

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received MAR 21 1985

date entered APR 18 1985

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

1. Name

historic

and/or common Allan Herschell Carousel Factory

2. Location

street & number 180 Thompson Street not for publication

city, town North Tonawanda vicinity of

state New York code 036 county Niagara code 063

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Lynn Shell and Debra Kolaweski

street & number 207 Vandervoort Street

city, town North Tonawanda vicinity of state New York

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Niagara County Clerk's Office

street & number County Hall

city, town Lockport state New York

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Inventory of Historic Resources has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date June 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records Division for Historic Preservation

city, town Albany state New York

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Allan Herschell Carousel Factory is located along an abandoned New York Central Railroad right-of-way in the southwestern section of the city of North Tonawanda in Niagara County. Located at the westernmost edge of New York State, this fairly large industrial city is bordered by the Niagara River to the west and the Tonawanda Creek to the south. The nominated property is approximately .75 acres in extent and incorporates six major buildings and their additions which, over the years, have been inter-connected by a series of roofs that unite the entire sprawling complex. The factory complex is situated in a mixed residential/manufacturing/commercial area. Located immediately adjacent to the complex on its southwest, northwest, and northeast sides are three altered nineteenth-century residences. The boundaries of the factory complex were determined by Geneva Street to the north, the New York City Railroad right-of-way to the south and the property lines of the adjacent residences of the west and east. The boundaries of the nominated property reflect the historical extent of all of the features originally associated with the operation of the Allan Herschell Company.

The elements of the factory include six contributing primary structures built c.1910 to 1915 with five contributing additions which date from the factory's most productive period of wooden carousel manufacturing in the late 1920's and early 1930's. There is one cinder-block non-contributing addition attached to the Roundhouse (#4). The contributing structures in the nomination include: #1 the Mill Building (c.1910) with rear (north) addition; #2 the Carving and Pattern Shop (c.1910); #3 the Paint Shop and Storage Building (c.1915); #4 the Roundhouse (c.1915) with loading-dock addition on the southeast, a shed-roofed addition on the east and a cinder-block (non-contributing) addition on the south; #5 the Machine Shop (1915) with additions on the east and south; and #6 the Assembly and Testing Building (1915). In addition to the structural elements of the complex, the nomination includes a 1916 model portable carousel which contributes to the significance of the nomination.

The irregular configuration of the complex was partly determined by the New York Central Railroad right-of-way that bisects the southeast corner of the block bounded by Geneva (north), Vandervoort (west) and Thompson (south) Streets. The main structure of the complex, the Mill Building #1, forms the western edge of the property and is sited at an oblique angle, due to the railroad right-of-way, along Thompson Street. Adjacent to the mill building and sited at the same angle is the Carving & Pattern Shop (#2). Directly to the rear (north) of the combined carving and pattern shop is a long, narrow rectangular structure which houses the Paint Shop (#3) in its southern end and storage space (#3) in its northern end. Located to the east of the storage area and connected to it by a long, enclosed corridor is the Machine Shop (#5). South of the machine shop and

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connected to it by a series of additions and enclosures is the Roundhouse (#4), distinguished by its unique octadecagonal (18-sided) shape. The roundhouse faces Thompson Street with its loading dock, positioned on the northeast side, connecting to the railroad right-of-way. The last structure in the complex, the Assembly and Testing Building (#6), is sited to the northeast of the roundhouse and connected to it and the machine shop to the west by several additions. The assembly and testing building forms the eastern edge of the nominated property.

The six structures which compose the carousel factory were built between c.1910 and c.1930. The entire factory complex is composed of wood-frame construction with various exterior treatments such as clapboard, novelty siding, vertical tongue and groove siding, sheet metal siding and asbestos shingles. The structures, which vary in size and shape, are all interconnected by additions and a series of roof-enclosed spaces. Yet, the buildings remain distinct by their different size, massing, roof pitches, fenestration, and exterior sheathing. All of the structures have asphalt roofs and boarded windows. Although out of operation since 1960, the carousel factory complex remains virtually unchanged since the early 1930's. The only structure currently used is the roundhouse, which houses an operating carousel during summer months. All of the structures, with the exception of the roundhouse, remain in good exterior and interior physical condition. The conical roof of the roundhouse (#4) collapsed in March, 1984 but the original rafters have been saved and will be used to rebuild the roof in 1985. All of the structures retain the majority of their original carousel-production equipment except the mill building (#1) which has been empty since the milling equipment was removed in 1960.

Description of the individual structure follows:#1. Mill Building (c1910)

The mill building, which housed the wood milling equipment and operations of the carousel factory, actually pre-dates the Allen Herschell Company and was originally built for the Tonawanda Box and Lumber Company. Built c.1910, the mill building is a representative example of a frame industrial structure incorporating a clerestory monitor. A system of heavy bolted wooden trusses simultaneously supports the clerestory structure and allows a large, well-lit, columnless clear-span 40 feet wide. In plan, the building is a trapezoid following the lot lines intersected by the railroad diagonal. The large clerestory monitor along the roof ridge has five sets of three six-light windows on each side. It is terminated with wooden gable ends. The large rectangular false front of the

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facade rises to the height of the monitor at approximately a 45 degree angle to it. The weathered siding on this false front retains the sign board lettering of the carousel factory: "Allan Herschell Company Incorporated." The facade of this building as well as most of the other primary walls of the complex is sheathed with red painted novelty siding. The structure has large fifteen-light windows and sliding wooden doors.

At the rear (south) of the mill building is a two-story gable-roofed addition built c.1923. The addition is sheathed with sheet metal siding stamped with brick course patterns. On the interior, the two-story addition opens directly into the mill building.

The mill building contains equipment that shaped and dressed poplar, basswood and pine woods in various box-shaped forms for the production of all components of the carousels and other amusement park rides.

#2. Carving and Pattern Shop (c.1910)

The carving and pattern shop was originally used as storage space for the Tonawanda Box and Lumber Company. The facade of the structure continues the diagonal of the adjacent mill building and is marked by a false front which retains the original, although faded, advertisement for the carousel company. The false front has a shed roof canopy over the windows and entrance, which are boarded over. The one-story, frame building is composed of two parallel gable-roofed areas. The interior is marked by the exposed roof truss system. The exterior is sheathed in novelty siding. A metal boiler stack is a prominent exterior feature. In the 1940's, a pitched roof was constructed to join the carving and pattern shop with the machine shop to the east. The pitched-roof shelters a long, narrow corridor which is lit by five large skylights.

In the carving and pattern shop, the wood forms were hand-carved and cut following one of several horse patterns. The heads and legs were also carved from a single piece of wood and glued and pegged to the body.

#3. Paint Shop and Storage Building (c.1915)

The paint shop and storage building is an extremely long, relatively narrow rectangular structure built as part of the Herschell Carousel Factory. The gable-roofed building is divided approximately in half by a horizontal brick firewall which rises well above the roof in a stepped parapet. The frame structure features low-pitched gusseted truss rafters. The two-story section west of the firewall and the firewall itself were built c.1915 on the lines of an earlier

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structure that burned c.1912. The eastern section between the carving shop and the firewall was once a one-story structure, but was raised to two stories c.1920. The present exterior walls are clad in metal sheathing. The north wall of this building is now an interior wall but retains its original novelty siding and six-over-six window sash.

The interior of each section was originally divided in half lengthwise to form two separate rooms. During the 1920's, these walls were removed although the vertical posts remain. The paint shop was divided into two section with gluing and priming taking place on the first floor and the finish-painting done on the second floor. After sanding was completed in the carving and pattern shop, the horses were primed and painted in the paint shop.

#4. Roundhouse (c.1915)

The roundhouse is the most conspicuous structure within the carousel factory complex. The 54' diameter frame building has a unique octadecagon (18-sided) shape and a tent-like faceted conical roof. The building features an unusual structural system to create an unobstructed interior space without a center post. The upper section of the roof cone is formed by a compression ring composed of dimensional lumber. A 2" wide steel tension strap binds the top of the wall sections. The exterior of the 11' high wall is composed of narrow vertical tongue and groove siding. Each wall originally had a large horizontal six-pane window although many of these have been boarded-up. There were also originally two small dormered skylights in the roof which were removed in the 1930s when the roof was raised using the same technique. The rafter ends are still in place at the lower level where they were sawn off for the raising and the original eave line remains clearly visible on the exterior. In March 1984, the conical roof collapsed due to a heavy snowfall and has been temporarily replaced by a shallow gable roof. The original roof will be rebuilt during 1985.

In the 1930's, a one-story, gable-roofed railroad loading dock was added to the southeast side of the roundhouse connecting it to the New York Central Railroad right-of-way. The narrow board, vertically sheathed structure features large double doors on all three sides. Also in the 1930's, a one-story frame lean-to shed was attached to the east side of the roundhouse connecting it with the assembly and testing building to the rear (north). In the 1940's, a one-story, shed-roofed concrete-block addition was built on the southwest side of the roundhouse. This is the only non-historic element within the factory complex.

The roundhouse served an essential function in the carousel manufacturing process for it was here that the carousels were

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assembled and tested. Although the roof of the structure collapsed in March 1984, much of the original building fabric remains.

#5. Machine Shop (1915)

The machine shop was originally a 32'x78', one-story rectangular structure. The building features a trussed rafter gable roof. In the early 1930's, the structure was enlarged by additions to the east and south. The eastern wall was removed but the vertical supports remain. The building and its additions feature bands of six-over-six double-hung window sash.

In the 1940's, a roof was installed connecting the machine shop with its additions to the roundhouse to the south and the assembly and testing building to the east. At the same time, a pitched roof corridor was constructed between the storage and paint shop and the machine shop and its southern addition.

In the machine shop, the numerous specialized metal parts for the carousel frames and their interior mechanisms were built. The building still contains some of its original equipment.

#6. Assembly and Testing Building (1915)

The assembly and testing building is a two-story, rectangular 28'x45' gable-roofed structure which contains a single large interior space. Constructed in 1915, the building features an unusual structural system composed of vertical studding of alternating paired and tripled 2 x 6's. The walls are sheathed on the interior with narrow horizontal tongue and groove boarding while the exterior is finished in novelty siding. The structure has six-over-six windows and a large sliding door on the east.

The building is joined to the machine shop (to the west) by a roof-enclosed corridor and to the roundhouse (to the southwest) by its one-story lean-to shed on the east side.

This building was used for the assembly and testing of all other amusement park equipment manufactured at the factory.

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The Allan Herschell Carousel Factory includes a model of a Number One Special Three Abreast Herschell Carousel as a major contributing element. Manufactured in the factory in 1916, the carousel measures forty feet in diameter and has thirty-five wooden "jumping" horses (the lead horse is missing), one chariot, and one lovers' tub. The three-row portable machine has large Herschell style horses on the outer row and smaller Armitage-Herschell style horses composing the inner two rows. The decorative picture center has seven beveled mirrors and intricate low-relief carvings. The seven oil paintings which originally adorned the picture center are missing. The rounding board features a scalloped edge illuminated by colorful lights in a trefoil motif and intricately carved cartouches with low-relief figures. The rounding board lacks the original seven cornice panels depicting nature scenes. The circular lovers' tub and the chariot have an Art Nouveau wave motif and "wheels." The carousel retains its original 588 colored lights, gear and clutch assembly, and 15 horsepower gas engine. Despite the loss of the oil paintings and the lead horse, the carousel remains remarkably intact and in operating condition. The Carousel Society intends to restore the missing components according to old photographs of the model. The carousel operates in the roundhouse during the summer and fall. For the rest of the year, the carousel is disassembled and stored in specially designed wooden crates which are original to the roundhouse.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c.1910-c.1930 Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Allan Herschell Carousel Factory is an architecturally and historically significant complex of buildings constructed between c.1910-1915 that is believed to be one of only two surviving manufacturing complexes in the United States which produced hand-carved wooden carousels in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One of the largest, most prolific and well-known producers of carousels, the Allan Herschell Company, under a variety of different names, was in the forefront of American carousel manufacturing from 1883 to 1955. An acknowledged leader of the industry, Allan Herschell designed a unique kind of steam-driven carousel known as the "Tonawanda Machine" in 1883 which became one of the most widely produced types of carousels in the country. Herschell is also noted for his mechanical contributions to the industry and for his role in establishing the first band organ factory in the country. As the last surviving carousel manufacturing complex in North Tonawanda, which once had five such companies, the Allan Herschell Factory is the only extant link with the major industry that made this city nationally famous at the turn of the twentieth century. Although the Allan Herschell Company produced carousels until 1955, the factory's period of significance spans from its opening in 1915 to the early 1930s, when the production of all-wooden carousels dropped dramatically throughout the country. Although the majority of the frame structures within the complex are representative of the standard utilitarian building practices of the period, two of the buildings have additional architectural significance. The Mill Building (c.1910), which pre-dates the Allan Herschell Factory, is a rare surviving intact example in North Tonawanda of a frame industrial structure with a clerestory monitor. The Roundhouse, built in 1915, is an unusual 18-sided specialty structure designed specifically for the assembly and testing of carousels. The complex retains architectural integrity as well as most of the original equipment used in the manufacturing of wooden carousels. The complex also includes a rare surviving 1916 model of Herschell's Number One Special Three Abreast portable carousel, one of the first examples of its type and also one of the first carousels produced in the factory. The Allan Herschell Carousel Factory is a rare surviving link to a specialty industry which flourished from 1885 to 1930, a period in which carousels and amusement parks were common features of the American landscape.

Carousels were first produced in the United States as early as 1800 in New England. Constructed by wheelwrights, early American carousels commonly known as "whirley-gigs," had crudely carved horse forms suspended by chairs from arms which projected from a centerpole. By the mid-nineteenth century, carousels were becoming popular and efforts to improve them were registered with the patent office. The carousels figures, which were predominantly horses,

9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 0.75 acres

Quadrangle name Tonawanda, East

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	7	6	7	3	2	7	0	4	7	6	6	0	7	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached Tax Map

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

NA

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Claire L. Ross, Field Representative (see continuation sheet)

organization Div. for Historic Preservation date January 1985

street & number Empire State Plaza Agency Bldg. #1 telephone 518-474-0479

city or town Albany state New York

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Julia S. Stokes

title Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation

date 4/6/85

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

for Melvyn Byer
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 4-18-85

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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gradually became more lifelike with the addition of horsehair tails and manes, glass eyes, and carved saddles, and, after the Civil war, animals other than horses began to be used. In 1867, the first major American carousel factory was opened in Philadelphia by Gustav Dentzel, a member of a German family renowned for carousel production. Dentzel was the first to introduce steam engines to carousels, which enabled them to be much larger and more ornate than their hand-powered predecessors. By the 1880's, carousels were produced by several firms in New York City and Philadelphia.

Allan Herschell's involvement with the carousel industry began in 1882, just as carousel production was becoming an established industry. Born in Scotland in 1851, Herschell had moved with his family to Buffalo in 1870. Trained as a molder in the steel and iron casting business, Herschell practiced his trade in Canada before settling in North Tonawanda in 1872. In association with James Armitage, a machine shop foreman, and his brother George, Herschell established the "Tonawanda Engine and Machine Company" to manufacture steam engines and boilers. The three chose the city of North Tonawanda as the site of their company because of its strategic location as the western terminus of the Erie Canal and its rapid growth as the second largest lumber port in the world. Surviving two devastating fires, the firm was extremely successful and in 1876, it was renamed the "Armitage-Herschell Company."

In 1882, Herschell was advised to leave the firm and spend some time in New York City for his health and it was here that he encountered one of the traveling carousels that were rapidly becoming popular. Upon his return to the firm in 1883 and against much opposition from his partners, Herschell designed an improved kind of steam-driven carousel which he named "The Tonawanda Machine." Herschell's version of the carousel was unique in that it did not use the customary center pole and radiating spokes with dangling horses. Instead, Herschell's model featured a platform, carrying animals, which moved on wheels around a circular steel track. The horses were hinged on supports fastened to the platform and a special mechanism underneath gave them a "galloping" motion. A small band organ, usually positioned in the center core, played tunes.

Herschell toured western New York with "the Tonawanda Machine" before selling it. In 1884, he completed another and sold it quickly. Convinced his product was marketable, Herschell, an able salesman with a flare for the dramatic, built a third machine, now known as a "Steam Riding Gallery," and sailed it down the Mississippi on a riverboat in 1885. By the time he reached New Orleans, he had received a dozen orders.

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At some point between his return to North Tonawanda in 1886 and 1890, Allan Herschell convinced his partners of the financial rewards of producing carousels. In 1890, the Armitage-Herschell Company sold sixty machines and in the following year, the number had increased to 100. By 1894, the company was recognized as a leader in the industry and Herschell had salesmen traveling as far away as Tahiti. Herschell himself traveled to Bombay, India to sell a machine. As the firm became successful, the partners invested in land throughout the Tonawanda area. In 1899 both the economy and the company collapsed.

The firm's success occurred during the heyday of American carousel production. Between 1880 and 1930, the United States had sixteen carousel and carving shops: six in Brooklyn, three in Philadelphia, five in North Tonawanda, and one each in Kansas and California. During this period, amusement parks flourished and carousels were found at resorts, beaches, parks and along trolley lines. Carousels progressed from the primitive "Flying Horses" models, with figures hung on an overhead suspension system, to the large, steam-powered, ornately decorated types with several rows of horses and "chariots" (seats). The introduction of the steam engine also enabled carousel manufacturers to build smaller, more portable models which soon became the staple of traveling circuses, amusement parks and local fairs. Electricity made possible the production of three, four and five-row carousels with as many as 100 horses and other animals. Like their steam-driven precursors, the electric carousels had ornately carved and embellished rounding boards with sculpture, bas-relief, gilded mirrors, and rows of incandescent lamps. During the 50-year heyday of carousel production, approximately 10,000 carousels were produced, of which, only an estimated 280 survive today. The only other known surviving historic carousel factory is a stone barn built c.1904 in Philadelphia by the Philadelphia Toboggan Company.

During the 1890's, as the Armitage-Herschell Company was becoming successful, North Tonawanda was emerging as "the carousel center" of the country. Known for its extremely profitable lumber industry, Tonawanda had an endless supply of wood and skilled woodcarvers drawn from the large local German immigrant community. The first local manufacturers were Carl Landon and Carl Newman who built a very primitive carousel in 1879. The Norman and Evans firm of Lockport, New York started to manufacture a machine similar to Herschell's in 1891 which started a feud between the two companies. Also during the 1890's the American Merry-Go-Round and Novelty Company and the Gillie, Godard and Company were formed. The latter produced a machine they called a "steam riding gallery" until Herschell complained and had the name changed.

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Employing many of the same woodworkers, all of the Tonawanda-based manufacturers produced similarly shaped carousel animals supported by a stirrup-shaped bracket and hinge underneath that permitted a rocking and galloping motion. Until 1913, Herschell horses were cut with simplicity of line and a true-to-horse form. After 1913, the pantograph was used to turn out the basic body shape. Shop carvers cut out the heads and attended to decorative detail. Legs and tails were usually mass-produced and then attached, while the chariots and saddles remained hand-carved.

In 1901, Herschell and his brother-in-law, Edward Spillman, formed a new company, "Herschell-Spillman," located at a sprawling factory on Oliver Street in North Tonawanda. (None of the buildings remain from this complex.) The Herschell-Spillman Company achieved instant success and was recognized as the world's single largest manufacturer of outdoor amusements. Herschell and his partner redesigned the old "Steam Riding Gallery" and renamed it the "Twentieth Century Carousel." Their machines were known for their mechanical excellence, their high quality craftsmanship and design, and their detailed ornament and appearance. The company's "two-a-breast" model was the most advanced carousel produced at the time due, in part, to its ability to use either steam, gasoline or electrical power. The "two-a-breast" model was also one of the cheapest and most portable carousels, which heightened its popularity. The firm also produced large, ornate machines for amusement parks which sold for \$14,000 and up. Constantly improving his own designs, Herschell continued to produce affordable, practical, and reliable carousels which were also exquisitely detailed.

In 1911, Herschell retired from the business due to poor health. His importance to the industry is evident from the fact that Edward Spillman made him sign a contract swearing that he would not enter into competition. (The original Herschell-Spillman Company continued to thrive until 1920 when it was reorganized under the name of Spillman Engineering). The contract was broken; however, for in 1915 Allan Herschell formed his last company, the Allan Herschell Company. Herschell moved into buildings previously used by the Tonawanda Box and Lumber Company on Thompson Street. With the mill building and carving and pattern shop (c.1910) already in place, Herschell built the paint shop and storage building (c.1915), the roundhouse (c.1915), the machine shop (1915), and the assembly and testing building (1915). During World War I, the company produced "Liberty Engines" for aircraft. From 1917 to 1919, the factory only produced three carousels, but once the war ended, the company produced amusement devices exclusively. The firm specialized in the production of hundreds of two and three row portable carousels which were highly profitable. Herschell also began to produce menagerie machines, although far fewer than his

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rival, the Herschell-Spillman Company. The company's most famous "road" machine was the 32-foot "Little Beauty," which had two rows of horses and played short engagements all over the east coast. Once again, Herschell's carousels were nationally famous for their high degree of craftsmanship, mechanical excellence, ornate rounding boards and cornice shields, and realistic figures. The Allan Herschell Company shipped machines to all parts of the United States as well as Canada and several European countries.

In addition to his improved designs for a variety of carousel types, Allen Herschell was also recognized as a leader within the industry due to the many other contributions he made. Herschell was extremely influential in establishing the first band organ factory in the country. American carousel-makers had been importing their band organs from Germany but deliveries were slow and import duties high. Herschell convinced Eugene Dekleist, a German organ maker, to move to North Tonawanda in 1892 to manufacture organs. Herschell sold Dekleist land where he built the North Tonawanda Barrel Organ Factory, the first in this country to manufacture pegged organs. In 1908, Dekleist sold his firm to the Wurlitzer Company and by 1920, Wurlitzer organs were standard features on American carousels. Herschell also patented several mechanical inventions or improvements for his carousels, including the horsepipe telescope in 1916 which improved the "galloping" motion of the horses. In 1918 he patented an improved "horse hanger" which made rapid replacement and easy removal possible for carousels playing short engagements.

In 1923, Allan Herschell retired from the business due to poor health. After his death four years later, the company was operated by John Wendler, the plant superintendent. (In 1945, Wendler also acquired the Spillman Engineering Company and the firms were combined once again.) The Allan Herschell Company actively produced all-wooden carousels until the mid-1930's. This was the last major phase of wooden carousel production throughout the United States for by the 1930's, cast aluminum parts were being used and the demand for carousels had dropped significant as a result of the effects of the Depression. During World War II, as well as World War I, the company survived by filling wartime contracts. After World War II, the company turned its attention to making "kiddie rides" due to the post-World War II baby boom. By the 1950's, the company was still working on Navy defense contracts and producing aluminum horses only.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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received

date entered

APR 18 1985

Allan Herschell Carousel Factory, North Tonawanda,
Continuation sheet Niagara Co., NY Item number 8

Page 6

In 1955, the Weisner-Rapp Company purchased and moved the Allan Herschell Company to new quarters in Buffalo, where it operated until the late 1960s. The name "Allan Herschell" was retained through a variety of ownership changes until 1970 when the company was purchased by the Chance Manufacturing Company. The abolishment of the Allan Herschell name from carousel manufacturing ended a legacy which had started in 1883. Located in Kansas, Chance Manufacturing is one of only two companies still producing cast aluminum carousels today.

Architecturally, the Allan Herschell Carousel Factory is composed predominantly of simple, frame utilitarian structures that reflect their manufacturing function. Built c.1910 to 1915, the structures are joined by a series of contributing additions dating from the late 1920s to the early 1930s which correspond to the factory's most prolific period of wooden carousel manufacturing from 1915 to c.1935. The mill building (c.1910), which predates the complex, is one of the few surviving frame structures remaining from Tonawanda's once thriving lumber industry. With its intact clerestory monitor, a relatively rare surviving feature on industrial structures, the mill building is a representative example of an early twentieth century frame industrial structure. Built in 1915 by Herschell, the 18-sided roundhouse is unique as the only surviving frame structure in the country designed specifically for the assembly and testing of carousels. The complex remains architecturally intact with much of the original carousel-manufacturing equipment still in place.

An important contributing feature of the Allan Herschell Carousel Factory is the model of the Number One Special Three Abreast carousel produced at the factory in 1916 and reinstalled in the roundhouse in 1983. The carousel is one of the earliest manufactured at the factory, which opened in October 1915, and a distinctive example of its type. Two- and three-row portable carousels were among the most popular models of carousels ever produced due to low cost, ease of construction, and the steady cash flow that they provided. Herschell's competitor, Herschell-Spillman, produced hundreds of portable machines and prompted Herschell to introduce the Number One Special Three Abreast model shortly after he opened his new factory. As advertised in Herschell's Catalogue Number Four, the Three Abreast model was a "jumping horse carousel" with thirty-six hand-carved horses (the outer row studded with jewels), two chariots, hand-carved and decorated cornice and shields, a picture center with beveled mirrors and oil paintings, 588 lights, and horse and platform hangers encased in polished brass. The model came with a paper-played military band organ with drums and cymbal and was operated by either an electric motor or a gasoline engine.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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APR 18 1960

Allan Herschell Carousel Factory, North Tonawanda,
Continuation sheet Niagara Co., NY Item number 8

Page 7

Catalogue #4 also exhibited for the first time Herschell's two new model horses, which helped to distinguish his machines from those of his competitors. These horses, examples of "jumpers," generally did not have breast bands (a common feature on carousel figures). The "thin-faced" model had a raised head, swept back mane, and flattened or no ears at all. The second model had an extremely large head tucked in tight to the body and a very full Trojan mane. Both models were distinguished by their front legs, which were tucked in close to the body, saddle blankets with "flipped" back corners, and carved wooden tails.

This particular model of the Number One Special Three Abreast Carousel is distinguished because it varies from its type and may have been an experimental model of the style. Sold in March 1916, the carousel was probably one of the first manufactured in the factory. The carousel has 35 horses, one chariot, and one lovers' tub, itself a rare feature, for Herschell only added them to ten carousels. He did, however, produce one experimental machine consisting entirely of Lovers' Tubs but it was complete failure. Designed so that the couple riding in it could turn the center wheel causing the tub to spin and them to slide against each other, the lovers' tub was considered a very risqué feature on carousels.

In addition to the lovers' tub, the carousel is also distinctive because it exhibits two different models of horses. The outside row, which contains the largest horses, is composed of examples of Herschell's two new models of horses. The inner two rows, which contain medium and small horses, are composed of the old style Armitage-Herschell horses with their rigid, stylized manes, pointed lips, straight neck lines, square bodies, long, straight legs, large saddles and breast bands. Since many of the original Armitage-Herschell carvers remained loyal to Herschell and worked in his new factory, it is possible that they continued to produce the old style of horses. Another possible explanation for the mix of the two styles is that Herschell had a number of the old style horses in the factory and offered the odd combination to the buyer, who was in a hurry to purchase a carousel.¹ Despite the variations, the carousel is a representative example of the Number One Special Three Abreast model.

1. A.M. Hathaway of Herschell-Spillman Company to Daniel Joyce, 28 February 1916, Carousel File, Carousel Society of the Niagara Frontier, Inc., North Tonawanda, New York.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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APR 18 1985

Allan Herschell Carousel Factory, North Tonawanda,
Continuation sheet Niagara Co., NY Item number 8

Page 8

When originally purchased in 1916, the carousel lacked the paper-played military band organ that was advertised by Herschell as an integral component of the model, yet another indication that this particular carousel was an experiment or an early example of its type. The carousel now operates accompanied by a period Wurlitzer organ.

The carousel was purchased (cost between \$7,000 to \$9,000) in February 1916 by Daniel Joyce, who operated a small family amusement park (Springbank Park) in London, Ontario, Canada. Joyce had been searching for a carousel to replace his previous one that had been destroyed by fire and had spent much time looking at the models produced by Herschell's competitors, the Herschell-Spillman Company.² In 1936, Joyce's grandson moved the carousel to Hamilton, Ontario where it operated until 1959, when it was dismantled and stored at the family's home in London, Ontario. In 1978, the Joyce's sold the carousel to William Stenning, who began to restore it. In April 1982, the Carousel Society purchased the carousel for \$55,000 and assembled it in the roundhouse of the Herschell factory. The carousel operates during the summer and is dismantled and stored in period storage crates in the roundhouse during the rest of the year. These storage crates were specially designed to store carousels and are original to the Herschell factory. Retaining a high degree of integrity, the Number One Special Three Abreast carousel is significant as one of few (less than 300) surviving carousels in the country and as a distinguished example of Allan Herschell's design and craftsmanship.

The Allan Herschell Carousel Factory achieves significance as one of only two surviving manufacturing complexes associated with the production of carousels during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. With its architectural integrity intact, the factory is a unique link with this bygone industry, which once provided one of America's favorite forms of recreation.

2. Ibid.

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National Park Service

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APR 18 1985

Allan Herschell Carousel Factory, North Tonawanda,
Continuation sheet Niagara Co., NY Item number 9

Page 1

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

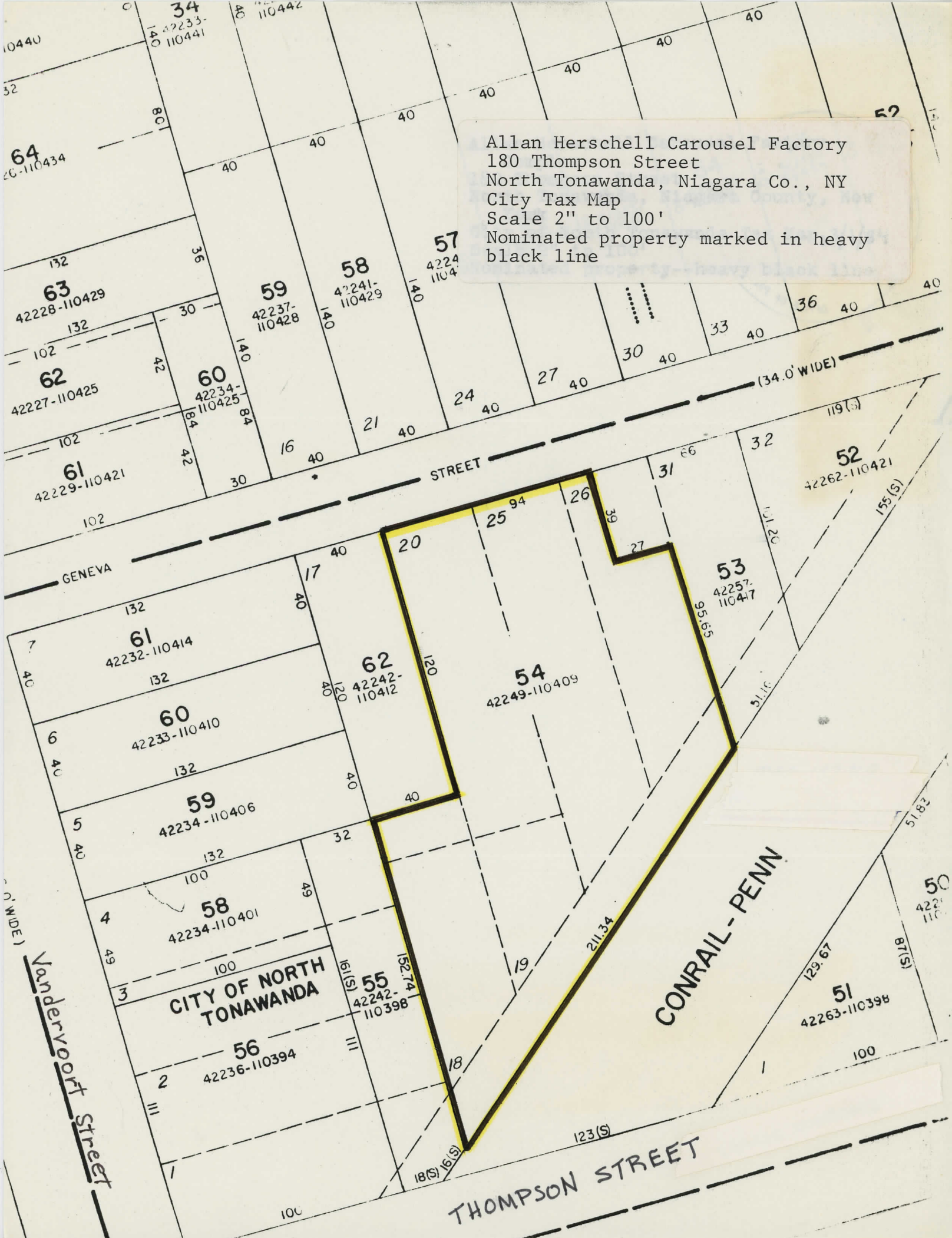
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date entered APR 18 1985

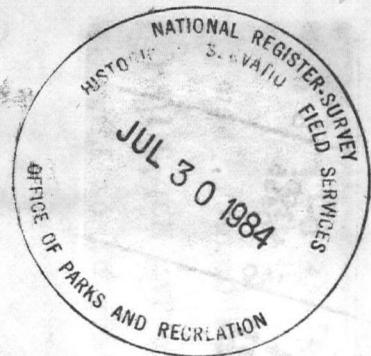
Continuation sheet Allan Herschell Carousel Factory Item number 11 Page 1
North Tonawanda, Niagara Co. NY

Research and draft nomination prepared by:

Mary Jo Martin
Preservation Consultant
218 Morris Street #2
Albany, New York 12208

Allan Herschell Carousel Factory
180 Thompson Street
North Tonawanda, Niagara Co., NY
City Tax Map
Scale 2" to 100'
Nominated property marked in heavy black line





1997 Northwood

1997 Northwood

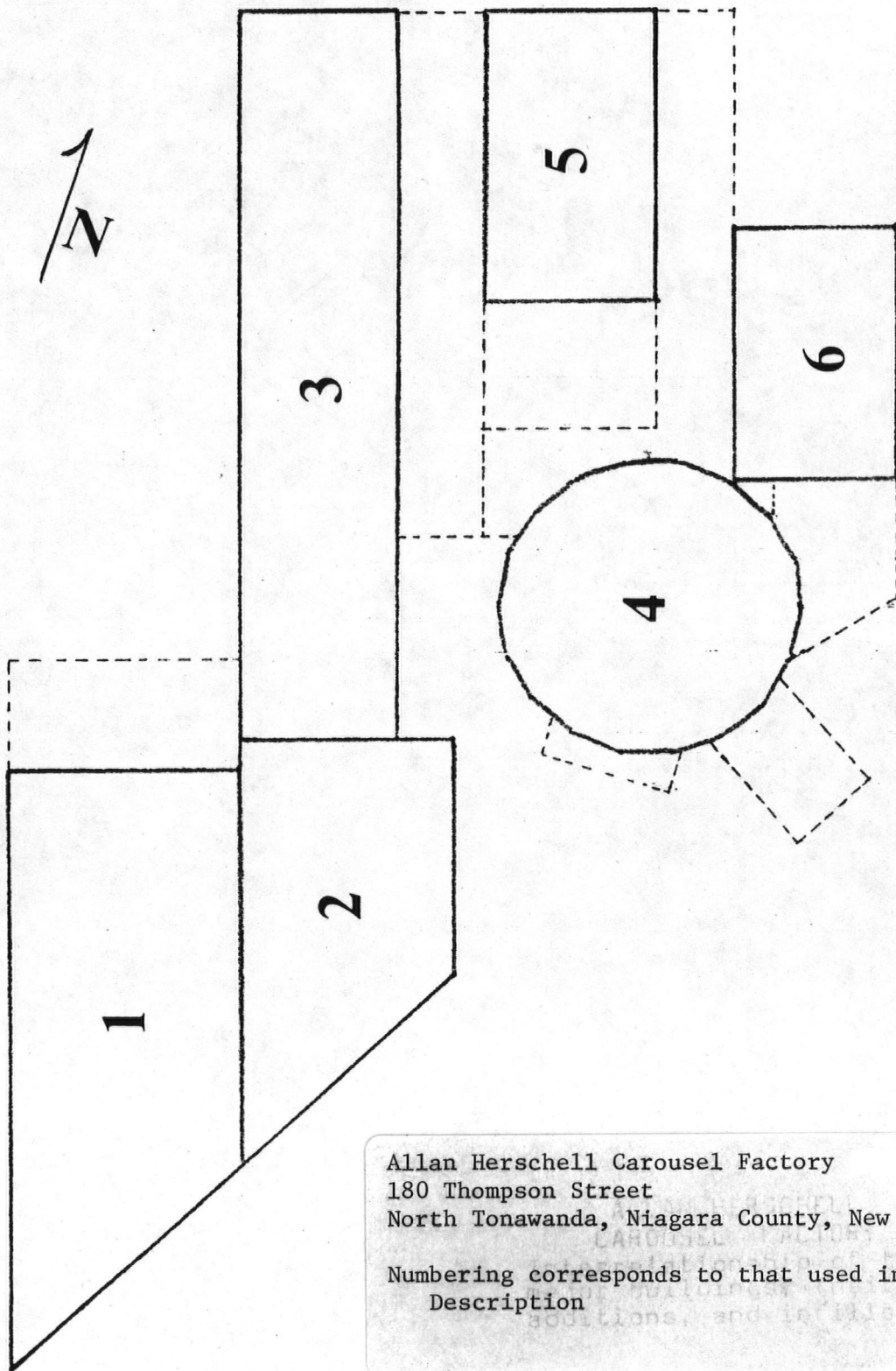


No. 1
Special
Three
Abreast

ALLAN HERSCHELL CO., INC.

Page Four

Allan Herschell Carousel Factory
180 Thompson Street
North Tonawanda, Niagara Co., NY
Picture of the No. 1 Special Three
Abreast Carousel Model Published in
Herschell's Catalogue #4



Allan Herschell Carousel Factory
 180 Thompson Street
 North Tonawanda, Niagara County, New York

Numbering corresponds to that used in #7
 Description

* numbering corresponds to that used in Item 7 Description.

85000856

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Allan Herschell Carousel Factory
Niagara County
NEW YORK

Working No. MAR 21 1985

Fed. Reg. Date: 2/4/86

Date Due: 4/18/85 - 5/5/85

Action: ACCEPT 4-18-85

RETURN

Entered in the NR
National Register REJECT

Federal Agency: _____

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____

Reviewer _____

Discipline _____

Date _____

_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

Check one

- unaltered
- altered

Check one

- original site
- moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_____ national _____ state _____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



ALVIN HERSHELL CO INC

ROAD CARBONS

Allen Herschell Carousel Factory

180 Thompson Street

North Tonawanda, Niagara Co., New York

Photo: John Conlin, March 1984

Negs: Div. for Historic Preservation, Albany

View: Facades of Mill Building and Carving
and Pattern Shop

1 of 13



Allen Herschell Carousel Factory
180 Thompson Street
North Tonawanda, Niagara Co., New York
Photo: John Conlin, March 1984
Negs: Div. for Historic Preservation, Albany
View: Side elevation of Mill Building from
southwest

#2 of 13



Allan Herschell Carousel Factory

180 Thompson Street

North Tonawanda, Niagara County, New York

Photo by: John Conlin, 3/84

Neg. at: Division for Historic Preservation

View: Truss and Clerestory of the Mill
Building

3 of 13



FOR SALE
CALL 1-800-368-1800
TELEPHONE

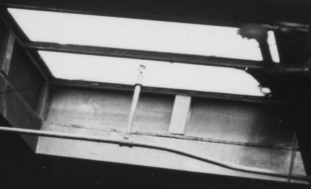
SALE
Paperston
TL3-1800

NO PARKING
ANY TIME

1980-AV

Allen Herschell Carousel Factory
180 Thompson Street
North Tonawanda, Niagara Co., New York
Photo: John Conlin, March 1984
Neg: Div. for Historic Preservation, Albany
View: Rear of Paint Shop and Storage
Building from west

#4 of 13



C

OUTES
ONLY

E

Allen Herschell Carousel Factory
180 Thompson Street
North Tonawanda, Niagara Co., New York

Photo: John Conlin, March 1984

Negs: Div. for Historic Preservation

View: Skylit corridor between the Paint
Shop and Storage Building and the
Machine Shop #5 of 13



Allen

Allen Herschell Carousel Factory
180 Thompson Street
North Tonawanda, Niagara Co., New York

Photo: John Conlin, March 1984

Negs: Div. for Historic Preservation, Albany

View: Roundhouse and Assembly and Testing
Building with their various additions

#6 of 13 from the east



Allan Herschell Carousel Factory

180 Thompson Street

North Tonawanda, Niagara Co., New York

Photo: John Conlin, March 1984

Neg: Div. for Historic Preservation, Albany

View: Roundhouse with additions from south

7 of 13



Allen Herschell Carousel Factory ~~Complex~~

180 Thompson Street

North Tonawanda, Niagara Co., New York

Photo: John Conlin, March 1984

Negs: Div. for Historic Preservation, Albany

View: Roundhouse from east

8 of 13



Allan Herschell Carousel Factory
180 Thompson Street

North Tonawanda, Niagara Co., New York

Photos: John Conlin, March 1984

Negs: Div. For Historic Preservation, Albany

View: 1916 No. 1 Special Three Abreast

Herschell CARousel located in factory

*9 of 13

*The Niagara Frontier
Factory Museum*

NY 14120



Allan Herschell Carousel Factory

180 Thompson Street

North Tonawanda, Niagara Co., New York

Photos: John Conlin, March 1984

Negs: Div. for Historic Preservation, Albany

View: 1916 No. One Special Three Abreast

Herschell Carousel located in factory #10 of 13



3. Allan Herschell Carousel Factory

180 Thompson Street

North Tonawanda, Niagara Co., New York

Photos: John Conlin, March 1984

Negs: Div. for Historic Preservation, Albany

View: Cartouches with low-relief on rounding

board on 1916 No. One Speical Three Abreast

Herschell Carousel #11 of 13

*rounded boards
Speical*



Allan Herschell Carousel Factory

180 Thompson Street

North Tonawanda, Niagara Co., New York

Photos: John Conlin, March 1984

Negs: Div. for Historic Preservation, Albany

View: The two different models of horses on
the Number One Special Three ABreast Herschell
Carousel #12 of 13

style number row horses
Special



Allan Herschell Carousel Factory
180 Thompson Street
North Tonawanda, Niagara Co., New York

Photos: John Conlin, March 1984

Negs: Div. for Historic Preservation, Albany

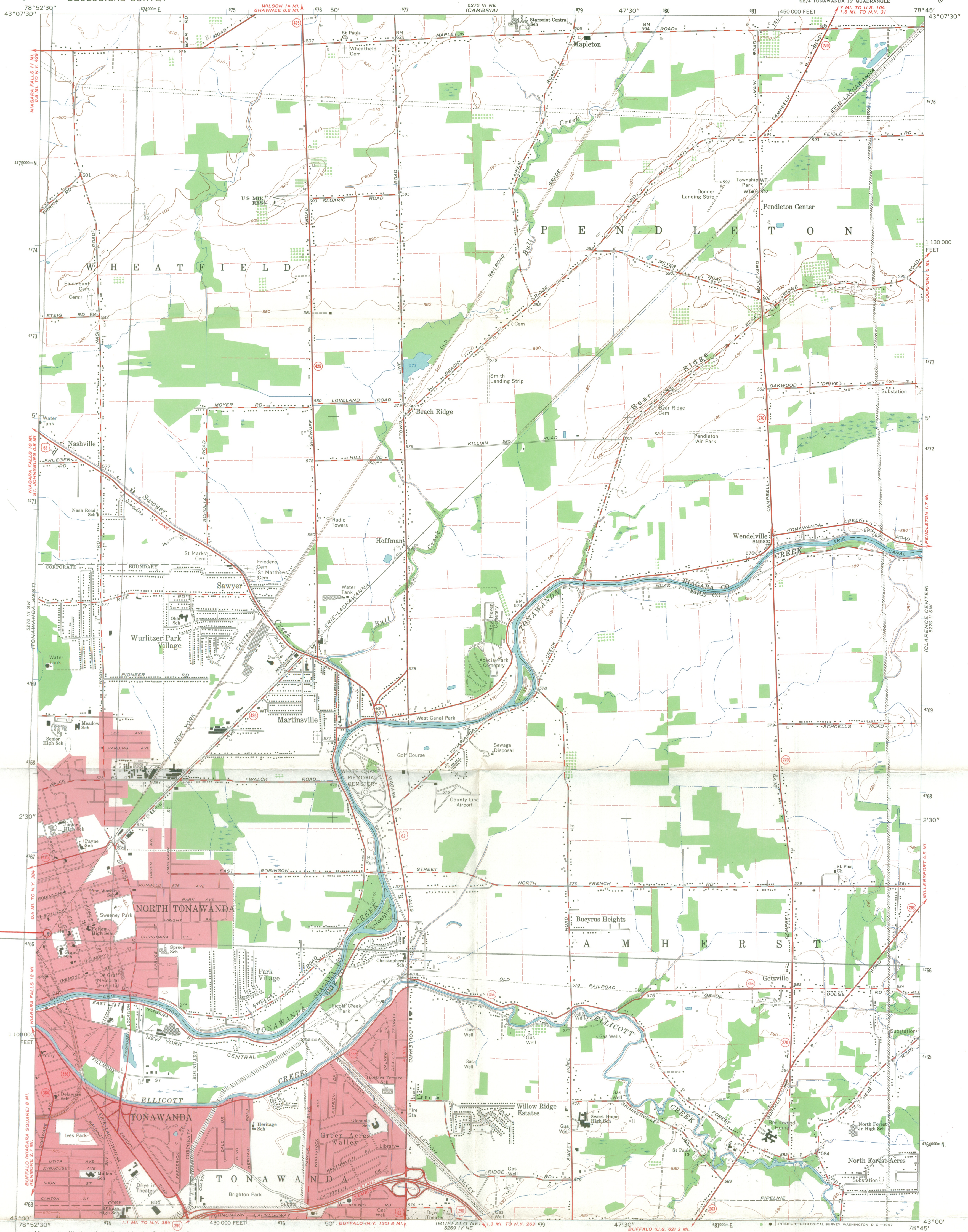
View: "Lovers' Tub" on the No. One Special

Three Abreast Herschell Carousel

#13 of 13

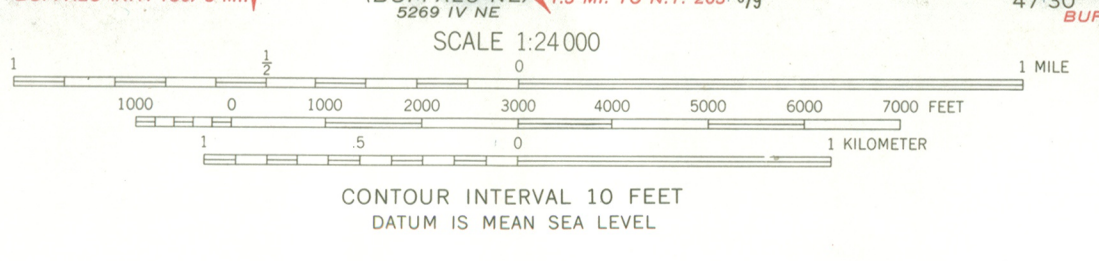
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

TONAWANDA EAST QUADRANGLE
NEW YORK
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SE/4 TONAWANDA 15' QUADRANGLE



Allan Herschell Carousel Factory
180 Thompson Street
North Tonawanda, Niagara County
Tonawanda, East Quad
(Zone 17)
Northing
Easting
A. 673270 4766070

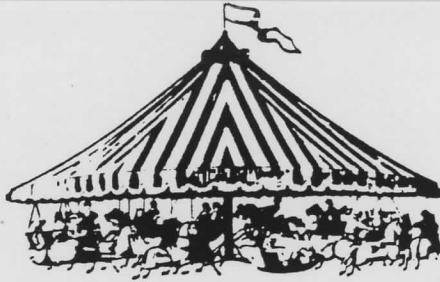
Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
in cooperation with New York Department of Public Works
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and U.S. Lake Survey
Planimetry compiled by U.S. Corps of Engineers from
aerial photographs taken 1942. Topography by
planetable surveys 1948. Revised 1965
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on New York coordinate system, west zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 17, shown in blue
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



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

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

TONAWANDA EAST, N. Y.
SE/4 TONAWANDA 15' QUADRANGLE
N4300—W7845/7.5
1965
AMS 5270 III SE—SERIES V821



National Carousel Association

March 2, 1983

Frederick Fried, A founder
~~Chairman, Conservation Committee~~

National Register of Historic Places
1100 "L" Street N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20240

Landmark Designations

Dear Sirs:

This is an appeal for preservation of one of America's most extraordinary wooden structures. This building, located in North Tonawanda, New York, is enriched with a most colorful history, being the original factory for the design, carving and construction of carousels for our fairgrounds, seashore resorts, carnivals and parks. This is the Allan Herschell Company factory. Mr. Herschell, along with James Armitage, had been manufacturers of carousels - Steam Riding Galleries, as they named them, since the propellant was a steam boiler with a belt attachment to the machine equipped with wheels on a track. The firm began operation in 1882 and continued under different names as the Herschell-Spillman, and the Allan Herschell Company.

— Together, these firms produced more carousels than any other in the world, and in the 1890's they produced one carousel a day.

Today, the structure is still standing in good condition, serving as a warehouse. However, the name, "Allan Herschell Company, Manufacturer of Carousels - Merry-Go-Rounds," is still emblazoned on its sides, each letter three feet high, though fading. A railroad siding, still there, once freighted the company's products to fairgrounds and carnivals to the remotest parts of our continent and the world.* The roundhouse in which the carousels were erected and tested before being shipped still stands ready to receive a carousel once made in this very shop.

This carousel has been purchased by the Carousel Society of the Niagara Frontier through the nickels and dimes of school children and the local population. This organization's charter calls for the "Preservation of carousel history of the Niagara Frontier and to collect and preserve artifacts, manuscripts and other memorabilia dealing with carousel and music machines."

North Tonawanda was also the home of several organ and musical instrument firms. Among them were the Wurlitzer Company, the North Tonawanda Musical Instrument Works, and the Artizan Factories, Inc. All made organs for the carousels. These buildings are still standing, empty or employed for other purposes.

cont'd....

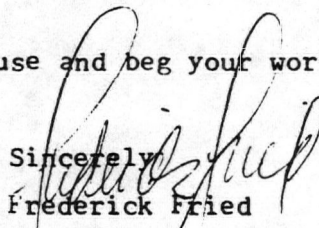
Interest in the carousel has grown enormously within the last ten years, although the number of operating carousels is dwindling alarmingly each year** In the United States, where once over ten thousand carousels were in operation, now exist only 280. It is urgently important that we alert our fellow citizens to the danger and threat to our once great heritage.

The Carousel Society of the Niagara Frontier was organized to do just that, and deserves your assistance. Having purchased the carousel, their drive is now on to:

1. Save the Allan Herschell building
2. Get Federal and local financing to help in its purchase
3. To have it declared a national landmark
4. Establish a museum as an educational and cultural center, the first of its kind in the country.
5. Train docents who can bring the message of historic preservation to the public.

I am happy and proud to endorse this great cause and beg your worthy attention and assistance.

Sincerely,


Frederick Fried

- * Notes of a Merry-Go-Round Salesman. Autobiography of Joseph Guinn, salesman for the Armitage Herschell Company. An account of his travels with his sample carousel around the world. Merry-Go-Roundup, serialized starting with the September 1975 issue.
- ** Last Ride for Carousel Figures? Historic Preservation, July/September issue, 1977, pp 22-27.

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

March 12, 1984

Mr. Orin Lehman
Commissioner
New York State Office of
Parks, Recreation and Historic Places
Agency Building #1
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12238

J. Slovic
OK page
OL

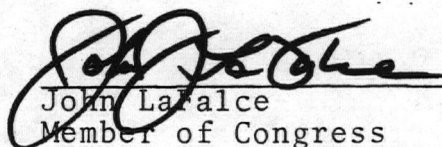
Dear Commissioner Lehman:

It has recently come to our attention that the Carousel Society of the Niagara Frontier (CSNF) of North Tonawanda, New York, has applied to the Division of Historic Preservation for a nomination to be listed on the National Register of Historic places.

As you may know, the CSNF has tirelessly generated an enormous amount of community support, both monetary and man/hours, and interest in this project. We strongly believe that completion of this most intriguing undertaking can yield very tangible economic and psychological benefits to the residents of the City of North Tonawanda and Niagara County. The unique industrial history of North Tonawanda as a renowned manufacturing center of carousels is a hallmark of Americana that should not be allowed to fade into history unnoticed.

Thus, we respectfully request that you give the CSNF application all due consideration so that the organization's efforts in revitalizing North Tonawanda might be complemented by the benefits which would flow from historic landmark status.

Thank you for your interest in this matter.


John LaFalce
Member of Congress


Alfonse D'Amato
United States Senator

AD:fsc
cc: Mayor Elizabeth Hoffman

RECEIVED

MAR 23 1984
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

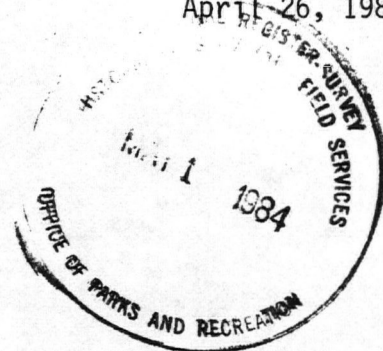


NIAGARA COUNTY
DEPT. OF ECON. DEV. & PLANNING
NIAGARA COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
59 PARK AVENUE
LOCKPORT, NEW YORK 14094

GLENN L. MATHIASSEN
Director

(716) 439-6033

April 26, 1984



Ms. Clair Ross
New York State Office of Parks,
Recreation and Historic Preservation
The Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller
Empire State Plaza
Agency Building 1
Albany, New York 12238

Dear Ms. Ross:

Enclosed is a certified resolution passed by the Niagara County Planning Board concerning the Allan Herschell Carousel Factory Complex, 180 Thompson Street, North Tonawanda, Niagara County.

I hope this assists on behalf of the Carousel Factory Complex to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Glenn Mathiasen
Director

Enc. - Resolution

cc: Shanley
McKernan
Mayor Hoffman

GM/bs

NIAGARA COUNTY, NEW YORK

PLANNING BOARD
RESOLUTION

North Tonawanda Carousel - National Register of Historic Places

WHEREAS, Allan Herschell was a pioneer in the manufacturing of carousels, and

WHEREAS, the Hershell Companies which were founded in 1883 became the world's largest manufacturer of carousels by the turn of the century, and

WHEREAS, carousel manufacturing contributed to the growth of numerous other manufacturers including the Rudolph Wurlitzer Company, and

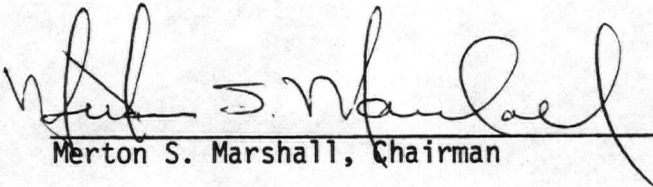
WHEREAS, the factory building located at 180 Thompson Street in North Tonawanda began operation in 1915, and

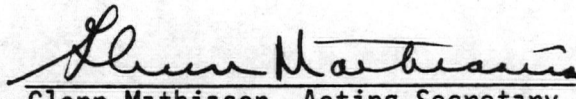
WHEREAS, the staff of the Niagara County Department of Economic Development and Planning recommend that the above facility be placed on the National Register of Historic Places to enhance tourism, the economy and the quality of life, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Niagara County Planning Board hereby supports the efforts of the Mayor and others of North Tonawanda and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to have this building included on the National Register of Historic Places, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Planning Board recommends to the Niagara County Legislature that they indicate their support of the above efforts.

CERTIFICATION: This is to certify that the foregoing resolution was duly passed by the Niagara County Planning Board at a regular meeting held in Lockport, New York, on April 16, 1984.


Merton S. Marshall, Chairman


Glenn Mathiasen, Acting Secretary

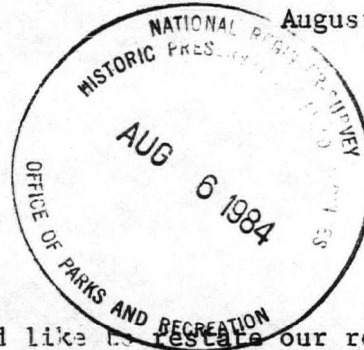
CAROUSEL SOCIETY

of the NIAGARA FRONTIER, INC.

P.O. Box 672, North Tonawanda, N.Y. 14120

August 3, 1984

Ms. Claire Ross, Field Representative
Division For Historic Preservation
Agency Building 1
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12238



Dear Ms. Ross:

As the sponsoring organization we would like to ~~restare~~ our request to nominate the Allan Herschell Co. factory building to the National Register of Historic Sites.

Located at 180 Thompson Street in the City of North Tonawanda, New York, this complex of wood frame buildings was the home for nearly 50 years of the Allan Herschell Company, manufacturers of carousels and other amusement park rides. The products of this company were shipped throughout the world. Children across the United States continue to enjoy the experience of riding the hand carved carousels, car and boat rides, "Little Dipper" roller coasters, and others found at carnivals, country fairs, and amusement parks.

The carousels produced by the Herschell companies and by other companies in New York City and Philadelphia are now being recognized as prized American folk art. Operating machines are being dismantled by antique dealers for tremendous profit. Very few complete machines remain to be enjoyed by the young and the young at heart.

To our knowledge this building is the only remaining complex in which hand carved carousels were produced in the United States. The Carousel Society has purchased a 1916 Allan Herschell carousel, one of the first to be produced in this building, and is now operating the carousel in the round house portion of the building complex.

We plan to restore this historic building for use as a carousel and band organ museum. We believe this building has National significance as a historic site which has contributed to the recreation of several decades of American families. Your efforts and assistance in nominating this building to the National Register are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Raphaelle A. Proefrock,
President CSNF