

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JAN 16 1986

date entered

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

1. Name

historic New Orleans City Park Carousel and Pavilion

and/or common same

2. Location

street & number City Park N/A not for publication

city, town New Orleans N/A vicinity of

state LA code 22 county Orleans Parish code 071

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

4. Owner of Property

name SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

street & number

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. New Orleans City Hall

street & number 1300 Perdido

city, town New Orleans state LA 70112

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title NONE has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date \_\_\_\_\_  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date 1929 - pavilion
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			1948 - carousel

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

The New Orleans City Park Carousel and Pavilion are located in the amusements section of a large municipal park. The pavilion, which originally housed a different carousel, has been in city park since its c.1906 construction. It and the present c.1910 carousel have been together since 1948. Both have been moved short distances and both have received some minor alterations; however, they still easily retain their significance as rare surviving examples of a once common phenomenon.

### The Moves:

In 1929 the carousel pavilion was moved less than one mile from one location in city park to another. As indicated above, it does not retain its original carousel. The present roughly contemporaneous carousel was installed in the pavilion in 1948 by Harry Batt, Sr. It originally was located in an amusement park about a mile away. Neither structure has been moved out of the area which forms its context for significance. Also, one would never guess that the two had not always been together. In fact, the State Historic Preservation Office would not have known otherwise had it not been for an interview with Batt's son. In addition, it should be noted that the present pastoral amusement park setting is entirely appropriate.

### The Carousel Pavilion:

The carousel pavilion is a ten sided structure with a clerestory surmounted by a lantern cupola. The roof is faceted to match the sides. At one time there were double fold French doors on each side. Some of these have been replaced by plate glass windows and garage type doors; others have been remodeled into fixed windows. Nonetheless, the stained glass transoms remain intact as do the matching stained glass windows in the clerestory and cupola.

### The Carousel:

Essentially the carousel consists of a huge spoked wooden wheel supported by a central mast. The wheel, which supports the carousel animals and the floor, is turned by means of a huge horizontal cog connected to a vertical drive shaft. This system in turn is connected to an electric motor. The carousel contains fifty-four animals plus a single two seater chariot. All of the animals are horses except for a lion, a camel, and a giraffe. Thirty of the horses are "flyers," providing a floating galloping motion which is actuated by an overhead cranking system using crossheads. The animals are typical of period carousel figures in that their features are boldly carved in dramatic poses, but without close attention to detail. Though much repainted, all figures are original.

The central carousel mechanism is concealed by a canvas screen with a continuous mural surmounted by a faceted beveled mirror. This in turn is surmounted by a large faceted crown with panels depicting exotic natural scenes. There is also a Baroque looking organ. The outer rim of the carousel is capped by a continuous set of painted brincaade panels.

CONTINUED

# 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 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.1906 - pavilion **Builder/Architect** Pavilion Builder: Bartholomew A. Murphy  
 c.1910 - carousel  
**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)** Carousel Figures: Shops of Charles Carmel and Charles Loeff, Brooklyn  
 Criterion A

The New Orleans City Park Carousel is of national significance in the area of recreation as a rare example of the prevalent form of mechanized recreation in America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The carousel pavilion is of national significance in the area of recreation because it represents a once prevalent recreational structure which has largely disappeared from the American scene.

Of all the forms of mechanized recreational amusement, the carousel was the most prevalent prior to about 1920. It was the first to be introduced in America, and it held its own well into this century.

Generally speaking, carousels were brought to an area for one of two distinct purposes:

(1) They were installed in municipal parks to provide an added recreational attraction. A typical park might have a canoeing lake or a bandstand, but as a rule, the carousel was the only mechanized "ride,"

(2) Carousels were also brought in as centerpieces for commercial picnic grounds. These were set up by traction car companies at the outermost point on their lines. The purpose was to provide a destination for Sunday riders, thus boosting fare collection on an otherwise slow day. It was generally found that the presence of a carousel would attract more patrons than picnic grounds would by themselves. Carousel manufacturers encouraged this kind of business, for example, by making presentations at traction car company conventions. Of course, some commercial picnic grounds later acquired other rides and became amusement parks. But for the most part carousels were the work horses of mechanized amusement in America, being by far the most common mechanized ride.

Today the carousel is considered tame, but in its day it was a "thrill" ride. At that time carousels were turned much faster than they are now so that people were able to experience speeds in an unprotected setting that were unattainable in everyday life. In addition, the flying motion of the horses could be quite violent. As one New Orleans operator remarked of his carousel: "It took a cowboy to ride it."

Carousels declined in popularity after about 1920 and were relegated to the status of a children's ride. One theory as to why this took place is that as automobiles became more common and speeds increased, it took more to thrill the public.

According to the National Carousel Association, there were well over two thousand carousels operating in the United States during their heyday (c.1880-c.1920). The New Orleans City Park Carousel is one of only 247 remaining examples. (It is the only one left in Louisiana.) In addition, about ten to twelve historic carousels are being lost per year, according to the National Carousel Association.

CONTINUED

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property @ 1 acre

Quadrangle name New Orleans East, LA

Quadrangle scale 1: 24000

### UTM References

A 

1	5	7	7	9	8	8	0	3	3	2	0	7	6	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification See attached sketch map. Boundaries were chosen to encompass the significant resources. In this case the boundary line is a circle of 130 foot radius centering on the conical top of the pavilion. To have nominated the entire acreage under single ownership would have meant listing the whole park with vast numbers of unrelated features.

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title State of Louisiana

ASSISTED BY OWNERS AND NATIONAL CAROUSEL ASSOCIATION

organization Division of Historic Preservation National Register Staff

date November 1985

street & number P. O. Box 44247

telephone 504-922-0358

city or town Baton Rouge

state LA 70804

# 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

*Robert B. DeBlieux*  
Robert B. DeBlieux

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date January 6, 1986

### For NPS use only

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

*James Byer*  
Keeper of the National Register

*James Byer*  
Keeper of the National Register

date 2-3-86

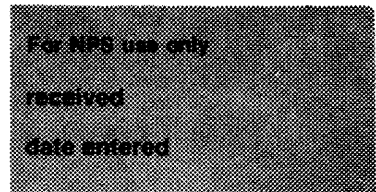
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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                                 Carousel and Pavilion      Item number      4      Page      1

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Owners

Pavilion:    New Orleans City Park  
                 New Orleans, LA 70119      504-482-4888

Carousel:    John A. Batt  
                 Henry J. Batt, Jr.  
                 6528 Pratt Drive  
                 New Orleans, LA 70122

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Description (continued)

Carousel Alterations:

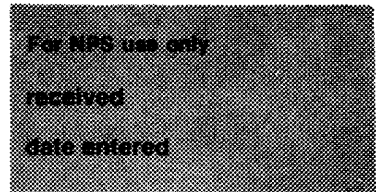
- (1) The mural which conceals the motor mechanism was repainted about twenty years ago.
- (2) As previously mentioned, the carousel figures have been repainted many times.

Assessment of Integrity:

In our opinion, the changes made both to the carousel and pavilion should be regarded as minor because both still easily retain their historical identity. Also, in the case of the carousel, it would be virtually impossible to find an example where the figures had not been repainted. In the case of the pavilion, the roof structure and the stained glass transoms and windows are so prominent that the replacement of the French doors has not had the visual impact that might be expected. Finally, the companion structures represent an element of patrimony which is becoming so rare that even more significantly altered examples would still probably be important.

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Significance (continued)

Carousel pavilions are even rarer. At one time virtually all carousels of any size had pavilions, but today less than 100 pavilions remain in the country.

NB: The foregoing carousel and pavilion statistics come from the National Carousel Association.

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Carousel and Pavilion

Bibliography

Personal communication with Charles Walker, Conservation Chairman, National Carousel Association.

Personal communication with Henry J. Batt, Jr.

Fried, Frederick. A Pictorial History of the Carousel. Vestal, New York: The Vestal Press Ltd., 1964.

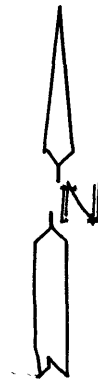
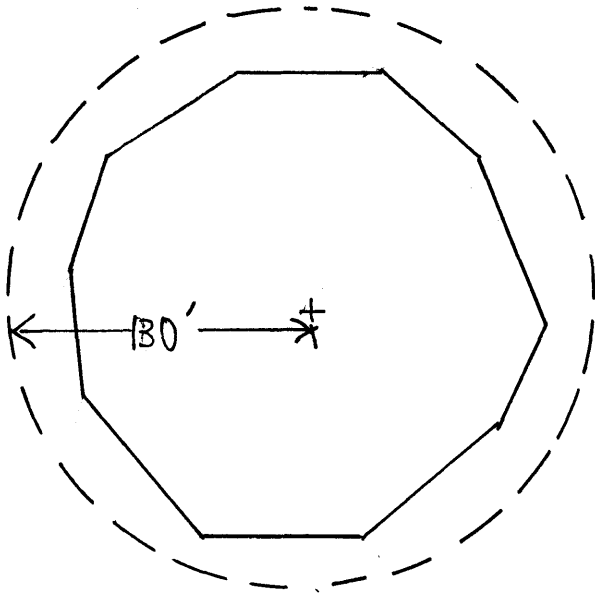
Fried, Frederick. Appraisal Report on New Orleans City Park Carousel.

Historic City Park, New Orleans. Friends of City Park, 1982.

National Carousel Association. Merry-Go-Roundup. Volume 12, Number 3, Fall 1985. This volume contains the 1985 carousel counts nationwide.



NEW ORLEANS CITY PARK  
CAROUSEL & PAVILION  
ORLEANS PARISH, LA.



BOUNDARY

↑  
① EXTERIOR  
PHOTO.

(NOT TO SCALE)