NPS Form 10-900-b

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION FORM

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. 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. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Broome County Carousels

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Endicott Johnson Corporation and Welfare Capitalism in Broome County, NY, 1919-1934
Endicott Johnson Corporate Recreation Programs in Broome County, NY, 1919-1934
Allan Herschell Company All Wooden Carousels in Broome County, NY, 1919-1934

C. Geographical Data

Boundaries of Broome County, New York

[ ] See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

Signature of certifying official — Date: 12/10/91
Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation
New York State OPRHP

State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

8 Signature of the Keeper of the National Register — Date: 1-25-92

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Discuss each historic context listed in section B.

Identification of Themes

William Inglis's 1935 authorized biography of George F. Johnson relates specific information concerning Broome County's carousels:

> There is a handsome merry-go-round in every one of the six playgrounds George F. Johnson has given to the children, from Binghamton to West Endicott. Each of them marks a step in his progress in getting even for the old days when he was lucky to ride a wooden camel once a year, and they all contribute to the happy life that helps a youngster to grow up into a strong and useful citizen. Mr. Johnson, in June 1934, gave a merry-go-round to the children of North Side, Endicott, in the park his son George W. presented to the neighborhood. On the day it began to spin twelve hundred children, from four-year-olds to those of grammar school age, all freshly washed and brushed in their best clothes, marched past the tanneries and factories to George F.'s home, in Park Street. **(1)**

The carousel mentioned here was the last of six that Johnson donated to Broome County between 1919 and 1934. Inglis continues the story:

> ... the twelve hundred swarmed over the lawn while three little girls handed George F. a basket of flowers. His wife, his son and his nephew stood by. He was photographed with the flower girls and a small colored boy stood beside him.
>
> "Let me tell you this," said George F. to the little army; "if anything has been done for you that has made you a bit happier, hand it on to somebody else, just as soon as you can. That's the way to keep square with the the world. And now look. In that big park across the street there's a-merry-go-round and ice cream. Help yourselves." **(2)**

These paragraphs are indicative of the generous nature of the president of the Endicott Johnson Shoe Company (EJ) and, equally, of the gratification of the citizens of Broome County. Johnson's gift to the children was reciprocated by their gesture of thanks: the image of big business and the common man working together in harmony towards a single goal of peace and prosperity is suggested by Johnson's philanthropy and reinforced by Inglis's retelling. Throughout the cities, towns and villages of Broome County, visual reminders of EJ's role as paternalistic overseer are prominent: The placement of carousels in six Broome County public parks, many of which themselves were donated or built by the Johnson family of the Endicott Johnson Corporation, is one example in a series of physical manifestations in the triple cities that reveal an underlying theme of social history and labor relations known collectively as Welfare Capitalism, a common phenomenon practiced by large U.S. industries during the years between the end of World War I and the implementation of the New Deal.

Parks and recreation were a favorite recipient of Johnson's gifts to Broome County's workers and communities. In line with contemporary Progressive Movement theory, Johnson saw the benefits of social control afforded by the planning and construction of new urban parks the functional transformation of older nineteenth-century picturesque pleasure grounds. Organized athletics and recreation were also a prominent part of Johnson's overall theme of labor relations. As a institutional program within the corporate strategy, recreation became a substitute for what management saw as less desirable activities of workers, who, in the same period, saw an increase in their amount of leisure time. Corporate leaders such as Johnson took on the role as

time. To this end, corporations invested a tremendous amount of resources towards the construction, operation and upkeep of entertainment and recreational facilities, such as movie theaters, dance pavilions and athletic fields. According to reformers, children too, left unsupervised, would find an active outlet for their enthusiasm in the streets, ultimately leading to an unhealthy or possibly even criminal lifestyle. Johnson encouraged large families and thus saw a need to provide family oriented entertainment. Carousels adequately fulfilled this need with a current popular form of "clean" entertainment that greatly appealed to children.

The Broome County Carousels were all manufactured by the Allan Herschell Company of North Tonawanda, NY, one of the most prominent manufacturers of hand-carved all wooden carousels in the United States. Herschell began to produce machines in the United States as early as 1883, but it was between 1890 and 1930 that the carousel industry experienced its most prolific output: during this time, the United States had sixteen manufacturers actively producing carousels, with North Tonawanda home to five of these. Herschell was by far the most successful company during this period, producing thousands of all wooden carousels, sometimes at a rate of one per day, between 1915 and the mid-1930s. Herschell is also credited with contributing to the first successful design and manufacture of band organs, convincing Eugene Dekleist, a German organ maker, to open the North Tonawanda Barrel Organ Company. The firm was eventually sold to the Wurlitzer Company and, by 1920, Wurlitzer Military Band Organs were standard equipment on all carousels.

The hand carving of carousel figures represents an immigrant tradition transported to the United States in the late nineteenth century with the arrival of European craftsmen who settled in New England and later in New York State. For decades, the tradition of carving individual figures remained intact, but by the mid-1930s, economic considerations made fully hand-carved figures on a large scale a rarity, and thereafter the manufacture of all wooden carousels was greatly reduced. The Herschell Company stopped producing this type of machine by the mid-1930s.

Of the original thousands all wooden carousels carved by the Allan Herschell Company, only nineteen fully operational ones remain in existence today. **(3)** Of these virtually none retain integrity of locale and function. The Broome County carousels are a rare and unusual collection of their type in that all six carousels are of the all wooden type; all still perform their original functions

within their intended settings; five of the six have never been relocated; all original housing structures remain largely unaltered; and two band organs remain fully operational and intact.

1. The Endicott Johnson Corporation and Welfare Capitalism in Broome County, New York, 1890-1950

Welfare Capitalism, the notion that management accepted an obligation for the well being of its employees, was particularly widespread among large prosperous American firms during the 1920s. **(4)** As a phenomenon, Welfare Capitalism had its roots in the decades preceding World War I, known collectively as the Progressive Era. Reformers, religious leaders and businessmen took on the role of philanthropists and worked to transform uneducated rural Americans and recently arrived immigrants into hard-working, thrifty and honest American citizens modeled after themselves. **(5)** As a reformer, Johnson took up a personal crusade to ensure the social stability of rural and immigrant EJ workers and, perhaps more important, to assist with these workers' introduction to a set of mainstream middle-class American values, a process known as Americanization.

Proponents of the Progressive Movement perceived human beings, regardless of their current state, as inherently good, believing that "bad" people could be converted through enlightened intervention. Blame was placed on society rather than on the individual and, thus, changes in one's environment were believed to aid in a proper transformation. Urbanism, and industrial cities in particular, were singled out as major factors contributing to the unfortunate status of the poor and working classes.

In Broome County, EJ's own unique form of Welfare Capitalism was known as the "Square Deal." As a concept of fair play between management and labor, the "Square Deal" had been manifest within corporate policy since before the turn of the century. In 1890, the Lester Brother's Boot and Shoe Company, later to be incorporated and renamed EJ, relocated its factory from downtown Binghamton west into vacant farmland on the outskirts of the city. A new town was formed surrounding the factory and named Lestershire in honor of G. Harry Lester, president of the shoe company. Within a decade of the move, Lester's company nearly tripled its labor force, and the town of Lestershire grew from about 100 inhabitants to over 3000. **(6)**

Lester's initial move out from the center of Binghamton's industrial core, an act that physically and mentally severed the connections between factory work and the evils of the industrial city, was in line with the anti-urban stance of the Progressive Movement. Lester Brother's had begun operations in Binghamton in 1854, and by the following year, its twenty-five employees made it the city's largest manufacturer. Binghamton was home to several boot and shoe manufacturers throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, but Lester Brother's had been the most successful. By the time of the 1890 move, the firm was still by far the largest in Binghamton, employing a total of 475 workers. **(7)**

Social, economic and political reasons can be found to explain Lester's departure from the industrial city of Binghamton, but a more idealistic picture of the move is painted within the pages of the "official" company-sponsored biography of George F. Johnson, at that time a manager with Lester Brother's:

> ... my picture of a real factory was the shop out in the open country, with the homes of the workers around it in a little village. Then the men and their families could have gardens, could get fresh air and the sun, and bring up their children decently, away from the crowded city. **(8)**

The working-class individual's urban environment, considered by reformers like Johnson as an instigator of undesirable or unacceptable social practice, was thus altered through the process of suburbanization. Johnson hoped that by moving the factory "down the river a few miles," his craftsman-like village could be realized, where "the workers [could] buy lots and build their homes near the shop." **(9)**

This early vision of Lestershire as a bucolic suburban village, ostensibly as the antithesis to an overcrowded industrial city, was promulgated in Johnson's biography and proved paramount to establishing the notion of EJ and George F. Johnson as the benevolent patriarch to a "Happy Family" of workers. To Johnson, factories were not Draconian mills but rather "shops"; his industrial company town was "a little village"; and workers' lodgings were homes with gardens in open air and sunlight.

Industrial suburbanization as such was not a phenomenon unique to Broome County and EJ. The most notorious example was George Pullman's manufacturing center along the banks of Lake Michigan south of Chicago. **(10)** Not coincidentally, the city of Pullman was

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also founded in the latter decades of the nineteenth century: cheap land for expansion of manufacturing, lower or non-existent taxes, and the segregation of a work force in the face of rising tides of unionization and labor unrest all contributed to a national urban restructuring process, manifest in the relocation of manufacturing, that paralleled changes in the organization of capital. **(11)**

Additional advantages could likewise be had by a suburban relocation: those gained by Lester's move out of Binghamton became immediately apparent in 1890, when Binghamton's lucrative cigar manufacturing industry became divided by the city's longest strike. Several different cigar companies located in a central manufacturing district experienced simultaneous work stoppages by their employees. Non-unionized but still unified, the workers staged mass pickets in the vicinity of the factories: as public awareness and sentiment grew, the manufacturers were forced to bring in strike breakers and eventually sought legal rulings from the courts declaring picketing illegal. The sense of working-class solidarity in Binghamton extended past the picket lines and workshops and into the homogeneous class segregated neighborhoods. At the time, the separation of work and home was less distinct in Binghamton's industrial district. **(12)**

By locating several miles west, Lester and Johnson were able to ensure the isolation of their operations from other similar enterprises within Binghamton's boot and shoe manufacturing district. Isolation of the factory was also desirable to prevent any consolidation or political unification of workers. Furthermore, this separation spatially segregated the work place from homogeneous class-conscious neighborhoods where workers shared similar labor-related interests.

With Lester's relocation came recognition from local observers. Newspapers realized Lester's initiative as a bonus to the county at large, where "real philanthropy" would benefit those affected. **(13)** The industrial utopia envisioned by Johnson and Lester would feature a library, reading room, public hall, low cost housing and affordable food and fuel. In addition, the urban evils of over-crowdedness, filth and liquor would be completely eliminated. Although personal fiscal hardships, a downturn in the national economy and social reality prevented the fulfillment of all of Lester's promises, the die had been cast for EJ's corporate image. **(14)**

George F. Johnson had joined Lester Brother's in 1881 as a foreman. He had worked in various Massachusetts shoe towns as a young man and his experiences of overcrowded shops and horrid working conditions, common among late-nineteenth century New England Mill Town factories, were influencial in the reforms that he fostered while a manager in Lester's factory.

The company was reorganized during the 1890s, with Boston financier Henry B. Endicott assuming control of operations after a series of real estate speculations by Lester proved unprofitable and forced him to sell out. Endicott immediately raised Johnson to the level of General Superintendent and, in 1899, Johnson was offered personal loans by Endicott in order to assume a full partnership.

From the turn of the century through World War I, EJ grew steadily, building new plants and hiring more workers each year. By 1905, EJ was the largest manufacturer of its type in New York State. Scale and scope of operations expanded to include all processes of tanning and retail sales, and EJ adopted the motto "from hoof to foot."

World War I brought prosperity to many American industries and EJ, through lucrative war contracts, reaped dramatic economic benefits. Between 1914 and 1919, profits more than doubled, while the average number of workers increased by over 86%. **(15)** The rising demand for labor, accelerated by immigration regulations throughout the war, forced EJ's management to seek workers from an ever-shrinking labor pool in record numbers, and to this end, necessitated a concerted effort on the part of management to attract, and more important, to retain, labor. In 1920, after the death of Endicott, George F. Johnson assumed presidency of EJ and received a huge windfall as a consequence of the firm turning public. He subsequently ushered in an even more thorough series of corporate sponsored welfare programs. By 1922, EJ had become the largest manufacturer of its type in the world.

Throughout this period, it became important for purposes of successful labor relations for Johnson to secure EJ's position as benefactor to the workers and local community, one which he had fostered for years. Through successfully promoting the notion of the "Square Deal," Johnson succeeded in maintaining this position. In 1916, the community of Lestershire had honored him by changing the name of the village to Johnson City. From the early 1920s until his death in 1948, Johnson strove to pay back the honor through philanthropic acts towards his employees and a multitude of local community charities.

The programs that were initiated by EJ were similar to those of other well-known American corporations: Ford Motor Company, General Electric, U.S. Steel, American Telephone and Telegraph, International Harvester and Goodyear Tire and Rubber had all implemented paternalistic programs by the 1920s. Affordable housing, food and medical care provided by companies complemented improved working conditions and higher salaries averaged by both skilled and unskilled workers. **(16)**

EJ's initiatives in welfare programs had an impact not only on its shoe workers, but on the county as a whole. The hospitals and clinics built by the company were accessible to everyone; libraries and schools offered educational services to all local citizens and, during the Depression, EJ opened public markets offering food and other necessities at discounted prices.

The "Square Deal" of the 1920s and 1930s became Johnson's reinterpretation of the progressive ideals of earlier decades. Within the ranks of employees, Johnson was able to imbue upon a captive audience those values that appealed to the prosperous reformer. Thrift and hard work were rewarded with profit-sharing benefits and an eight-hour workday. Certain programs, such as affordable workers' housing, were intended on one level to fulfill needs not afforded by the local economy; but, at the same time, their benefits promoted fiscal responsibility and middle-class stability among an increasingly more mobile labor pool. Nearly every act of corporate welfare had a similar built-in motive for maintaining labor to a certain degree and their combined effects were quite successful: EJ remained both non-unionized and strike free for the duration of George F. Johnson's tenure as president.

Outside of the work force, Johnson's philanthropy achieved similar goals of community stability, fiscal responsibility and benefits to the common man. Money was often given to groups or institutions when Johnson saw a chance to promote his progressive ideals among the county's residents. Churches of all denominations received gifts from Johnson, as did local fire stations and municipalities for the purposes of building or improving roads and bridges. American Legion posts were another favorite beneficiary of his generosity. Local newspapers were a constant source of praise for Johnson and lauded his acts of generosity in terms of their benefit to the area. Even national newspapers reported gifts, seeming perhaps extraordinary to an outsider, but almost commonplace to a resident of Broome County: A headline from the New York Times of

October 4, 1921 reads "Gives $350,000 to Towns - Johnson Brothers give to Binghamton, Johnson City, and Endicott." **(17)**

Reportedly worth $7 million by 1920 when he assumed presidency of the corporation, by the mid-1930s, Johnson's net worth had fallen to $2 million. The weakness of the shoe industry throughout the Depression had made an impact, but newspapers reported that he had given the rest away in the form of community gifts. A 1935 New York Times Magazine article reported that he hoped to live only long enough "to see the final two million constructively working in fields where they can do the most good." **(18)** Other accounts place the total of his gift-giving into the tens of millions. Regardless of the actual amounts, it was more important that Johnson be perceived by the populace as a generous benefactor, a position he retains even today.

The same 1935 New York Times Magazine article gives an indication as to the nature of Johnson's benevolent expenditures. When asked where $5 million had been spent, Johnson himself fell silent. His son, George W. Johnson, later told the reporter:

> "Father doesn't like to talk about the money he spends out of his own pocket," he said. "The people here know about it and that is enough for him. Most of the money has gone into places for recreation. Parks, golf courses, tennis courts, baseball grounds, picnic grounds, swimming pools, wading pools, carousels, [and] dance pavilions owe their existence to him." **(19)**

2. Endicott Johnson Corporate Recreation Programs in Broome County, New York, 1919-1934

Recreational endeavors were indeed utmost in the mind of George F. Johnson, but recreation, like other institutions of corporate welfare, was seen as a means for both accommodating and reforming the working class. "Urban Reform Parks" were created throughout the United States between the turn of the century and the 1930s. **(20)** Organized recreation was advocated by those reformers who again sought to create an atmosphere conducive to transforming segments of society unable to make changes without the guiding hand of philanthropic paternalism. Organized play, especially for children, could alleviate problems created when unattended youth were left on their own to play spontaneously in the streets. Park leaders considered play as a natural instinct that would find an outlet in

deviant behavior if thwarted. These ideals of park reform were integrated into Johnson's overall visions of what proper industrial life should be for his workers and had a tremendous impact on the industrial towns within Broome County.

For the Welfare Capitalist, recreation achieved further benefits. Displaced workers who found themselves without traditional forms of rural recreation were deemed by industrialists to be an unruly mob whose after-work activity, left unsupervised, could only lead to trouble. Decreases in the amount of hours in the average work day translated into an increase in leisure time, and it became the responsibility of the company to fill up this time with organized activities. Without the recreational opportunities provided by the company, instances of drinking, fighting, thievery, general trouble-making or even union organizing might result. To this end, gymnasiums, movie theaters, dance halls, bowling alleys, pool rooms, swimming pools and band pavilions were built and maintained by the company. Like libraries and churches for a previous generation, these institutional diversions were meant to rescue the worker from the evils of unorganized leisure and ultimately intended to substitute for the street or saloon.

Attendance in recreational programs, though not mandatory, was highly recommended: EJ's Sunday night band concert series was a popular form of entertainment and serves to indicate how corporate policy functioned. In May of 1925, George F. Johnson sent a memo allowing the firm to pay all expenses for the concerts. By July, after attendance had fallen off, Johnson became upset:

> You are right about Band Concerts. They fall upon the ears of limited numbers...and they are to blame, themselves. We shall continue our Band Concerts... Sunday evenings until further notice. It is in our minds to continue our efforts to entertain, in Endicott and Johnson City, and occasionally in Binghamton. I am always glad to accomplish results in this way; to entertain people who would otherwise not have the privilege which this entertainment [gives]. **(21)**

But at the same time, Johnson could not condone all types of music: "As a Sunday night entertainment, I think your "jazz boys" are a little too far advanced to harmonize with the spirit of many people with old-fashioned ideas." **(22)** Johnson was one of these people of old-fashioned ideas and, soon thereafter, Sunday night concerts were discontinued.

Parks built by EJ in Broome County's industrial towns in the 1920s and 1930s were planned in conjunction with residential neighborhoods of workers' homes, provided at a time when housing shortages had become acute. In direct contrast to traditional types of working-class industrial housing, EJ erected thousands of large, well-built "middle-class" homes on spacious lots. These homes were located near factory complexes and allowed workers to make their daily commute on foot. In this respect, Johnson was able to realize his much earlier dream of an intimate "industrial village." Factory complexes were scattered, according to Johnson's biography, to provide "ample space between for homes, parks, and markets." **(23)** George F. Johnson himself, recalling his earlier days of life in a Massachusetts shoe town, tried specifically to avoid the negative connotations associated with New England mill towns: "In New England the factories are in an old settled country, in towns where they crowd against one another; no room to spread out and work and live, the way we do here." **(24)** When EJ was afforded the opportunity to plan an entirely new industrial community, Johnson's vision of industrial life in the 1920s and 1930s becomes clear:

> West Endicott was the name he chose for the new community, in which his dream of factories surrounded by pleasant homes of workers was at last to be realized ....The ground was gently rolling, and there was plenty of room for parks, playgrounds and wading pools for the littlest children....Fifteen acres were laid out as a park and picnic ground. The view from here over miles of country, its green fields and tracts of forest alternating with masses of factories surrounded by villages of attractive homes and gardens, is one of the finest in the State. **(25)**

Throughout these efforts to create rural villages for industrial workers, Johnson continually sought to maintain his position as patriarch. This was most often achieved through creating images of benevolence towards workers and their families, but children in particular held special prominence. Johnson was an annual contributor of five hundred dollars to Binghamton's "Fresh Air Fund," for the purpose of allowing children to travel from New York City to rural upstate in the summers. The monetary contribution was complemented by a send-off gift of a free pair of shoes for each child. **(26)**

When parks and recreational facilities were planned by the corporation, children's playgrounds were always among the top priorities:

> The company leveled and fitted out smooth baseball diamonds, for workers and youngsters, protected playgrounds with high fences of wire mesh that let parents see in and kept adventurous children from climbing out among traffic, while wading pools, see-saws and swings gave them plenty of fun within bounds. It was easy to know what they wanted--George F. remembered what he lacked as a child, and furnished it for them. **(27)**

Families were encouraged to participate in recreation to ensure domestic tranquility, and Johnson's gifts often specifically singled out the needs of "mothers and children" as a primary motivating factor for the gifts. Parks placed near homes and factories allowed for this type of family oriented entertainment. Their success was apparently achieved: one company park was visited by 200,000 people in the summer of 1919. Special events like dances, of which twenty-five were held in the park that summer, brought in an additional 23,000 people. But perhaps most popular were carousel rides, with over 160,000 given during the season, an average of nearly 2,000 per day. **(26)**

The importance of parks near homes and factories becomes clear in terms of EJ's recreational policies, and the erection of carousels in those parks reinforced Johnson's role as benevolent patriarch and protector of children. Johnson sought to portray this image through various means: one way took the form of providing recreational equipment for children that was denied to Johnson during his own youth. In 1926, Johnson donated five hundred dollars for construction of a playground in Hopkinton MA, a shoe town Johnson had worked in during his early adulthood. A letter of 4 February explains his purpose:

> I would like to meet some of the people who are promoting the playground enterprise in Hopkinton, and congratulate them on their interest in the boys and girls of today. It has been my great privilege to furnish playgrounds for the boys and girls of our own Community, at Endicott, Johnson City, and Binghamton. My present mind, since I had means, was always to provide a better place for children to play, and a better chance

for happiness, then when I was a kid. **(29)**

In the Winter of 1924-25, Johnson decided to have a toboggan slide built at Recreation Park in Binghamton. A letter of 23 December states: "Build one that is suitable, fitting to the surroundings, unoffensive to the eye, practical and permanent. I will cheerfully fund the proposition." **(30)** By mid-January, the toboggan had been installed, and Johnson began to receive "thank-you" letters. Replies to these letters indicate the purpose of the gift and, at the same time, serve to create or reinforce his public image:

> I have always felt that I owed something to the little ones - having, myself, been obliged to get along with a couple of barrel slabs and a neighboring, friendly hill, with ice, perchance, but not always very well cared for - for my own tobogganing in my earlier life. And I never will forget the first sled I owned - never, never. I shall never own as much, if I had Rockerfeller's (sic) or Henry Ford's wealth. So it has appealed to me mightily - this effort to give the little ones more of the pleasure of modern things, which I was denied as a "kid." **(31)**

> I never was privileged to ride on a toboggan. The nearest I ever came to it, when a boy, was a couple of barrel sleighs nailed together, and down any smooth hill that was convenient. And so, as I have been denied these pleasures which add so much to the happiness of the youngsters, I am trying to make up to them, what I was cheated out of. We will have toboggans, swimming pools, merry-go-rounds, baseball fields, football, etc. etc. Let's give the youngsters a good time, that we older fellows were cheated out of. **(32)**

The authorized biography of Johnson repeats this same theme - the denied pleasures of youth - in its discussion of the carousels:

> Each of [the carousels] marks a step in his progress in getting even for the old days when he was lucky to ride a wooden camel once a year, and they all contribute to the happy life that helps a youngster to grow up into a strong and useful citizen. **(33)**

But EJ's policy towards children was especially relevant, not only in terms of image making, but also in terms of maintaining a steady pool of labor. Large families were encouraged for workers at EJ.

The company even went so far as to sponsor a contest to discover the largest family at the firm. Its housing policy makes this point intrinsically clear. Company built homes went first to workers with the most children. Johnson explained this policy in the EJ Workers Review in 1919:

> Houses for the workers will be rented in the order of greatest need to our workers. "Greatest need" is generally present where there is a family of children, and the more children, the greater the nee....**(34)**

Children of EJ workers were featured in the company magazine in a special section called "Future EJ Workers." One issue describes a typical street in a new EJ subdivision:

> Kiddies, kiddies everywhere. The lawns have not yet been graded and everywhere we find mothers, working hard to keep those youngsters clean, and we will say that you will have to go a long ways to find a happier or healthier bunch. **(35)**

These children were encouraged, or simply expected, to follow in their parents' footsteps and join the company as soon as their high school education was complete. College, for the most part, was discouraged as a waste of four years.

Carousels were seen as a form of healthy recreation and "clean" entertainment for children who otherwise may have spent their summer hours in the streets. They became necessary to attract children into existing parks and became almost "standard" equipment, along with swimming pools, athletic fields and playground areas, for new corporate-built parks. An open letter from George F. Johnson to EJ workers and their families, written in 1925, makes this point clear:

> ...what we want is cheap land, and nice, friendly communities, where [a worker] may hope to own a little home of his own to rear his children in.
>
> And then, we want playgrounds in abundance, convenient to homes, to keep the children off the streets and away from danger, and mischief.
>
> There is no "mischief" in playgrounds, where numbers of children come to find recreation, amusement, and health. The Devil usually works individually, or in

small groups--and in darkness.

So let us have playgrounds, where large numbers of children may play, and build up their mental and physical well being. **(36)**

The association of an idle child with demonic tendencies is a typical one made by Johnson, but one that was not limited to children alone. Adults too, left in small numbers with unrestricted leisure time, could be a threat to Johnson's "friendly communities."

In 1925, during periods of slack time when orders were slow, Johnson began plans to build an eighteen-hole golf course for the workers. Golf was considered a healthy form of adult organized recreation but traditionally thought of as a rich man's sport. Johnson sought to change this association by making the sport available to the common man:

I have in mind the building of an eighteen hole golf course on the lots west of Round Top, down on the flats where the river overflows, on the lands which are practically worthless to the company for building purposes. **(37)**

By 1927, with the course substantially complete, another personal correspondence reveals further motivations for Johnson's recreational endeavors:

Yes, we are building Golf Links for the shoemakers. We don't have much work for them, and [I] have a firm belief in the old-fashioned proverb, "The Devil finds work for idle hands to do." So I am putting them to playing golf, rather than turn them loose to find mischief to do. As it is not going to cost our Company any money--or in fact, anyone but me--I have not heard any serious objections to the plan. **(38)**

Like children, the workers could not be left out of sight, and organized recreation became a means for control. A July letter of the same year to a sporting goods supplier discusses the company's purchase of golf equipment:

I think the average beginner out of our organization, who starts out on the West Endicott Links to learn to play golf, will start with three or four clubs - possibly

> two - and a couple balls. Then and thereafter will begin the growth, when we will want more clubs and more balls, to play more golf.
>
> These...clubs, with the possible addition of one other, would in my judgement constitute a set of clubs for an ordinary shoemaker who is going to learn to play golf. [With] progress, they may want as many clubs as an ordinary golfer; which is, I think, from twelve to fifteen. They, of course, may want caddies to carry the clubs around, and maybe they will want a Clubhouse where Social entertainment can be provided, etc. etc. But the thing I am encouraging, is the playing of golf in an economical way, for common, plain working people. Each player will carry his own clubs - four or five only. They will play after work (4:30 p.m.), and Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays. The Clubhouse will be a very plain, simple affair, with lockers and shower baths - nothing else. **(39)**

In spite of providing the means for recreation, Johnson still sees a distinction between the "ordinary golfer" and the "ordinary shoemaker" or "common plain working people." Another letter on golf states:

> With a good golf course which we might maintain at small expense, the workers might be permitted to play for 25 cents a day, or something small, that would keep up the course, and make them feel somewhat responsible. **(40)**

Reformers like Johnson, though encouraging recreation, still maintained a vision of society that made a distinction between individuals based on class and position. In the eyes of the reformer, working men and women should be aided and their standard of living could be raised; but at the same time, it remained within Johnson's right to be able to set those standards and, equally, to ensure that they were not crossed.

Johnson was still able to maintain his status as a loving father figure and benevolent provider. It is interesting to note in what terms the authorized biography describes EJ's golf course:

> The joys of golf are a great asset in the Endicott Johnson industry. Every executive plays but George F. He has time for it only on vacation. Shoemakers, from

> boys and girls just out of high school to grayhaired men and women, flock to the game every fair day. Apawamis, Baltusrol, Cocheco, Deal, Englewood and hundreds of other links are fine tests of skill, many of them championship courses. But not one of them is adapted to its purpose quite so well as the En-Joie Health Golf Club course that Mr. Johnson established for his workers at West Endicott.
>
> Children's playgrounds come first in his program, but golf for his friends who help him make shoes runs a close second. You feel it the moment you stand on the first tee and look out over the ground. Most important in the scheme is the broad field, level or nearly so. There was plenty of room to make a sporty course, up and down high hillsides, but men and women who have been at the bench all day, keeping up production at the swift pace that prevails in the E. J. factories, do not need sporty holes on hilltops. **(41)**

The author of the text has transformed a "worthless" floodplain into a "broad field," and rolling hills, typically an asset for planning a golf course, have been turned into a liability.

Like golf courses, carousels were provided to the communities to promote Johnson's own vision of clean entertainment, yet always within a context of reform-minded recreation. Johnson's first gift of a carousel to Broome County stipulated that rides were to be free of charge. By changing the nature of the carousel from a money making enterprise into a form of free entertainment, Johnson succeeded in promoting his own status as benevolent patriarch. Carousels had long been associated with carnivals, fairs and amusement parks and, as such, were always seen as money making ventures. Catalogs from the 1920s issued by the Allan Herschell Company, manufacturers of all six Broome County Carousels, included "testimonials" that boasted of the profit to be made from operating a carousel:

> Beg to state that the Merry-Go-Round purchased from you has measured up to all expectation, and has given us no trouble at all, and has been entirely satisfactory as a "money getter."
>
> During the six years you have known me, I have owned and operated four different Spillman machines on the

> Isthmus of Panama, and have always done a smashing business.
>
> Common sense would show that if there was a better machine on the market, I would be using the same. I have now been operating my Carousel for 6 1/2 weeks and the net results show a profit of $2,650, after deducting all expenses. The business is far beyond my expectations. **(42)**

A long letter of July 1920, on the occasion of the first gift, to Binghamton's Commissioner of Public Works indicates some of Johnson's own attitudes on the importance of recreation. The letter is a summation of many of Johnson's previously mentioned characteristics and is quoted at length:

> It was a great pleasure, a day or two since, to see the merry-go-round in operation, and to even ride one of the big revolving horses myself, to be sure it was all right; and to have the assurance of the gentleman in charge, that the machine was running perfectly, and that the children (and I didn't need this assurance) were enjoying it thoroughly.
>
> As I understand it now, provided the machine has met the requirements and specifications, and provided the bill is ready for payment and can be checked and forwarded to me, I am ready to pay for the machine as agreed, with the understanding that same is to be kept in good condition, to be operated daily whenever practical, free of expense to the children and others who may use it. This, if I am correct, was the original condition, well understood. If the machine works smoothly, and if the mothers and children (and once in a while the Dads) enjoy these rides, which I am sure they will, it will be a good investment, and one that I am happy to make.
>
> I have been impressed with the wonderful opportunities at Ross Park for improvement; also impressed with the fact that today even, it is a splendid place for the people who have leisure time to go there and enjoy themselves in a healthy desirable way. I hope the Council will continue to make reasonably large appropriations for the improvement and upkeep of the Park.

> There is no investment quite so good, in my judgement, for the public, as that which creates healthy recreation for the public. The money is so well spent as that which brings "the greatest good to the greatest number." And in this automobile-crazed Age, those who have to use the street cars or walk, always need a "place of refuge" as there does not seem to be, now-a-days, any room on the highways where they can be reasonably safe from bodily injury and perhaps sudden death, due to this same "Automobile Age." Now then, the Park becomes more than ever necessary for the children. Hence the attraction of the Park must be considered. Nothing else will bring people to our playgrounds, except the chance of enjoyment after they have arrived.
>
> I am willing to do anything I can to help make Ross Park more attractive, and I welcome suggestions of possible chances for improvement. **(43)**

Johnson's placement of the enjoyment of mothers and children over any personal profit and, at the same time, his reference to the carousel as an "investment" for the health and recreation of the public in general, shows quite clearly his affiliation with both the ideals of the Progressive Movement reformers and the manifestation of Welfare Capitalism.

Johnson's commitment to recreation did not go unnoticed. In 1925, he was offered a position as a Commissioner of the Central New York State Parks Commission. **(44)** In June of that year, he wrote to Henry F. Lutz in Albany, Executive Secretary of the State Council of Parks, turning down the post: "it has been my final decision not to accept the appointment as Park Commissioner, owing to the fact that I can not devote the necessary time to the work. I have so notified Governor Smith...." **(45)**

If Johnson did not accept the state position because of a lack of time, that excuse certainly did not prevent him from his local endeavors. Indeed, throughout the 1920s, EJ and George F. Johnson's contributions to local recreation were such that in 1931, during the annual "George F. Day" celebrations, the local communities commemorated Johnson with a bronze plaque and the Binghamton Press bestowed upon him the title of "godfather" of sports and recreation in Broome County. **(46)**

With the variety of programs initiated by EJ, it was possible for one to be born in an EJ hospital, cared for with post-natal and

child care in an EJ clinic, attend an EJ grammar and high school, worship at an EJ church, study at an EJ library, play at an EJ park, find work at an EJ factory, live in an EJ house, receive an EJ old age pension and be buried with the help of EJ burial funds. Nearly every Broome County resident's life was touched in one way or another by EJ's paternalism, and for a majority of those people not directly affiliated with the corporation, this relationship was more than likely a recreational one.

The legacy of Johnson's recreational programs is impressive. En-Joie golf course was made an annual stop on the PGA tour; several of the parks donated by Johnson are among the finest in the county; and the six carousels given to the people of Broome County make this county the self-designated "Carousel Capital." According to the National Carousel Association's most recent census, this honor is probably well deserved: Broome County has the highest number of carousels per capita for any region in the entire United States. **(47)**

The immediate consequences of EJ's paternalism were to keep the company non-unionized and strike free for the duration of the 1920s and 1930s, continuing the tradition of Lester's 1890 move out of Binghamton. In a larger context, however, EJ's paternalism shaped, to a great extent, the fabric of several residential neighborhoods throughout Broome County, through the construction of both single family homes and recreational parks that today still convey the atmosphere of a close knit community. The carousels, like other monuments, stand as visual stimuli in reminding community members of EJ and, in particular, of George F. Johnson, who was able to retain the image of a patriarch and a benefactor to the various communities of Broome County throughtout his lifetime and even after his death. Today, these carousels are monuments to an important period of history in which the direction of American society throughout the remainder of the twentieth century was shaped.

3. Allan Herschell Company All Wooden Carousels in Broome County, New York, 1919-1934

Allan Herschell, born in Scotland in 1851, was one of thirteen children. He was forced to leave school at an early age and chose to learn the mold-making trade. At the age of nineteen, Herschell emigrated to the United States, settled in Buffalo, New York and found employment in his trade. When his employer's business failed, Herschell, along with a shop associate James Armitage, bought out the company's equipment and began the production of steam engines.

In 1873, the new owners relocated their business to North Tonawanda to capitalize on its strategic location along the Erie Canal. Later, with the addition of Herschell's brother, the company was reformed as Armitage Herschell. **(48)**

In 1882, Allan Herschell, on the advice of doctors, visited a New York City specialist to cure a chronic case of ague. There, Herschell was introduced to a new amusement device, the carousel. Seeing the potential for profit, Herschell convinced reluctant partners to invest in the construction of a steam-operated machine, and in 1883, the "Tonawanda Machine" was born. Unlike competitors, Herschell concentrated on the manufacture of portable traveling carousels intended to withstand the abuse of constant movement and frequent assembly and dismantling. Herschell figures were distinguishable during this early period in that, on the average, they were smaller with a compact design. **(49)**

The success of Herschell's machine brought financial rewards to the company, which invested heavily in local real estate. A collapse in the economy in 1899 resulted in failure for Armitage Herschell. In 1903, Edward Spillman, Herschell's brother-in-law, gained control of the company's assets and formed a new company, with Herschell as partner. Herschell Spillman subsequently became the world's largest producer of carousels, with their products located throughout the world. **(50)**

During the 1910s, Herschell Spillman ventured into the market of large amusement park carousels. At the same time, variety in figure types, known as menagerie animals, made their way into company catalogs. These larger carousels, intended to attract paying customers, were more richly decorated, with rounding boards and scenery panels providing a highly decorative complement to the multicolored and jewel-studded animals. **(51)**

In 1911, Herschell retired from Herschell Spillman, only to establish the Allan Herschell Company four years later. Herschell constructed several new buildings during this period, though the onset of World War I all but completely halted production. In 1920, the Spillman Engineering Company acquired Herschell Spillman, which would itself eventually merge with the Allan Herschell Company. Throughout the 1920s, the Allan Herschell Company stood as the premier carousel manufacturer, setting standards in craftsmanship of carving and nationally famous for the mechanical excellence, ornate rounding boards and cornice shields and realistic hand-carved figures that distinguished the firm's products. The Allan Herschell

Carousel Factory in North Tonawanda, Niagara County, New York is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. **(52)**

Herschell was recognized as a leader within the amusement industry for his constantly improved designs on a variety of carousel types. Furthermore, Herschell is credited with convincing Eugene Dekleist, a German organ maker, to move to North Tonawanda to manufacture organs to be used in conjunction with carousels. Dekleist founded the North Tonawanda Barrel Organ Factory, which was sold to the Wurlitzer Company in 1908. By 1920, the popularity of "Band Organs" made them standard equipment on carousels. **(53)**

Herschell retired for good in 1923 due to poor health and died four years later. Under the plant superintendent John Wendler, the Allan Herschell Company remained in operation until the 1950s. The company continued to produce all wooden carousel figures only until the mid-1930s, however. With the result of a drop in demand for new carousels and economic hardships brought on by the Depression, new cheaper and more easily produced cast aluminum parts replaced older wooden parts, and the fully wooden carousel became a thing of the past. **(54)**

Carousels were one of the most popular forms of amusement in the United States during the first several decades of the twentieth century. Between World War I and the Depression, amusement parks experienced the height of their popularity and, during this time, the Allan Herschell Company provided the majority of the nation's carousels. The Allan Herschell Catalog #4 boasted that:

> No park or amusement resort is complete without a modern Jumping Horse Carousel. It matters not what other amusement devices may be on the ground, the Carousel is the most sought after and most liberally patronized by the many visitors. **(55)**

In Broome County, this was certainly the case. Figures from a single summer at one of the EJ built parks reveal that over 160,000 rides were given during the season, an average of nearly 2,000 per day. **(56)**

Between 1880 and 1930, the so-called "heyday" of carousel production, approximately 10,000 machines were produced. **(57)** Of these, only an estimated 170 machines are still operating in the United States. A recent census by the National Carousel Association shows that only nineteen Allan Herschell Company all wooden

carousels are still intact, **(58)** and, thus, Broome County's holdings are nearly one-third of that total. Furthermore, Broome County's three largest examples are the only Allan Herschell Company Four Abreast models still operating in the entire country. Five out of the six are rare in that they have never been relocated, and the remaining one was moved from one municipal park to another, retaining much of its integrity.

The six Broome County Carousels are representative of the last phase of the Allan Herschell Company's manufacture of all wooden carousels. They are especially distinguished by the quality of their hand-carved wooden carousel figures. In addition, a few of the individual figures represent exceptional examples of Herschell types. The dogs on two of the nominated carousels are, according to the National Carousel Association, "far more full of action and life than other dogs from that company or any other." **(59)** The two band organs are also important; only about eighty-five of the 100 recorded organs are still operating, of which only forty-seven are the Wurlitzer Military Band Organ type, arguably the most popular of the genre. **(60)**

END NOTES

1. William Englis, George F. Johnson and His Industrial Democracy (NY: Huntington, 1935), 271.

2. Ibid., 271-2.

3. All empirical data on carousels is derived from the most recent census conducted by the National Carousel Association, in Merry-Go-Roundup 16/4 (Winter 1989-90): 7-25.

4. For a general overview of Welfare Capitalism, see David Brody, Workers in Industrial America: Essays on the Twentieth Century Struggle (NY: Oxford, 1980), chapter 2 and Stuart D. Brandes, American Welfare Capitalism, 1880-1940 (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1976).

5. On the Progressive Movement, see Robert Wiebe, Businessmen and Reform: A Study of the Progressive Movement (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1962).

6. On the early history of Johnson City, see G. Joseph Socki, "Johnson City, New York: Its Early Growth and Development," seminar paper, SUNY-Binghamton, 1989.

7. For background on the history of Binghamton industry, see Ross Mcguire and Nancy Grey Osterud, Working Lives: Broome County, New York, 1800-1930: A Social History of People at Work in our Region (Binghamton: Roberson Center, 1980); on the boot and shoe industry in particular, see Ibid., 63-4.

8. Inglis, 25.

9. Ibid., 24.

10. For a recent interpretation of Pullman, see Richard Sennett, Authority (NY: Knopf, 1990), 62-77.

11. See David Gordon, "Capitalist Development and the History of American Cities," in William K. Tabb and Larry Sawyers, eds., Marxism and the Metropolis: New Perspectives in Urban Political Economy, 2nd ed. (NY: Oxford UP, 1984) and Raymond A. Mohl, The New City: Urban America in the Industrial Age, 1860-1920 (Arlington Heights: Harlan Davidson, 1985).

12. Socki, 44-5; McGuire and Osterud, 55-63.

13. Quoted in Gerald Zahavi, Workers, Managers, and Welfare Capitalism: The Shoeworkers and Tanners of Endicott Johnson, 1890-1950 (Urbana: U of IP, 1988), 2-3.

14. See Gerald Zahavi, "Workers, Managers, and Welfare Capitalism: The Shoeworkers and Tanners of Endicott Johnson, 1880-1950" (Ph.D. dissertation, Syracuse University, 1983), chapter 1.

15. Zahavi, 1988, 219-21.

16. For a general description of the various welfare programs see Brody, chapter 2 and Brandes, 38-134.

17. New York Times, 4 October 1921, p. 2, column 3.

18. Ibid., 11 August 1935, sec. 7, p. 8.

19. Ibid., p. 17.

20. On the reform park movement in general, see Galen Cranz, The Politics of Park Design: A History of Urban Parks in America (Cambridge: MIT P, 1982), 61-99.

21. Letter from George F. Johnson to Harold F. Albert, 17 July 1925.

22. Ibid.

23. Inglis, 72.

24. Ibid., 80.

25. Ibid., 90.

26. Letters from George F. Johnson to George J. Michelbach, 23 August 1924, 28 August 1924, 5 June 1925 and undated memo: "Fresh Air Children" [July 1925].

27. Inglis, 93-4, 98.

28. EJ Workers Review 1/10 (Christmas 1919): 41.

29. Letter from George F. Johnson to Mr. Stratton, 4 February 1926.

30. Letter from George F. Johnson to William Fischer, 23 December 1924.

31. Letter from George F. Johnson to Foster Disinger, 27 January 1925.

32. Letter from George F. Johnson to Ben L. Joggersy, 31 January 1925.

33. See note 1.

34. EJ Workers Review 1/10 (Christmas 1919): 3.

35. Ibid. 2/4 (June 1920): 11.

36. Letter fragment from George F. Johnson, undated [1925].

37. Letter from George F. Johnson to W.F. Dickson, 25 May 1925.

38. Letter from George F. Johnson to E.H. Ellison, 23 April 1927.

39. Letter from George F. Johnson to W.J. Burke, Vulcan Last Company, 1 July 1927.

40. Letter from George F. Johnson to W.F. Dickson, 25 May 1925.

41. Inglis, 98-9.

42. Allan Herschell Company, Inc., Carousels (Merry-Go-Rounds) Catalogue Four (North Tonawanda, n.d.), 31.

43. Letter from George F. Johnson to Arthur LaRoche, 2 July 1920.

44. Letter from George B. Graves to George F. Johnson, 9 April 1925.

45. Letter from George F. Johnson to Henry F. Lutz, 15 June 1925.

46. Binghamton Press, 26 August 1931. Quoted in Zahavi, 1988, 51.

47. Portland OR, through recent purchases, has the largest number of carousels per capita for a single city. See Anne Hinds, Grab the Brass Ring: The American Carousel (New York: Crown, 1990).

48. Charlotte Dinger, Art of the Carousel (Green Village: Carousel Art, 1983), 85.

49. Ibid., 85.

50. Ibid., 87.

51. Ibid., 90.

52. Mary Jo Martin, "Allan Herschell Carousel Factory," National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, January 1985, Item 8, 4-5.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.; Dinger, 98.

55. Allan Herschell Company, Inc., 5.

56. See note 28.

57. Martin, item 8, 3.

58. Data compiled from Anne Hinds, "National Carousel Association--1990 Census," Merry-Go-Roundup 16/4 (Winter 1989-90), 7-25.

59. Hinds, quoted in Binghamton Sun and Press Bulletin, 7 November 1987.

60. Data compiled from Hinds.

F. Associated Property Types

I. **Name of Property Type** Allan Herschell Company All Wooden Hand-Carved Carousels

II. **Description**

The Broome County Carousels were all manufactured by the Allan Herschell Company of North Tonawanda, NY between c1919 and 1934. These carousels conform to a traditional model common among carousel manufactured in the United States during this period. A carousel is an amusement device whose chief function is to rotate a series of animals, usually horses, which are connected to a rotating platform. Multiple decorative elements are added at various distinct points within the object: scenery panels, rounding boards and shields are the most common. Variations to this basic form are found in the number and type of animals, their arrangement in relation to each other and the proliferation of decorative elements found upon the carousel.

Each of the Broome County Carousels is located within its own permanent housing structure, which takes the form of a centrally planned, multi-sided pavilion. Each pavilion conforms to a basic utilitarian and functional building type whose chief purpose is to enclose the carousel while protecting it from the elements. Variations to this basic type of pavilion are found in construction and foundation materials, number of stories, number and arrangement of windows and doors, roof shape and exterior cladding material.

Each carousel conforms to the Allan Herschell Company "permanent park" type. These are characterized as being relatively larger than most, with animals arranged either four or three abreast, and were intended by the manufacturer to remain in a single location rather than to be repeatedly relocated. The C. Fred Johnson Park Carousel, George F. Johnson Recreation Park Carousel and Ross Park Carousel are each four abreast machines. The George W. Johnson Park Carousel, Highland Park Carousel and West Endicott Park Carousel are each three abreast machines.

The Broome County Carousels have higher than average numbers of carved figures, which usually numbered about twenty-four figures per machine. The C. Fred Johnson Park Carousel has seventy-two figures; the George F. Johnson Recreation Park Carousel and Ross Park Carousel have sixty figures; and the George W. Johnson Park Carousel, Highland Park and West Endicott Park Carousel have thirty-six figures. All of the figures on the Broome County Carousels are "jumpers"; that is, they move up and down while the carousel rotates. Chariots, or stationary seats, are also typical of carousels and are found on the George W. Johnson Park Carousel, Highland Park Carousel, George F. Johnson Recreation Park Carousel and Ross Park Carousel.

Each of the figures from all six Broome County Carousels is a hand-carved, all wooded figure, a type produced by carousel manufacturers until the mid-1930s. The Allan Herschell Company carousel figures are further defined by their compactness and naturalistic detailing. Variations among figures are attributable to changing tastes and the abilities of individual carvers. All of the Broome County Carousel figures conform to a general Allan Herschell Company type that is distinguishable from those of other manufacturers. There are six distinct variations among the total number of Herschell carved figures, distinguished by head placement and mane type. These variations are: (1) flowing mane with head rearing; (2) flowing mane with head erect; (3) flowing mane with head down; (4) flowing mane with head tucked; (5) "trojan" mane with head tucked; (6) "trojan" mane with head tucked and tilted. Each nominated carousel features examples of each of the above variations, with types 2, 3 and 5 the most prolific.

Menagerie figures are also present within the Broome County Carousels and these include one zebra, on the C. Fred Johnson Park Carousel, which emulates the "trojan" mane with head tucked horse variation. There are also two pigs and two dogs; one of each is featured on the West Endicott Park Carousel and on the Highland Park Carousel.

Decorative elements added to each carousel include painted and mirrored scenery panels, painted rounding boards, painted shields and painted or stencilled sweeps. Many of the painted decorations have been repainted over the years, either in the same patterns or in new patterns; in addition, in some cases, the original colors were not recorded. Several of the Broome County Carousels have had their paint restored; others are scheduled for restoration in the future. Painted landscapes are the most traditional form of decoration for rounding boards; these are found on the Highland Park, the George F. Johnson Recreation Park Carousel and the Ross Park Carousel. Rounding boards on the C. Fred Johnson Park Carousel, George W. Johnson Park and West Endicott Park Carousel are unadorned; however, they may have originally been painted. Shields are located at the junction of each pair of rounding boards; each shield consists of a carved head affixed to a flat wooden board, which is often elaborately carved. There are several distinct types of heads on the Broome County Carousels: Indian, Viking, Gypsy and Troubadour are all represented numerous times. Each of the nominated carousels contains at least one of these varieties.

Scenery panels are typically highly decorated. Like rounding boards, they are often decorated with painted landscapes. Variations include simple painted curvilinear scroll patterns. Mirrors are sometimes substituted for painted boards. One scenery panel is traditionally reserved on each carousel to show the manufacturer's name. This type of panel can be seen on the George W. Johnson Park Carousel and the Ross Park Carousel. Sweeps also provide an opportunity for decoration, typically in the form of a repeated stencilled pattern. The sweeps on the Highland Park Carousel illustrate this decorative type. More typical is the instance of unadorned sweeps, as displayed on the remaining carousels.

Band organs were at one time standard equipment on carousels. The Wurlitzer Company provided the greatest number for this purpose. It is possible that all six Broome County Carousels at one time possessed Wurlitzer Military Band Organs; two originals are still in place and operational on the George F. Johnson Recreation Park

Carousel and on the Ross Park Carousel. A third, from the Highland Park Carousel, is still in existence, although in private ownership. The Band Organ from the C. Fred Johnson Carousel was reportedly lost in a 1935 flood. Oral history reports a Band Organ at the George W. Johnson Park Carousel, but its present whereabouts is unknown. No record of a Band Organ at the West Endicott Park Carousel has been located.

Each of the six nominated carousels retains its original housing structure (included as contributing features). These enclosing pavilions were probably constructed by local contractors at the time of each carousel purchase. The architect of one pavilion, for the George F. Johnson Recreation Park Carousel, is known: Charles H. Conrad of Binghamton. Others have not been determined. In all six instances, pavilion walls and roofs are constructed of wood; structural members are wooden on all carousels except for the George F. Johnson Recreation Park Carousel, which features steel I-beams. The two largest pavilions, at C. Fred Johnson Park and George F. Johnson Recreation Park, are all multi-storied. Windows on the upper levels allow light to penetrate the interior. The remaining pavilions are single storied.

Foundations for the pavilions are either concrete or asphalt. Those at C. Fred Johnson Park and George F. Johnson Park are concrete; those at George W. Johnson Park, Ross Park and West Endicott Park are asphalt; that at Highland Park is both concrete and asphalt.

III. Significance

The Broome County Carousels are significant as representative examples of an amusement device commonly found throughout the United States from the end of the nineteenth century until the middle of the twentieth century and as rare surviving examples of hand-carved, all wooden carousels made by the Allan Herschell Carousel Company, one of the largest and most important of carousel manufacturers. As gifts donated to the people of Broome County by George F. Johnson, a prosperous local industrialist whose shoe factories dominated local employment, the carousels are also physical manifestations of welfare capitalism, an important aspect of labor history between the end of World War I and the implementation of the New Deal. Installed in local parks between 1919 and 1934, these six carousels were important components of recreation programs advocated and financed by Johnson to benefit and improve the lives of his employees; in that they also served to promote Johnson's values,

they served as agents of social control, functioning as the direct representative of their employer in their daily lives.

In 1882, Allan Herschell, on the advice of doctors, visited a New York City specialist to cure a chronic case of ague. There, Herschell was introduced to a new amusement device, the carousel. Seeing the potential for profit, Herschell convinced reluctant partners to invest in the construction of a steam-operated machine, and, in 1883, the "Tonawanda Machine" was born. Unlike competitors, Herschell concentrated on the manufacture of portable traveling carousels intended to withstand the abuse of constant movement and frequent assembly and dismantling. Herschell figures were thus distinguishable as generally smaller than others with a compact design, a characteristic that the company maintained throughout its existence. **(1)**

The success of Herschell's machine brought financial rewards to his company, which invested heavily in local real estate. A collapse in the economy in 1899 resulted in failure for the Armitage-Herschell Company. In 1903, Edward Spillman, Herschell's brother-in-law, gained control of the company's assets and formed a new company, with Herschell as partner. During the 1910s, the Herschell-Spillman Company ventured into the market of large permanent carousels. At the same time, variety in figure types, which were known as menagerie animals, made its way into company catalogs. These larger and more ornate carousels were more richly decorated, with rounding boards and scenery panels providing a highly decorative complement to the multi-colored and jewel-studded animals. **(2)**

In 1911, Herschell retired from Herschell-Spillman, only to establish the Allan Herschell Company four years later. Herschell constructed several new buildings during this period, although the onset of World War I all but completely halted production. In 1920, the Spillman Engineering Company acquired Herschell-Spillman, which eventually merged with the Allan Herschell Company. Throughout the 1920s, the Allan Herschell Company stood as one of the premier carousel manufacturers, setting standards in the craftsmanship of carving and nationally famous for the mechanical excellence of its machines, the ornate rounding boards and cornice shields and the realistic figures that distinguish its carousels. **(3)**

Each of the Broome County Carousels is a representative example of the Allan Herschell Company's all wooden type produced between 1919 and 1935. This period was the final phase of the all hand-carved carousel as manufactured by Allan Herschell. Each of the animals on

all six nominated carousels is a hand-carved, all wooden figure, a type produced by carousel manufacturers only until the mid-1930s. These figures provide an outstanding showcase of the specialized art form associated with carousel production.

The American carousel industry was dominated in a large measure by German immigrant carvers. Most all wooden carousel figures were carved in a similar manner. The torsos were hollow and generally made up of a number of slabs, two inches thick, laminated together. The heads and legs were usually carved out of single pieces. Following carefully detailed patterns, less skilled joiners produced torsos and legs, while their highly skilled counterparts carved the more intricate heads, manes, saddles and trappings. The nearly three dozen individual parts of an animal were then glued together with wooden dowels added for strength. These pegs were later trimmed off in the final sanding process. In Herschell figures, the rear legs were joined to the body by a distinctive mortise type notch that became a construction trademark of the company. **(4)** In most cases, due to the nature and function of the objects, as many as ten coats of glazes, shellacs and varnishes were applied before the final colorful decorative coat was painted.

Despite the assembly line production method, carousel figures display a wide range of variety, due to changing tastes and the abilities of individual carvers. Although individual carvers and carousel companies had varying styles, many carvers worked for more than one company and the style of each company was most likely influenced by the others. Thus, it is sometimes difficult to identify the makers of individual carousel figures or to distinguish between them. And Allan Herschell was involved with several different companies that made slightly different figure types.

Horses were by far the most common choice for carousel figures, and in the 1920s, Allan Herschell figures were almost always horses. In general, Allan Herschell carousel horses of the 1920s are of compact size with naturalistic detail. They feature short legs, drawn up close to the body in parallel positions, elongated heads with small eyes and long, Roman noses. There are six distinct variations of carved horses exhibited among the Herschell company's figures, distinguished according to head placement and mane type. These variations are: (1) flowing mane with head rearing; (2) flowing mane with head erect; (3) flowing mane with head down; (4) flowing mane with head tucked; (5) "trojan" mane with head tucked; (6) "trojan" mane with head tucked and tilted. Each of the six Broome County carousels features examples taken from all of the above

variations, with types 2, 3 and 5 the most prolific. In contrast to the common practice of placing large, elaborately decorated standing horses on the outside rows of carousels and jumping horses only on the middle and inside rows, the Herschell company carousels of this period in Broome County feature all jumpers. Furthermore, the nominated carousels also feature examples of other carved animals, including pigs, dogs, a zebra and a number of chariots. Several of these carved figures are outstanding examples of Herschell types. According to the National Carousel Association, the two dogs featured on Broome County's carousels are "far more full of action and life than other dogs from that company or any other." **(5)**

Herschell was recognized as a leader within the amusement industry for his constantly improved designs on a variety of carousel types. Furthermore, Herschell is credited with convincing Eugene Dekleist, a German organ maker, to move to North Tonawanda to manufacture organs to be used in conjunction with carousels. Dekleist founded the North Tonawanda Barrel Organ Factory, which was later sold to the Wurlitzer Company in 1908. By 1920, the popularity of "Band Organs" made them standard equiptment on carousels. Two of the Broome County Carousels retain their original Wurlitzer Military Band Organs, a rare statistic, as only forty-seven Wurlitzer organs of this type (which was the most popular of the genre) are known to survive. **(6)**

Herschell retired in 1923 due to poor health and died four years later. Under plant superintendent John Wendler, the Allan Herschell Company remained in operation until the 1950s. The company continued to produce all wooden carousel figures only until the mid-1930s. With the result of a drop in demand for new carousels and economic hardships brought on by the Depression, new cheaper and more easily produced cast-aluminum parts replaced older wooden parts and the all wooden carousel became a thing of the past. **(7)** The six Broome County Carousels are significant in illustrating the last phase of the hand-carved carousel.

Carousels were one of the most popular forms of amusement in the United States during the first several decades of the twentieth century. Between World War I and the Depression, amusement parks experienced the height of their popularity; during this time, the Allan Herschell Company provided the majority of the nation's carousels. Within the context of Broome County, carousels represent an important part of the overall trend towards organized recreation based on the urban reform park movement of the first decades of the twentieth century. Both the highly visible placement of carousels

within residential neighborhoods and their free admission policy signify these objects as attractions meant to lure children into parks, and, as such, they are representative of the paternalistic policies of labor relations practiced by George F. Johnson and the Endicott Johnson company. By keeping children in parks, the company sought not only to safeguard children against street accidents, but also to monitor their activities. Without proper care, children would, according to the popular period theory ascribed to by Johnson, seek out deviant activities.

Between 1880 and 1930, the so-called "heyday" of carousel production, approximately 10,000 machines were produced. **(8)** Of these, only an estimated 170 machines are still operating in the United States **(9)** A recent census by the National Carousel Association shows that only nineteen Allan Herschell Company all wooden carousels are still intact and, thus, Broome County's holdings represent nearly one-third of the total. Furthermore, Broome County's three largest examples, the C. Fred Johnson Park Carousel, the George F. Johnson Recreation Park Carousel and the Ross Park Carousel, are the only Allan Herschell Company Four Abreast models still operating in the entire country. All but one of the carousels (that currently in Highland Park) have never been moved, a rare statistic.

Individually and collectively, the six nominated Broome County Carousels retain an outstanding degree of integrity for their type. The facts that all six retain their significant association with George F. Johnson, that all are maintained in park-like settings, that all retain their original wooden pavilions, that all but one occupy their original locations, that all six retain all of their hand-carved figures and the majority of their hand-crafted decoration, that two retain their original organs and, remarkably, that all six continue to serve their original function of providing free, supervised entertainment to the children of Broome County's working-class communities all connote a group of resources that clearly evoke their history and reveal their significance.

Endnotes

1. Charlotte Dinger, Art of the Carousel (Green Village: Carousel Art, 1983), 85.

2. Ibid., 90.

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3. Mary Jo Martin, "Allan Herschell Carousel Factory," National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, January 1985, Item 8, 4-5.

4. Dinger, 85.

5. Anne Hinds, qtd. in Binghamton Sun and Press Bulletin, 7 November 1987.

6. Data compiled from Anne Hinds, "National Carousel Association--1990 Census," Merry-Go-Roundup 16/4 (Winter 1989-90), 7-25.

7. Martin, Item 8, 4-5; Dinger, 98.

8. Martin, Item 8, 3.

9. Data compiled from Hinds.

IV. Registration Requirements

In order to be considered eligible for the National Register, resources must meet the following requirements:

1. donated to the people of Broome County by George F. Johnson or a member of the Johnson family between 1919 and 1934 with the stipulation that it be operated free of charge

2. located in a public park; retain a park-like setting

3. clearly illustrative of the Allan Herschell Company's all wooden, hand-carved carousel type

4. retain substantial integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

This project began in 1989 with an historic resources survey of the six carousels in Broome County conducted by Richard Barons, Executive Director of the Preservation Association of the Southern Tier (PAST), under the auspices of the Susquehanna Urban Cultural Park Commission. For each carousel surveyed, photographs were taken, research was conducted, map locations were determined and noted and Building-Structure Inventory forms were completed. An historic overview was also prepared. A site visit was made by a State Historic Preservation Office field representative and comments were forwarded to the SHPO in Albany. A National Register of Historic Places nomination proposal was submitted. SHPO staff completed a thorough study of the proposal and concluded that each of the six carousels met the criteria for individual listing within a multiple property format.

The six carousels are all located within highly visible and well populated urban areas of Broome County, New York and their existence is known to nearly every resident of the county. Public documents, including deeds and tax maps, were referred to whenever appropriate to confirm local histories and other secondary sources. Other primary sources, including archival correspondence, original newspaper accounts, City Council records, Sanborn Fire Insurance maps and Endicott Johnson company records, were all used for purposes of verifying and documenting the history of the carousels. The survey work of the National Carousel Association confirmed the dates and types of carousels in existence and verified their integrity.

Historic contexts were determined through preliminary research in consultation with the SHPO staff. The historic context of social history, specifically relating to the Progressive Era and Welfare Capitalism in the period 1919-1935, is apparent in terms of the corporate policies of George F. Johnson in his role as president of the Endicott Johnson Corporation. Gerald Zahavi's Ph.D. dissertation and subsequent book, Workers, Managers, and Welfare Capitalism: The Shoe Workers and Tanners of Endicott Johnson, 1890-1950 placed Endicott Johnson and George F. Johnson squarely into this historic context. As a literal and symbolic manifestation of Johnson's paternalistic policies, the Broome County Carousels are clearly significant in social history.

Recreation as an historic context was determined by the nature of the objects, their specific function in Broome County and their setting within parks. Recreation viewed as an institution related both to Progressive Era reform and to Welfare Capitalism likewise helped to determine the importance of the specific objects themselves.

Evaluation of the carousels in the context of art was based upon the high quality of craftsmanship that distinguishes the nominated carousels, particularly the hand-carved and painted wooden carousels figures, representative examples of the work of the Herschell company's master carvers, in comparison with other carousel art.

Integrity requirements were based upon a definition of the object that included its associative, locational and functional characteristics.

[ ] See continuation sheet

H. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

[ ] See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

[x] State historic preservation office
[ ] Other state agency
[ ] Federal agency
[ ] Local government
[ ] University
[ ] Other

Specify repository: _____

I. Form Prepared By

name/title CONTACT: Kathleen LaFrank - see continuation sheet

organization NYS-OPRHP date July 1991

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city or town Albany state NY zip code 1238

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