

The National Carousel Association: The Early Days, Part I

By Rol Summit

Our 20-year anniversary gives us an opportunity to look at the evolution of not only the NCA, but also of a new consciousness of carousels as an art form, an entertainment medium, and a focus for hobby interest.

I remember back to before the NCA, when there was no such consciousness, when—as in Genesis—the world of the carousel was void and things began to come together.

That was before 1964 and, by no coincidence, before the publication of Fred Fried's *A Pictorial History of the Carousel*.

The next decade was one of networking, when a few people found each other, got together, developed intensely fond and active relationships, and began to get an idea of how carousel interest might come together on a larger scale.

In 1973, the preceding ten years of expanding interest exploded into an organizing phase, which resulted in the first conference in Sandwich, Mass., followed by a second conference in 1974.

Four years later, at the fifth conference in Atlantic City, irreconcilable differences precipitated a crisis. But by the time of the seventh conference in Santa Monica, the NCA was back on course.

These are the highlights of the early years of the birth, growing pains, recovery, and building of the National Carousel Association.



The real history of the NCA begins with carousels themselves and with the emotional impact that riding a carousel tends to have on young children.



Where the heart is: A 1930s photo of future member, equestrienne, horse rancher, and carousel researcher Chatty Cook on the Pike carousel.

Carousels were created for the masses. Their creators, builders, entrepreneurs, and sales people were male; men were the driving force for producing carousels.

However, the impact carousels had on children was most apparent in little girls.

The emotional substrate of the NCA, therefore, is in the

hearts of women, in terms of the little girl who fondly remembers the fantasy world of riding on a carousel.

It's obvious that carousels also have an impact on little boys, but it's harder for them, once they become men, to find that. Bill Finkenstein has talked about finding the little boy, finding the little kid inside. Women



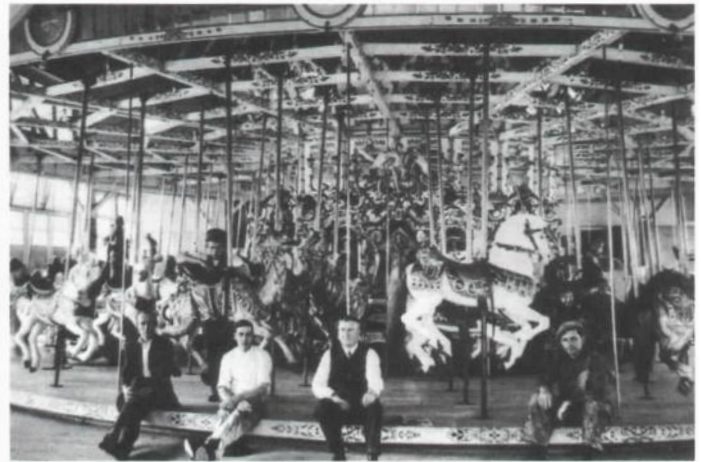
Sven Swenson, Harper's Bazaar, August, 1963.

are less embarrassed by the fact that they are still emotionally expressive about their childhood interest.

In a way, the history of the NCA also represents the fine balance between the rational mind trips of building, conceptualizing, and owning carousel art, and the

more emphatic, but less reasoned, emotional heart trip of how it feels to experience a carousel.

The NCA founders reflected that balance. Jo Summit, for example, grew up emotionally on the Long Beach carousel. Not having a real horse of her own, she



Early photo of Loeff's Hippodrome at the Pike in Long Beach, Calif. Note that men are in charge.

considered the Pike carousel her very special world. Fred Fried, on the other hand, grew up in the heartland of carousel manufacturing. Fred, who saw the chips fly from the chisel of Charles Carmel, was bound to document the facts of carousel history.

For many of us, especially in those early days, the emotional connection and nostalgic memories of carousels come together in terms of getting a piece of the carousel: buying the first horse.

For Jo and me, it was a little Heyn that came to us by way of an antique dealer from Holland. Once you have your own horse, the world of the carousel tends to come much closer. For us, it began a search for meaning, the discovery of where these horses came from, and a search for more

information.

That "little Dutch horse" was the celebration of our second wedding anniversary, in June 1959. There was no one to tell us who made it or where. We wondered: How should we restore it? What could we use for a tail?

That year, we met with an informational wasteland. Nobody could tell us anything authentic about carousel horses. There were no books in the library to give us even a start; we had only false starts. We were told that every horse in the world was carved by German craftsmen in the Black Forest. And that every carousel on the West Coast had been carried around the Horn on a sailing ship.

People had no sense that there was an American carousel industry. There was no manual on restoration.

There were no Bill Finkensteins to lecture on what has been learned and the mistakes that have been made. We made our own mistakes as we went.

Jo spent many days, during summers when she wasn't teaching, seeking out amusement professionals and getting the beginning of the word on where these things came from. We learned a little, but it was hard fought, hard won.

In the process, we developed some wonderful friendships with those people.

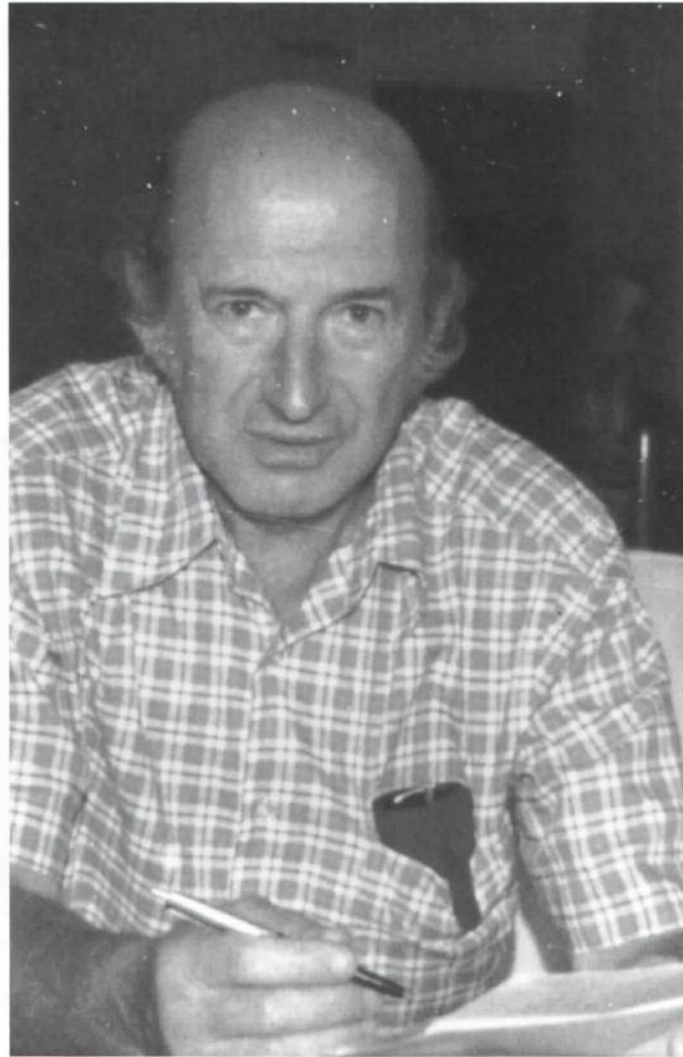
Dave Bradley, for example, was the gracious proprietor-owner of Beverly Park and its remarkable Parker. He also built rides in his Bradley & Kaye Amusements shop in Long Beach. Later he created the fiberglass menagerie animals that now ride on Chance carousels.

John Davis was the third-generation owner of three carousels, including the Spillman-Looff in Griffith Park. His grandfather established the earliest carousels in the Los Angeles area.

It otherwise was very lonely. People would say about our horse, "Gee, that's nice, but what do you do with it?" From that isolated beginning, we did not sense that there were hundreds and thousands of people with similar interests.

The realization of a shared consciousness would require national publicity and a stated permission to *feel* something for carousels, rather than to simply think about them and then forget them.

The breakthrough from being alone to discovering a sense of community came with a single photograph (see remembrance on page 28) in *Harper's Bazaar*, in August 1963. An accompanying paragraph described someone else who collected carousel animals.



Fred Fried, at an organizing meeting at the Summit home.

We saw Swen Swenson sitting among dozens of exotic pieces, holding a little horse that looked very much like our own. Swen was a successful actor, singer, and dancer in musical comedy. While on the road, he would look for estate auctions and pick up individual figures that otherwise might be lost or dispersed.

As described in *Harper's Bazaar*, his collection was "judged by experts to be the most important of its kind in the country and possibly in the world." It deserved that recognition, although there were few similar collections of *any* kind anywhere in the world.

The other *Harper's Bazaar* bombshell was the last line:

"Several of the figures have been photographed also for Frederick Fried's reference book on carousel folk art to be published in the fall by A.S. Barnes."

Lord's sake, somebody was writing a book. Somebody knew enough to put it together. Somebody had pictures!

You could hardly imagine, in these days, what a wonderful promise that offered and how exciting it was to know, first, that there were other collectors, and second—which was more important—that there was a historian who was willing to assemble the information.

When Fred's book came out in 1964, it opened up a new world for people all

over the country who had been searching for this information. He became a focal point for people who were writing and asking questions. We wrote to Fred when we came to New York City. He wrote back on May 30, 1966, "I would be most happy to meet with you," and gave us his address and phone number.

Fred and his wife, Mary, sat down with us in their Manhattan apartment and shared with us where to find the carousels in the East, gave us an itinerary of carousels along the Jersey shore, and provided introductions to people on Coney Island who could share memories of M. C. Illions.

Fred's book had already awakened our interest in Marcus Charles Illions. Now he told us that much of the Illions family had moved to the West Coast and that Illions' son, Rudy, lived just a few miles from us. He worked on the Pacific Ocean Park pier as a mechanical maintenance specialist for the rides and operated the Looff carousel there.

In the process of searching for Illions, we heard through a chance contact of my mother's that a dealer and collector in Roswell, N. M., had Illions horses. The dealer, Marianne Stevens, wrote back to us on April 8, 1969. We met the next year and became fast friends.

Jo and Marianne began spending what became a routine of hours and hours either on the phone or together in person. They were looking at pictures of merry-go-rounds from all over the country, learning to recognize what they were, honing the skills of classifying them, and developing a sense of the artistic development of each species of carousel animal. Each "stable" had its own lines waiting to be delineated.

Marianne worked with Gray Tuttle, who owned a carousel and several other rides in Myrtle Beach, S. C., to find carousels and document them. Gray took most of the pictures. Marianne shared the pictures with Jo, and the three established a somewhat undergraduate level of information.

Within a year of our association with Marianne, we found an ad in *Amusement Business* for a group of carousel horses. Jim Wells in Falls Church, Va., had bought a warehouse full of carousel carvings in Coney Island, which turned out to be the remains of several defunct Illions carousels. Portions of these carousels were combined to produce the merry-go-round at the New York World's Fair in 1964-65; the leftover, damaged figures were left behind in the Coney Island warehouse.

We bought the group of 50 horses. That's a story in itself. I was then a new staff psychiatrist with a modest salary. We had a new house and a growing family. We couldn't afford to buy 50 horses, let alone keep them. So we developed a mom-and-pop marketing operation and called it "Flying Horses."

The horses arrived in the spring of 1970. By fall we had put together a catalog of figures to sell, and had written an accompanying article on the history of the carousels of Coney Island. We did that with the help of Rudy Illions, who, thanks to Fred, was now our friend.

This time marked the beginning of connections between the new breed of carousel enthusiasts and the old school of amusement professionals. Because the "old carnies" tended to live in a separate world, making such a connection was neither quick nor easy.



Barbara Charles' 1972 cover story.

Rudy couldn't understand and couldn't quite trust a couple of relatively young kids taking an interest in his dad and asking questions about carousel carving. And by 1970, the second- and third-generation Illions had moved on into other things.

There was no existing context of respect for this work, so a two-way process began of young people learning from the older folks, and youthful excitement passing back to endorse what had been the masterwork of an earlier generation. The extended Illions family began to come together around the carousel history, even as they began to trust that we weren't trying to rip them off or run an ego trip with our interest in Illions' work.

With Rudy Illions' gra-

rious assistance and the rekindled interest of his own adult children, we published the Flying Horses catalog in October 1970. The catalog encouraged networking among carousel fans and promised to work together for conservation, and never to participate in the breaking up of operating carousels.

An added benefit from the catalog was the republication of *A Pictorial History of the Carousel*. Previously, Fred's book, the bible of carousel fans, had passed out of print for want of a larger audience. We begged and pleaded with the publisher to print it again, promising to spark a new era in popularity. Fortunately, the catalog allowed us to honor that promise—the publisher sold hundreds of copies and kept the book available until

Harvey Roehl gave it a permanent home with the Vestal Press.

We couldn't afford much advertising. Our main outreach was a single ad in a West Coast magazine called *Sunset*. But the ad passed from hand to hand and eventually reached more than 1,200 people—at least that was the size of our eventual mailing list. One of the responses was from a young woman named Barbara Charles, who asked not to buy any of the horses, but rather to visit and study their history.

We got together with Barbara. It was very exciting. Barbara is one of those free spirits with the heart for the carousel. She was working at that time as an artist and researcher with the Charles Eames Group, designing displays and artistic promotions. She lived in an apartment above the PTC carousel in the Santa Monica Pier's Looff Building. If you saw the movie *The Sting*, you may remember a particular scene looking down on the merry-go-round from a circular balcony inside the building.

At each of the four corners of the building was an apartment, one of which Barbara occupied. We shared an elegant dinner in that fantastic setting and talked carousels long into the night. Barbara said she wanted to travel the country to find and document forgotten merry-go-rounds.

Another response to our ad came from a Mr. William Dentzel, dated February 9, 1971. He wrote, "My grandfather was the manufacturer of the Dentzel carousels, and we are collecting bits of carousel items as time permits." We got together with Bill and his wife, Marion. Here again was a story of a family tradition that would have died but for the revival



April 16, 1973

Dear Carousel Friends:

For a number of years now, the undersigned have been interested in and involved with the American merry-go-round. (The builders referred to their creations as carousels - spelled various ways.) Because of our interest, many of you have been in contact with one or more of us. As we talked among ourselves and with others, we began to realize that across our country and Canada, there are many, many more people who are collecting figures and are concerned about their proper restoration, and equally concerned about preserving the wonderful machines still in use as well as learning more about their history. It seems time for everybody to get together.

"It seems time for everybody to get together."

that was going on at that time.

After that, Bill learned to carve. He came to cherish and to research and check out his roots and origins. He taught his children to carve, and he inspired the present generation of young Dentzels to become actively involved in various aspects of merry-go-round culture. They spread the hardware and the heart sense of the merry-go-round to people around the country, and as far as the Third World.

Chance one-to-one encounters led to arranged meetings and deliberate networking. Within a month of receiving Bill's letter, we were all sharing dinner at our house: Bill and Marion Dentzel, Barbara Charles, and Jo and I. Our dining room fairly buzzed with the excitement of discovery and the notion of how important all of this might be.

That spring, the International Association of Amusement Parks (IAAP) published an announcement of Barbara's trip in its newsletter. It called on amusement professionals to extend their hands and open their gates to Barbara so that she could photograph their merry-go-rounds.

Barbara had done a West Coast shakedown in her converted Econoline van, checking out her photo-

graph skills. Originally, as she explained in the IAAP article, carousels were a vehicle to practice photography.

She said, "I would often have to wait between rides to take photographs of the carvings, and I began seeing marvelous details that I had never noticed before. The more I saw, the more fascinated I became. I began looking for anything I could find on merry-go-rounds."

As her photographs improved, Barbara began thinking in terms of a book, something that would capture the essence of the merry-go-round, "the quality of the carvings, how it works, the moods, the riders. Hopefully, the readers would get enthusiastic

with its newsletter a detachable postcard inviting amusement professionals and park operators to respond with a description of their merry-go-round, what the access might be, and an invitation to Barbara to visit. An accompanying article also pointed out that this was an opportunity for parks to capitalize on the interest in carousels, make something more of the carousel as a public relations tool, and to feature Barbara's visit as something newsworthy.

enough to go out and ride their local merry-go-rounds." The sense of personal discovery was turning into mission: "This is something very exciting for me. It deserves to be part of the hearts of people throughout the country." Barbara planned to begin the trip in May, move through the Southwest to the East Coast by July and August, and then finish up in the South in September.

The IAAP distributed

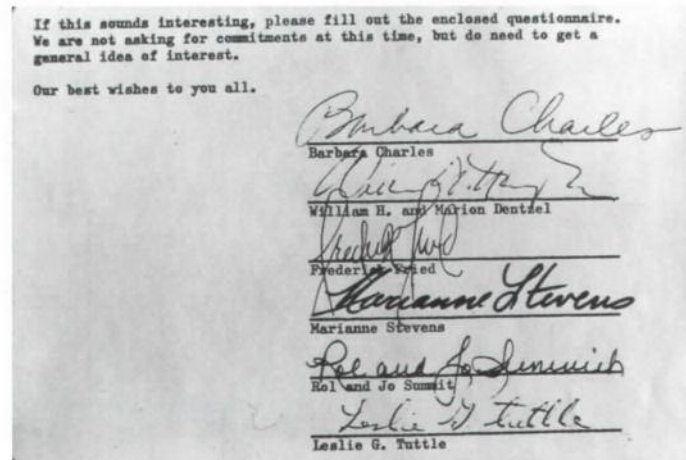
Barbara got at least 50 postcard responses. She also got all kinds of word-of-mouth leads to obscure carousels—not necessarily obscure in their own community, but machines we didn't know existed.

Already she was establishing what was to become the NCA Carousel Census.

Letters we received from Barbara over that summer of 1971 communicated the excitement of discovery. "Here I am in Philadelphia, and I've discovered a new manufacturer. A guy named T. M. Harton, who assembled carousels in Philadelphia and drew pretty much on Muller animals."

We had never heard that before, at least not in a recorded or organized form.

Barbara combined her pictures and her new wealth of knowledge to create a gorgeous and informative article for *Smithsonian*, which was published in July 1972. Barely a year after Barbara began her odyssey, a national publication celebrated the beauty and the historical importance of carousels.



The founders of the National Carousel Roundtable "test the water" to determine members' level of interest.



Mary and Fred Fried in the midst

During her travels, Barbara sought the principal networkers. She met Marianne Stevens and Fred Fried, and became a nucleus of information.

By the fall of 1972, Fred began to push the idea of an organization. Make no mistake; although several of us were in contact with each other, somebody had to be the mover. Fred was the mover. He wrote to Barbara on November 18, 1972, in response to an earlier phone conversation: "I am delighted that you have consented to take an active part in assisting with the formation of a carousel collectors organization."

It is notable that in the mentality of that time, it was first defined as a carousel collectors' organization. That's where the energy was at that time. Conservation was an ideal that would need persistent and diplomatic introduction.

Fred continued, "My proposal is that a group of the most active people meet for the purpose of setting up an organizing committee, a

convention committee, and whatever committee is needed to see this through. A call should be sent out in the name of the committee instead of an organization or individual, until one is actually established.

"Heritage Plantation has offered the entire grounds and facilities, before or after the season, and the fall of 1973 would be ideal. The committees could meet anywhere, and the sooner the better to get all of this in the works." He concluded, "I am seeking no office nor will I accept any because of my health (improving rapidly)."

Fred was recovering from a recent heart attack. It wasn't clear to him then that he would live long enough or have the energy to see this through, let alone celebrate a 20th anniversary with us.

So despite the kind of event that might have led to a substantial reduction of activity, he was pushing to get this thing going. He also pledged his list of some hundred carousel contacts.

Fred's next letter is dated January 8, 1973: ten months to go. He defines the potential organizing committee: the Dentzels, the Summits, the Tuttlers, Marianne

Marion and Bill Dentzel were there, and Barbara Charles and Marianne Stevens were on the phone. Agreeing on the importance of the conference, we kicked in \$50 apiece as an advance to pay for postage. Fortunately, postage in those days for a first-class letter was 8 cents, so the mailing to some 1,200 people would be a few hundred dollars.



The pre-conference dinner at the Daniel Webster Inn, Oct. 19, 1973.

Stevens, Barbara Charles, and himself, "if health permits."

This visionary document mapped out the format for every conference since, with a focus on balancing the wishes and needs of collectors, historians, and professionals.

There should be "the proper committee to arrange for panels on restoration, painting (or not to paint), carving, history, a swap table or mart, visits to local areas—Martha's Vineyard Flying Horses, Salem Willow, Providence, Boston, etc.," he said.

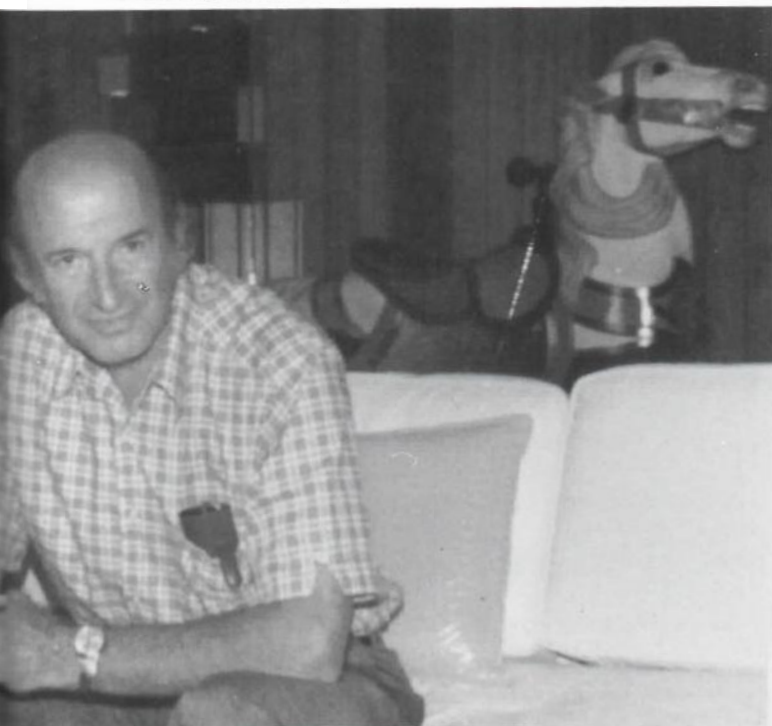
The organization began to come together when Fred was able to travel to the West Coast. We had a dinner meeting at our house in March 1973.

Mary and Fred Fried and

Jo took the job of acting secretary, and our house became the nerve center during the spring and summer of 1973. By April 16, she sent out the organizing letter: "Dear Carousel Friends: For a number of years now, the undersigned have been interested in and involved with the American merry-go-round."

In the early days, people didn't know the word "carousel," although American manufacturers used it. Fred's use of "carousel" in his book re-established the word and its dominant spelling.

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of planning the first conference, March, 1973.

there are many, many more people who are collecting figures and are concerned about their proper restoration, and equally concerned about preserving the wonderful machines still in use as well as learning more

for each additional person. The conference registration fee, including the banquet and two lunches, was \$25.

We sent out the last mailing on September 27, at the last minute, to confirm and flesh out plans for the 148



Fred Fried inaugurates Bill Dentzel as the first president of the National Carousel Roundtable, Oct. 21, 1973.

about their history. It seems time for everybody to get together."

"Here is our plan: This fall, on Oct. 20, 21 and 22, we would like to hold a weekend conference on merry-go-rounds. The program will include talks, field trips, and discussions, also lots of opportunities to share information and argue about fine points. From a conference, we hope a national organization will evolve.

"While the initial beginnings will be small, we should aim to select a permanent name, elect officers, plan a get-together for a year hence, and begin a periodic newsletter to keep us all informed."

The now-designated founders signed the letter.

We received 224 responses, and 113 people expressed interest in attending. Accommodations were arranged at the Daniel Webster Inn, a charming New England hostelry in Sandwich. The rate was \$22 for a double room, plus \$3

people who had registered.

By the time the conference came together, there were over 200 attendees. After promising fun and expert enlightenment, Jo wrote: "The real stars will be the people who come together out of pure enjoyment to share their interest and pool their knowledge to build a living monument to a lost art."

Sprinkled throughout the nuts and bolts of that conference were works of art. Fred designed the definitive logo for what we then called the National Carousel Roundtable. Even the meal tickets reflected Fred's calligraphic hand. Jo designed a simple paper name tag, only to discover that there was no printer who could die-cut them round. She ended up hand-cutting two hundred badges around the mouth of a jelly jar.

The program was as promised. It featured a running "Carousel Faire" swap meet and a lively set of organizational and informational

meetings . . . an opening session with greetings from Fred Fried . . . proposals for organization by Bill Dentzel . . . lunch, and then the highlight of that conference, a multi-media extravaganza assembled from hundreds of slides of Barbara Charles' trip presented by Barbara and Bob Staples.

They used three projectors and three screens for a kaleidoscopic swirl of images and wonderful music. It was an emotional experience never before or since captured (except for the command performances at the next conference and at the tenth anniversary conference).

The program also included a roundtable discussion of carousel conservation.

We thought it was politic

to bring dealers together—people who were already active in buying and selling carousel figures—in a conversation about the ethics and plans for conservation of existing carousels.

That was the NCA's first effort to promote conservation; Marianne Stevens was the moderator.

Saturday night was the banquet, with a keynote speech from Fred Fried.

Sunday began with a seminar on identification with Jo, Barbara, and Nina Fraley sharing that rare skill of recognizing small parts of animals. (Nina and Maurice Fraley had built a San Francisco Bay Area community of carousel enthusiasts through their Redbug Gallery in Berkeley. Their son, Tobin, would become



Inaugural issue of the Merry-Go-Roundup, December 1973.

the namesake of collectable miniatures.)

I presented a slide show on restoration. Workshop options included "The Carousel in Poetry and Art," "The Care and Feeding of Collections," and a presentation on band organs by Harvey Roehl.

Bill Dentzel, the newly elected president of this first-ever organization of carousel fans, capped the conference Sunday evening. On Monday we went to Martha's Vineyard to visit the historic Dare carousel at Oak Bluffs.

Already, however, at that first conference, there were rumblings of discontent. The organization was to be devoted to preservation. Fred said some strong words about the obligation to preserve carousels and the hazards posed by collecting. A number of collectors and dealers took silent offense at some of that philosophy.

The conference did receive national attention, thanks largely to Fred's experience as a publicist. *Time* asked, "Is there still room in the American imagination for the quaint, circling beauty of the carousel aglitter with colored glass



Bill Dentzel, president, and Jo Summit, vice president, present Salvatore Cernigliaro with honorary membership in the National Carousel Roundtable.

and alive with organ music?" "The carousel is an art form," says Fried, "the greatest mobile. I consider them to be like great American landmarks."

My Weekly Reader featured the conference in its May 15 issue, explaining to schoolchildren all over the country that adults cared about merry-go-rounds, too.

The first issue of *Merry-Go-Roundup* came out in December 1973. Bob Sorley, who had volunteered in Sandwich to be editor, did a magnificent job through the formative years. An army

colonel and tactical expert, he kept us in line and established the drill, writing the original by-laws.

The premier issue reviewed the success of the first conference and expanded the census list. It also contained an obituary for Rudy Illions, who died November 12. The Conservation and Preservation Committee report was prominently featured.

The NCA's first historic recognition effort was the presentation of an honorary membership to Salvatore Cernigliaro, now better known as "Cherni." He was one of the major carvers for Dentzel, and for E. Joy Morris before that. We had a champagne party at the Los Angeles apartment he shared with his daughter, Marguerite.

At the risk of overhype, I'll say that the second conference was a genuine work of art. Armand Winfield, a specialist in plastics, had volunteered in Sandwich to chair the second conference. He promised to establish it at the historic Greenfield Village, Henry Ford's monu-

ment to American history.

That connection didn't work out, so John Hayek volunteered to help relocate it in the Buick capital, in Flint, Mich.

At first, we were a bit intimidated by Armand's ambitious plans—he wanted to put this thing on the map. He wanted to expand the membership into the tens of thousands, and he printed thousands of program materials. His work paid off: he assembled a conference that will probably never be matched for its combined focus on history, conservation, and museum expertise.



Armand Winfield with a valued friend.

Armand produced two authoritative booklets, one for the program and one for what would be the first-ever curated exhibition of carousel art. Robert Stuhmer provided original artwork for the booklets (he also contributed band organ music for program interludes).

In addition to the schedule of meetings, the program booklet included a continental map of the known carousel census, a history of the carousel revival and the formation of the association, biographies of the program committee members and presenters, biographies of the presenters, and the dedication of the conference to the founders, followed by lengthy biographies of the



Stu and Tina Christiani Gottdenker on the Greenfield Village carousel, 1974. Stu was program chair for the 1975 conference at Cedar Point and NCA president in 1976 and 1977.



DEDICATION

The 1974 Conference Committee, in concert with the entire Membership of the National Carousel Roundtable, hereby dedicates the Second Annual Conference to its most illustrious and esteemed founders: Frederick and Mary Fried, Marianne Stevens, William and Marion Dentzel, Roland and Jo Summit, Barbara Fahs Charles and L. Gray and Judy Tuttle.

It is with heartfelt gratitude that we recognize their foresight and untiring dedication to the goals and ideals which guided them in their task to establish an organization devoted to the preservation and protection of the American Carousel. Because they sought to spare this endangered segment of our folk heritage and to guarantee its well being for future generations, we can be assured that the joyous spirit of the merry-to-round will remain for countless children now and in the future. Their deed will be reflected in every carousel and on every child's smiling face.

Second Annual Conference

Clockwise from the top: Bill and Marion Dentzel, Wal and Jo Summit, Marianne Stevens, Fred and Mary Fried, Barbara Charles and Judy and Gray Tuttle.

A page from the elaborate program for the second annual conference of the National Carousel Roundtable.

six (or eleven, counting spouses) founders.

In addition to the wonderful Staples and Charles multi-media slide presentation, the program included a keynote speech by Fred, a lively presentation on "The Carousel as Folk Art" by a panel of distinguished muse-

um directors, and an illustrated review of the restoration of the Greenfield Village Herschell-Spillman carousel by Col. Edward Gilbert, chief conservator, and Tony Orlando, restoration artist.

It was the first authentic restoration of a carousel based on the recovery of

original colors and designs from years of overlying paint. This tradition has since been perfected by Will Morton and Rosa Ragan, and is now a mainstay of NCA technical conferences.

Until then, we had no idea of the complexity and subtlety of stippling, shad-

ing, pin striping, and applied designs of the originals. People tended to pot-paint in abrupt, unrelieved blocks of solid colors.

The program showed attendees how to erect a merry-go-round (John Davis), how contemporary carousels are constructed (Harold Chance), and everything you always wanted to ask about organs (Harvey Roehl).

Marianne Stevens illustrated, in contrast to the museum version, how to do a "Shoestring Restoration." Nina Fraley, Barbara Charles, and I lauded the styles of Dentzel, Loeff, and Illions in increasingly ponderous detail (the *Washington Post* review of the conference cited the Illions presentation as a ludicrous example of sophistry).

Gray Tuttle related the history of the Long family's contributions to the American carousel industry, and then introduced Robert and George Long in person.

Nancy Phillips, Walt Youree, and Bill Dentzel described the joys of collecting, and Jo, Marianne, and Gray led an identification session using slides submitted by members. The "Horse Trading Stable" included an expanding selection of contemporary paintings and miniature carvings in addition to original figures.

The fun peaked at the Saturday night "Coney Island Night" costume banquet, which featured "Little Egypt" (the belly dancer), a one-man band, and a musical vaudeville revue by Edo McCullough, author of *Good Old Coney Island* and a self-described "uncured Virginia ham."

The Monday field trip was to Greenfield Village, to see and ride the wondrously revived Herschell-Spillman carousel.

The exhibition at the

AMERICAN
Carousels and the Magic of the Brass Ring

THE WASHINGTON POST
Sunday, Nov. 3, 1974 1, 3



Carousel, from 62

A decade ago there was no such thing as a prize merry-go-round preservationist. The art of carousel-making operators who were interested, revere, in the old and craft and seasonal revival or restore who kept these creatures live in the living room. Now there are collectors and carvers who have turned fish and people into art, appreciation and investment.

There were more than 200 of the members of the conference in Flat, Va., having debates and panel discussions and workshops on techniques of preservation and techniques of restoration and techniques of true fish art.

Carousels and their carvers were given the first academic proceeding. Here we have an example of the latter class, with the latter's presence there, more abstract than the latter's approach you see in the previous slide.



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The Washington Post, Sunday, Nov. 3, 1974.



Several young girls sat on the floor for hours making drawings of their favorite figures. Perhaps they, too, would carry their wonder into artistic careers, in the NCA tradition of Nancy Strailey, Diane Luke, and our own Suzy, who began her career as a biological illustrator the following year at age 12 by sketching horses at Cedar Point.



Whatever their futures may hold, these children will surely search to find carousels for their own little girls and boys, continuing an unbroken cycle of affection inspired by the National Carousel Association.

Note: All photos are courtesy of Rol Summitt.

Next Issue: The conclusion of the Early History of the NCA, how it changed its name, sustained rebellion, and rose to recovery.

Sloan Museum at the village was the first and perhaps the greatest of carousel carvings under one roof, including 80 historic figures and accesso-

ry artwork. Armand had arm-twisted members, museums, and amusement parks to loan their finest figures.

of appreciative adults, the most moving response was the silent wonder of the children.

Beyond the oohs and aahs

Several young girls sat on

Frederick Fried

This tribute was taken from a biography of Fred, written by Bradley Smith.

Frederick Fried, author of *A Pictorial History of the Carousel* has been attached and attracted to carousels since he was a boy.

With fascination, he watched these animals being carved in a small factory near his Brooklyn home.

Years of research for his book took him across America and Canada. He has recorded more of the long history of the carousel and its carvers, particularly in the form of neglected American folk art and also American band organs.

Fred's search for information introduced him to carousel carvers, owners, collectors, and enthusiasts.

He is a contemporary piper. Wherever he goes, he leaves behind men, women, and children exchanged with the world of the carousel.

More than that, however, he leaves them with an important message: the American carousel has become an endangered art form that somehow must be protected and preserved."



Fred Fried, at PTC #18-78R in the Carousel Mall in Syracuse, N.Y., during the 1993 NCA convention.