is completed, the Over-the-Jumps carousel will be returned to War Memorial Park and housed at the Little Rock Zoo.¹⁵

A pavilion, yet to be designed, will be constructed at the Little Rock Zoo to house the carousel.¹⁶ The design specifications for a pavilion have been extensively researched to facilitate the design process in order to be responsible in the perpetual care of this rare and cherished example of the carousel-makers art.

To the knowledge of Friends of the Carousel, Inc., the cast-iron undulating track is the single remaining example of a Spillman Corporation "Jumps" model. Restoration of the track has not begun at the present time but extensive research on the restoration treatment has been conducted with engineers and conservators.

¹³ M. Anderson and Ken Story, p. 7-1.

¹⁴ Parker and Sixbey, p. 390.

¹⁵ Information in the files of the Friends of the Carousel, Inc.

¹⁶ Parker and Sixbey, p. 396.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page 4

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Herschell-Spillman Carousel was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on December 1, 1989, with statewide significance. At the time, the nomination stated that the carousel was “a rare collection of wooden sculptures carved by artisans of his [Allan Herschell’s] company, one of the earliest carousel manufacturers in the United States. They are rendered even more significant by their continued attachment to the largely-original sectional wooden riding platform which allows its unique motion.”¹⁷

Subsequent research revealed that the Herschell-Spillman Carousel is the last remaining example of a Spillman Corporation “Jumps” model, and likely one of only five examples originally produced.¹⁸ As a result of the new information about the Carousel, and the rarity of the resource type, the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program seeks to increase the Herschell-Spillman Carousel’s level of significance from statewide to national.

¹⁷ M. Anderson and Ken Story, p. 8-1.

¹⁸ Parker and Sixbey, pp. 383, 386.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, M. and Ken Story. "Herschell-Spillman Carousel, Pulaski County, Arkansas." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. From the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 1989.

Parker, Rick H. and Peter L. Sixbey. *Jeffrey: Horse of a Different Color*. Found in: Dorge, Valerie and F. Carey Howlett (eds.). *Painted Wood: History and Conservation*. Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, c.1994. (Proceedings of a symposium organized by the Wooden Artifacts Group of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works and the Foundation of the AIC, held at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 11-14 November 1994.)

Information in the files of the Friends of the Carousel, Inc.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION-RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Herschell-Spillman Carousel

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, PULASKI

DATE RECEIVED: 07/20/04 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/04/04
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89002⁰65

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:	N	DATA PROBLEM:	N	LANDSCAPE:	N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS:	N
OTHER:	N	PDIL:	N	PERIOD:	N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:	N
REQUEST:	N	SAMPLE:	N	SLR DRAFT:	N	NATIONAL:	Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT ☐ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Documentation demonstrates that the property is
nationally significant as an example of carousel
design.*

RECOM./CRITERIA *Accept additional documentation*

REVIEWER *Daniel Vivian* DISCIPLINE *Historian*

TELEPHONE *(202) 354-2252* DATE *9/14/04*

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



The Department of Arkansas Heritage

Mike Huckabee, Governor
Cathie Matthews, Director

Arkansas Arts Council

Arkansas Natural Heritage
Commission

Historic Arkansas Museum

Delta Cultural Center

Old State House Museum



Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

1500 Tower Building
323 Center Street

Little Rock, AR 72201

(501)324-9880

fax: (501)324-9184

tdd: (501)324-9811

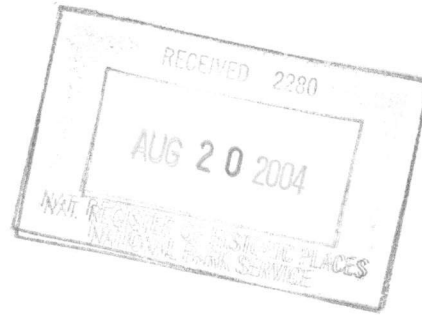
e-mail:

info@arkansaspreservation.org

website:

www.arkansaspreservation.org

August 11, 2004



Carol D. Shull
Chief of Registration
United States Department of the Interior
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
8th Floor
1201 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

RE: Herschell-Spillman Carousel – Little Rock, Pulaski County,
Arkansas

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the revised additional documentation for the above-referenced property. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

If you need further information, please call Ralph S. Wilcox of my staff at (501) 324-9787. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathie Matthews
State Historic Preservation Officer

CM:rsw

Enclosure

An Equal Opportunity Employer

