

## **The Facility**

The Carousel at Lighthouse Point Park is a unique historic facility. Besides housing the antique Carousel, the building provides ample space for private functions with beautiful views of New Haven Harbor and Long Island Sound, especially at sunset.



**LIGHT HOUSE POINT & CAROUSEL**

## **History:**

### **THE CAROUSEL AT LIGHTHOUSE POINT PARK – A WONDERFUL RIDE**

Although there were more than 10,000 such carousels in operation in the 1920's, The Lighthouse Park Carousel is one of less than 100 in use today. For a small fee, come take a ride on one of the 72 figures mounted in 20 ranks on a 60 foot platform.

## **Glory Days**

The Lighthouse Point Park Carousel is a unique and magnificent treasure. Built in 1916, it is a rare and important example of American folk art. Although there were more than 10,000 such carousels in operation in the 1920s, the Lighthouse Park Carousel is one of less than 100 in use today.



## A New Life

For years, a ride on the carousel was the highlight of a day at New Haven's Lighthouse Park. But time and use took a heavy toll. Hurricanes, age and gradual deterioration from the seaside location caused the carousel to eventually close down, and the building was boarded up in 1977. The carved creatures were dismantled and placed in storage, and the Wurlitzer Band Organ fell silent.

In late 1980, the mayor of New Haven appointed a group of citizens to investigate ways to restore the carousel with private funding. These dedicated volunteers joined together to reclaim this piece of New England heritage. In 1983 the carousel and its storied pavilion were placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The City of New Haven, which purchased the carousel in 1927, allocated funds to rehabilitate the neglected building. An "Adopt-A-Horse" program was developed to help pay for restoration of the endowment was established at the Community foundation for Greater New Haven to build a Reserve for the future. After hours of scraping,



cleaning, painting, fundraising and restoration, the carousel twirled once again. Yet there is much to be done.

### A Labor of Love

Keeping the carousel beautiful and in working order is a continuing task. The motor that sends the carousel spinning requires regular refurbishing, as does the organ that accompanies riders on their flights of fancy. Horses need new tails, manes, and jewels. Routine wear and tear caused by the damp bathing suits of seaside riders make frequent paint touch-ups necessary. Maintenance and restoration must be ongoing if the carousel is to remain beautiful and vibrant.

## **CAROUSEL FACTS: HISTORY AND TRIVIA**

It was assembled in 1916 by the Murphy Brothers in their Savin Rock workshop.

The carved animals were the work of the Murphy Brothers, Charles I.D. Loeff and Charles Carmel.

Few carousels are bigger. It boasts 72 figures mounted on 20 ranks on a 60-foot platform.

There are animals aplenty. Jumping horses are set four abreast alternate with horses standing three abreast. Two exotic dragon chariots charge from opposite sides of the platform. Nearby strides a camel.

Paintings of the New Haven Harbor – steamboats, sailing ships, barges, lighthouses and mermaids add to the attraction.