

GLEN ECHO PARK CAROUSEL 100TH ANNIVERSARY

FACT SHEET | 1921 - 2021



INSTALLED IN 1921 by the Dentzel Carousel Company of Germantown, Pennsylvania, the Glen Echo Park carousel is **one of only 135 functioning antique carousels in the country and one of the few still in its original location.**



Listed on the **National Register of Historic Places**, the carousel is truly a Washington area treasure!



Known as a "**menagerie carousel**" because of the variety of its animals, the Glen Echo Park carousel includes **52 animals**: 40 horses, 4 rabbits, 4 ostriches, 1 giraffe, 1 deer, 1 lion and 1 tiger. It also features two circus chariots. 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.



In the **summer of 1960, Howard University students led protests at the park** along with local residents. The students rode the carousel and were arrested for doing so in violation of the amusement park's segregation policies that barred African Americans. The **case went all the way to the United States Supreme Court**. Their continued protests under the heat of the summer sun – and the active engagement of community members in the fight – led to the amusement park's desegregation, opening the venue to everyone for its 1961 season and beyond.



In 1970, slated to be sold after the private Glen Echo Amusement Park has closed in 1968, the Glen Echo Park carousel was **saved by a group of local citizens**, led by Town of Glen Echo resident Nancy Long. Private citizens and foundations also donated funds in support of a twenty-year restoration.



In **1983**, Rosa Patton —a North Carolina-based artist who specializes in carousel restoration—began working on the carousel's 52 animals and other sections, including ceiling and barrel panels and the Wurlitzer band organ front. Assisted by her artist husband, other artists, and carousel staff at the Park, she removed as many as 10 layers of paint before repainting each carousel animal in its initial hues. She left several **small areas unfinished to reveal the original paint**, providing a "window" into the conservation process. The **twenty-year restoration** of the carousel was **completed in 2003**, the canopy building and floor were finished in 2005, and the band organ was refurbished in 2007.



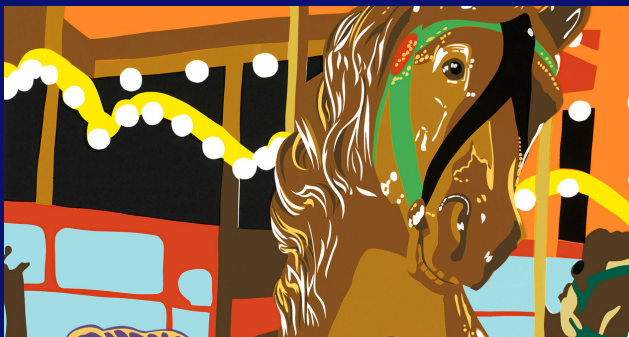
Another **more recent rehabilitation** of the carousel is the latest chapter in its colorful history. In 2019-2020 it closed for major repairs to the carousel building roof and the band organ room, as well as receiving a new fire detection system. (It remained **closed in 2020 due to the pandemic**.)



Today, 1921 Dentzel Carousel is the **only remaining historic ride from the amusement park era at Glen Echo Park**. It is ridden by **more than 50,000 people each year** – including multi-generations of families visiting the Park. In 2021, the carousel celebrates its 100th Anniversary in the Park.



Find information on the Carousel 100th Anniversary Celebration at glenechopark.org/carousel100



GLEN ECHO PARK CAROUSEL 100TH ANNIVERSARY

TIMELINE | 1921 - 2021

1921

Carousel installed in the Park

1926

Wurlitzer 165 Military Style Band Organ installed

1940s

Servicemen and women visit the Park to ride the carousel during WWII

1960

Howard University students & Bannockburn residents protest the segregation of the Park

1961

The privately-owned Glen Echo Amusement Park opens to all races

1968

Amusement Park closes

1969-1970

Carousel saved by local residents

1983 - 2003

Twenty-year restoration project

2010

Park honors protesters at 50-Year reunion

2020 & 2021

Carousel closed for 2020 due to global pandemic. Opens for 100th season in 2021!

