



GLEN ECHO PARK

Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**** Media Advisory ****

Glen Echo Park Begins Celebration of Carousel 100th Anniversary with Live Launch Event

Glen Echo, Maryland – The Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture, together with Montgomery County and the National Park Service, will commemorate the 100th anniversary of Glen Echo Park’s beloved Dentzel carousel with a months-long celebration, including virtual lectures on the history and restoration of the carousel, summer family weekend activities, social media contests, carousel anniversary merchandise, a fundraising campaign, and the premieres of three short videos that will feature personal stories reflecting the unique and enduring role the carousel has played in the community for a century. To kick off the celebration of the **Carousel 100th Anniversary**, the Partnership will present a launch event on **February 18 at 12:30 p.m.**

Live from the carousel building in Glen Echo Park, emcee Liz Dapo, Artistic Director of the Puppet Co. and her sidekick (find out when you tune in!), will guide the audience through a short program to announce the exciting activities and events planned for the 100th anniversary. She will be joined by Glen Echo Park Partnership Executive Director Katey Boerner and Partnership Board President Bonnie Casper along with special messages from the **National Park Service, Senator Chris VanHollen, Congressman Jamie Raskin, Maryland Delegate Marc Korman, Montgomery County Councilmember Andrew Friedson**, and other special guests!

The livestream can be viewed on the Glen Echo Park website (<https://glenechopark.org/carousel100>), as well as on YouTube and Facebook.

Glen Echo Park patrons, carousel enthusiasts, history buffs, and kids of all ages will find something to participate in with this unique celebration beginning this month and running through September. A few highlights include:

- Following the live launch event, the Partnership will present a special behind-the-scenes virtual tour of the carousel. Pre-recorded and premiering on YouTube on February 19.
- On February 24, the first of four lectures in the Carousel 100th Anniversary lecture series will be given by filmmaker Ilana Trachtman as part of the Partnership’s Black History Month programming. Ms. Trachtman will discuss her upcoming documentary, which tells the Civil Rights story of the carousel.
- In a joint project with Story Tapestries, a nonprofit arts service organization that specializes in empowering people’s voices through digital storytelling, the two organizations are collecting information from the public throughout the month of February. A form is now available on the Glen Echo Park website, and individuals are invited to describe their most memorable moment on the carousel. A handful of the stories collected will be featured in three short videos, and some will be

shared in other ways throughout the carousel celebration. All the stories will be preserved. A link to the form can be found at <https://glenechopark.org/carousel100>.

The Glen Echo Park website has a special section devoted to Carousel 100th Anniversary activities and events: <https://glenechopark.org/carousel100>. There the public can find detailed information as well as RSVP for events, purchase Carousel 100th Anniversary logo merchandise, donate to the Carousel 100th Anniversary fund, share their carousel story, and more.

Carousel 100th Anniversary Celebration activities are paid for with funds provided by the state of Maryland through the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, as well as Heritage Montgomery and funds from private donors. Additionally, the Dentzel Carousel at Glen Echo Park has been awarded the 2021 Heritage Award in the “Place” category from the State of Maryland through the Maryland State Arts Council, which comes with \$5,000 in funding for the celebratory events.

WHO: Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture

WHAT: Live Launch Event for Carousel 100th Anniversary Celebration

WHEN: February 18, 2021 at 12:30pm

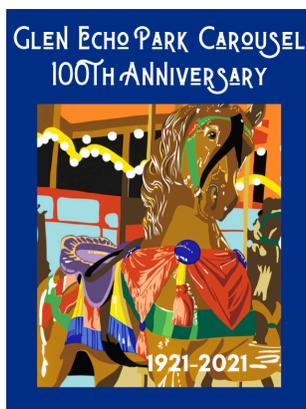
WHERE: Live on the Glen Echo Park Partnership website (<https://glenechopark.org/carousel100>), as well as YouTube and Facebook

WHY: To announce the activities and events included in the months-long Glen Echo Park Carousel 100th Anniversary celebration.

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Note to editors: High-resolution images of the carousel, including historic images are available.

CAROUSEL HISTORY



Installed in Glen Echo Park in 1921 and now the property of the National Park Service, the carousel has been described as “one of the Washington area’s true treasures.” The ride was built by the premiere carousel company of its day: the Dentzel Carousel Company of Germantown, Pennsylvania. Dentzel carousels of the 1920s represented the height of carousel design, known for their elegantly carved and painted animals and their precision-crafted mechanisms. The carousel is one of only 135 functioning antique carousels in the country and one of the few still in its original location. With its playful animals and striking ornamentation, the carousel has been an iconic symbol of the Park throughout the site's amusement park years and into its current phase as an arts and cultural center.

The carousel was saved through actions of the local community when threatened with a sale to another park in the early 1970s and is a local treasure loved by many in the Washington, DC area. The carousel is also the site of civil rights protests that took place in the 1960s during the era of the privately-owned amusement park.

A full restoration of the decorative elements of the carousel was conducted from 1983 through 2003, paid for with funds from Montgomery County, the State of Maryland, and the federal government through the National Park Service; in addition, a \$23 million renovation of other Glen Echo Park facilities was completed in the mid 2000s. Recent major repairs, paid for by the National Park Service, the State of Maryland through the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, and Montgomery County, include replacing the roof of the carousel building, replacing the outdated fire suppression system, and rebuilding the band organ room, which houses the

Wurlitzer band organ. These much-needed repairs will now keep the carousel safely protected for many years to come.

Today, Glen Echo Park is one of the premiere arts and cultural centers in the Washington, DC area, and the carousel is the only ride that remains in the park from the amusement park era, which ended in 1968. It has a ridership of close to 55,000 each year and normally operates from May through September each year. Due to Covid-19, the carousel did not operate in 2020. The Partnership hopes to be able to celebrate the 100th anniversary with carousel rides this year, dependent upon COVID restrictions imposed by the State of Maryland and/or Montgomery County. If permitted, the ride will open on May 1, 2021.

ABOUT GLEN ECHO PARK AND THE GLEN ECHO PARK PARTNERSHIP

Glen Echo Park is a vibrant arts and cultural center presenting festivals, exhibitions, and dances, as well as children's theater, music programs, nature programs, and art classes to more than 375,000 visitors each year. The Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture, a nonprofit organization, oversees these and other activities, including preserving the historic structures in the Park. Glen Echo Park, part of the National Park Service, is located in Glen Echo, Maryland, six miles northwest of Georgetown along the scenic Potomac River palisades.

The Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture is supported in part by the Maryland State Arts Council (msac.org) and also by funding from the Montgomery County government and the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County (creativemoco.com). All programs are produced in cooperation with the National Park Service and Montgomery County, Maryland.