

THE FAGB PRESENTS
THE
MANCHESTER

F A I R G R O U N D

EXTRAVAGANZA



CENTURY & TOBERS

SPECIAL

The Fairground Association of Great Britain:

Century of Tobers

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Edited by Michael A. Smith.

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EDITORIAL

Perhaps I should start by wishing the Association a happy first birthday! Yes, we have survived our first year of existence, and I think satisfactory progress has been made. By way of a celebration, we are presenting our first "Manchester Fairground Extravaganza"; this is really the first time such an event has taken place, certainly in the North-West. To follow shortly after this will be the AGM, and I hope members will give this their full support, so enabling us to progress into a second successful year.

Membership cards were dispatched with the last "Century of Tobers", so all but the most recent members should have theirs by now. Would members with PINK cards (numbers 101 - 257) please note that RENEWALS are now due, and should be paid as soon as possible, and not later than 31st March if they wish to receive the next edition of this magazine.

Members will be pleased to know that badges have now been ordered, thanks to the generosity of member Pat Collins, who has lent the Association the necessary funds. Delivery is expected shortly, so watch the "WF" for details. Orders will be strictly CASH WITH ORDER, so as to cut down on administrative work. It is hoped that car stickers, tee shirts, etc., will follow.

Michael A. Smith, January 1979.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Member Colin Parker is currently trying to trace some of his ancestors who were in the showland business some years ago. Information so far collected is a little sparse, but it is hoped that other members may be able to add something to this. Henry GUNTHORPE was the owner of a Bioscope Show which was disbanded when he died in 1924. It is believed that the family were based in either Lancashire or Lincolnshire. Any information would be most gratefully received, and can be sent to Colin at 97 Eastcote Road, Uxner, Middlesex, HA5 1ES.

MACHINE CHANGES

New Machines -

Machine	Owner	Manufacturer	Date
Dodgems	G. Eddy	Supercar	Winter 1978/9
Meteorite	W. Coneley	W. Coneley	Autumn 1978
Twist	T. Smith	Leisure Sales	Winter 1978/9

Changes of Ownership -

Machine	From	To	Date
Ark (Easyrider)	M.A. Collins*	E. Atha	Early 1979
Gallopers	Pat Collins	L. Bishton	12/78
Jets	Rose Bros.	W. Lee, jnr.	Autumn 1978
Jets	D. Parnham	?	Autumn 1978
Jets	A. Evans	?	11/78
Octopus	J.H. Mellors	C. Summers	11/78
Twist	P. Booth (Porthcawl)	D. Searle	10/78
Twist	D. Parnham	?	Autumn 1978

* M.A. Collins' Easyrider is currently appearing at the Kelvin Hall, presented by Clifford Codona. I am told that Athas expect to take delivery after the end of the season there.



MONT BLANC BURNT OUT!

I have several reports concerning the Mont Blanc, travelled until recently by Albert Evans, and since in store at their yard at Burn, Nr. Selby, Yorks. It appears that the ride has been destroyed in a fire, leaving only the twisted and charred remains of the trucks, and the steel components - cars, swifts, etc. This is a sad loss, and now means that there is only one Blanc surviving from the 1930's in this country: that of member Tom Green, which still travels regularly in Lancashire.



Members may be interested to know that Kevin Scrivens is currently working on a history of Mont Blancs, covering every machine known to have been built, which we hope the Association will eventually be able to publish. Anyone wishing to help, with either information or photographs, can write to Kevin at 25 Harnion Road, Southsea, Hants.

ASSOCIATION'S FIRST A.G.M.

Subject to the confirmation of our booking, the first Annual General Meeting of the Association will take place on Saturday, 3rd February, 1979. The venue will be the Digbeth Civic Institute; this is located within easy reach of Birmingham New Street Station, and only a few hundred yards from Bob Wilson's Fun Fair in the Bull Ring. It is hoped that many members will make the effort to attend, as there is much important business to discuss. Nominations for officers and area representatives are now invited; please send them, together with any other enquiries concerning the A.G.M. to the Chairman: Mr Graham Downie, 1 Holly Court, Frome, Somerset. Phone: Frome 66335. It is expected that the afternoon's activities will be brought to an end with a film show, as at last year's meeting. Member Rod Jesson has kindly offered to bring along his projector, and other members are invited to bring along their films for showing. Please watch the "World's Fair" for further information.

FORUM: The page for your comments/queries

Ted Wyatt of 56 Newtown Road, Castleigh, Hants., SO5 4BW, writes: I would like details, history, or photographs, also personal experiences, regarding Bartletts' fair of Fordingbridge, Hants., which travelled Hampshire, Dorset and Wiltshire from 1840 to 1939. The Gallopers were sold during the war to Goodey Brothers, of Twyford, Berks. They were then sold to Joe Kefford, Albert Fanning, and lastly Fred Double-day, where they stood outside the Kursaal at Southend-on-Sea, in a very bad state. After that they passed to Body Brothers, of Snodland, Kent, who broke some of the machine up. They sold various pieces to Crofts' antique dealers in Petham, Kent, and renovated and restored to a reasonable condition what was left. This was not as a ride but as a platform and top, to act as a platform for use at the 1959 Jazz Festival at Beaulieu. Unfortunately, it is said to have been destroyed by hippies during a televised part of the concert. Thus a machine made in Hampshire came home to die in Hampshire. It is with this sad ending that I am trying to recapture any straws that may be grasped of a respected family of the New Forest who gave pleasure to countless thousands of men, women and children for 100 years, and record safely some history which may otherwise be lost forever.

Bernard Fielding, of Crosby, Liverpool, has sent several short items for inclusion in this column.

The first is an extract from the "100 Years Ago" column of the Halifax Courier, for June 1964. The original letter was published in June, 1864, and has an interesting bearing on the statement on p.13 of our last issue that steam on the fairgrounds was introduced by Mr Soame in 1865. Judging by the expression "last year's fair" it would appear that somebody was using steam in the West Riding as early as 1863. Any ideas?

The Halifax Guardian contained the following letter in its issue of 18th June, 1864:

"Having noticed among the amusements of last year's Fair what is called a 'Go-round' propelled by a steam engine, I wish to call attention to the very great danger there is in allowing this destructive agent to be used for such a purpose. It endangers the lives of scores of children, as in case of an explosion, which would not be at all unlikely considering the state of pressure at which it is worked. I do hope those in power will insist upon this favourite machine being worked by the old system, making it again a safe and pleasing recreation to the juvenile portion of the visitors at the coming fair.

"Yours etc., 'One Anxious for Safety'."

The second item is a letter which Mr Fielding wrote about 12 years ago to a local paper; it concerns Liverpool Folly Fair, 1745:

"While calling at the offices of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board recently I was very interested in a picture with the above title, depicting an old fair-ground scene. The main 'attraction' appears to be a portable theatre, with an open stage, but covered auditorium. Nearby is a horses roundabout with five or six men laboriously pushing in an anti-clockwise direction. I wonder if the artist realised that as the horses faced the normal way, the roundabout would be travelling backwards! Also shown was a small set of swingboats, a Punch and Judy show, and several open stalls, besides a showman's living van with end door, large window, and tall chimney.

"We are told that the fair was held at Easter, near to the present St George's Hall, and took its name from 'Liverpool Folly', an eight-storey building nearby. (Evidently they had 'skyscrapers' even in those days.) It is recorded that 'owing to abuses' the fair had fallen into disuse by 1818.

"Inquiries reveal that this picture was one of a series commissioned about 100 years ago by a local artist; so it is depicting a scene about 100 years after the event. I wonder what is the earliest known date for a roundabout, as I feel a bit sceptical of a horses roundabout as early as 1745. Possibly the artist is painting from memory of his own boyhood days, just before the fair closed down for good about 1818."

On reflection Mr Fielding thinks the men may have been pushing the roundabout the wrong way to stop it at the end of a ride.

THE MANCHESTER FAIRGROUND EXTRAVAGANZA

For those visiting the Manchester Fairground Extravaganza today, a very warm welcome from the Fairground Association, especially to those who are not members, or are encountering our activities for the first time.

At this point, a few words about the background to the exhibition may be of relevance. The idea first came about after a visit to The Fairground (exhibition) at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, in London, on 8th December, 1977. David Wallis asked if it would not be possible to run something similar, for one day, somewhere in the North West. The idea was duly sounded out, and met with a very good response. It was decided to use the concourse of the Renold Building at UMIST, as this was most suitable in both size and location, and a lecture theatre (for the film show) and the private bar were also booked. There then followed several months of trying to obtain suitable items to place on show; if all goes according to plan, you should be able to see how successful we have been by your surroundings today. A number of films were also chased up and booked for the film show, which will take place this evening at 5.00pm in 07.

This being the first time such an event has been staged by the Association, it is difficult to predict whether or not it will be a success; however we are very hopeful at present, and if it does meet with success it may be repeated in the future.

It was originally planned to produce a complete catalogue of all exhibits on show at the exhibition today. However, because of the uncertainty of some items turning up, and the late booking of others, to produce a comprehensive list would be more or less impossible. All items on show should be adequately labelled, though, so the list which follows is only a rough guide of what to expect. Our apologies for the non appearance of anything listed, and there will no doubt be quite a few late entries which are not listed.

1. Front boards from the ex-John Ling Moonrocket, painted by Edwin Hall in 1939.
2. Front from the ex-Matty Reid, jnr. Shooter, a flat Ben Hur scene, painted by Edwin Hall; one of his best pieces, and possibly as late as immediately post war. Now owned, and kindly lent by "Tate".
3. Front from the Ghost Train owned by Johnny Scott, painted a few years ago by Fred Fowle. This front was replaced a short while ago by a new one, and is now owned by "Tate".
5. Brand new front for David Wallis's Waltzer, straight from the workshop of Fred Fowle.
6. Front from a Maxwell-built Juvenile owned by Butlins Ltd., and based at Pshelli. Again newly decorated, straight from Fred Fowle.
7. Two old rounding boards, formerly used on Bert Holland's Waltzer. Decor is by Hall & Fowle, early 1960's.
8. An old rounding board from Arthur North's Dodgem, decor is again by Hall & Fowle.
10. Two boards from the front of Roger Hall's Divebomber, with decor by "Tate".
12. Five decorated shutters from the arcade of James Holmes. Straight from the workshop of "Tate".

13. Hoopla shutters and roll down boards from Henry Wallis's Bingo, decor by Fred Fowle.
20. Paybox from David Wallis's Cyclone Twist.
21. Paybox from Malcolm Taylor's "Ski Jump" Flying Coaster.
22. Shutter from Michael Wallis's Speedway; decor by Maxwells.
25. Popeye and Rocket from the ex-Ling Moonrocket. The Popeye was carved by Sidney Wright just after the war to replace the original, which was lost in a fire.
26. Car from David Wallis's Maxwell Waltzer, decor by Fred Fowle.
27. Motorcycle from Michael Wallis's Maxwell Speedway.
28. The old front from David Wallis's Waltzer; decor by Fred Fowle.
29. Two Ponies from James Holmes' Juvenile Gallopers.
30. New fibreglass Easyrider bike by Thos. Tinsley.
31. selection of fibreglass Panels by thos. Tinsley.
32. Fibreglass Satellite Car, built by Bennetts, and recently rebuilt by Pollards, owned by Michael Wallis.
50. $\frac{1}{2}$ " scale model of Orton & Spooner Scenic Dragons, still under construction, by Paul Angel, Hereford.
51. $\frac{1}{8}$ " scale model Cyclone Twist, built by D.R. Harrison, Hyde.
52. $\frac{1}{2}$ " scale model Speedway, built by D.A. Harrison, Hyde.
53. $\frac{1}{2}$ " scale model Waltzer, built by Ron Lee, Sheffield.
54. $\frac{1}{2}$ " scale model Paratrooper, built by Ron Lee, Sheffield.
55. $\frac{1}{2}$ " scale model Twist, built by Ron Lee, Sheffield.
57. $\frac{1}{2}$ " scale model of Fowler Showman's Engine "Onward", built by Stephen Smith, Hull.
58. 1/18th scale model of a Lakin "Odeon" Waltzer, still under construction, by M.A. Smith, Disley.
71. Street Barrel Piano, owned by John Nixon, Biddulph Moor.
72. 10 tune Musical Box, owned by Mr Spring, Stockport.
- 80 - 86. A selection of old amusement machines, owned by Graham Brierley, Flint.
- 87 - 90. A selection of old amusement machines, owned by Mr Spring, Stockport.
100. Two carved cornice pieces from an old living wagon; now owned by "Tate".
101. Selection of pressed metal price tickets from the ex-Ling Moonrocket.

*

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It is very difficult to thank everyone who has helped individually, but with apologies to anyone missed, our special thanks to the following:

Terry Agland; Paul Angel; Graham Brierley; ; Miss Clarke; Ernie Clouston; Michael Collins; Concorde Films; Fred Fowle & Staff; Roger Hall; Jack & Lynne Hardman; David Harrison; John Hayward; Mike & Angela Harworth; ; James Holmes; Vic King; Philip Knightbridge; Ron Lee; The Leeds & District Traction Engine Club; The Manchester Evening News; Manchester City Libraries; Robert Palmer; Harry Parrish; William Percival; Pollards Engineering Ltd.; Dick & Alva Price; Ralph the Printer; John Ray; John Nixon; Scottish Central Film Library; Kevin Scrivens; Stephen Smith; Mr Spring; Stenhouse Reed Shaw Northern Ltd; Malcolm Taylor; Thos. Tinsley Ltd.; "Tate"; Staff of the Registrars and Estates Departments at UMIST; Piccadilly Radio; David Wallis; Henry Wallis; Michael Wallis; Editor & Staff of the World's Fair.

ABOUT THE FAIRGROUND ASSOCIATION...

It is now almost a full year since the Fairground Association was officially inaugurated. It owes its origins to a small group of fairground enthusiasts who, chatting over a drink after visiting a fair in the Spring of 1977, mooted the idea of some form of club which would cater for those like themselves who wanted to extend their activities to more than just fairgoing.

Briefly, the aims suggested were the publication of a regular magazine, the sponsorship of research into all aspects of fairs, the promotion of the showman's cause (rather like a supporters' club) and the creation of a network for social activities between members.

The response to this scheme, floated in the columns of the weekly newspaper, the "World's Fair", was sufficient to land credence to the idea. A mailing list of those interested in the proposal was drawn up, and a pilot issue of this magazine sent to them. When the inaugural meeting took place on a cold January day in Birmingham, nearly 50 enthusiasts from as far afield as Northumberland and South Devon turned up to register their support.

Since then the Association has grown in strength to a membership of nearly 300, and it can claim a truly national identity, with representatives covering the whole of the Kingdom. Membership is not limited to this country and we have members in Germany, France and Eire.

The most important link between members is this magazine which is published quarterly. It enables members to make their own contribution to the Association's activities by writing articles on their own particular pet subjects, or participating in the projects into the history of various types of fairground equipment which have been initiated in these pages. Other activities have included several social evenings - usually including a film or slide show - and a highly successful model and photo exhibition staged at Loughborough on the Saturday of the November fair.

The response to the Association by the showmen themselves has been both positive and gratifying. Many are members, and some have already been able to draw upon the support of the Association. One showman in particular, who met with opposition to his plans to hold a fair in an Oxfordshire town last summer was able to gain support from the general public through the efforts of local members. The fair was held and was well enough received to justify a return there this year. On several occasions during the past year members have leapt to the defence of showmen when misleading or critical articles about them have appeared in the press.

The willingness to act as unofficial public relations officers (a quite deliberate policy on the part of the Association) has been reciprocated by the travelling community. Members carrying out research projects have been helped with valuable pieces of information, previously unseen photographs have been dug out of family collections - and of course, the friendly hand of welcome has been extended to fairgoing members.

And that really is what the Association is all about - a fellowship of people sharing a common interest, the life and times of the fairground.

GOOSE FAIR EXHIBITION

Members may already be aware of the major exhibition to be staged next summer at the Nottingham Castle Museum with the theme 'Nottingham Goose Fair'. The show, which will be a part of the 1979 Nottingham Festival, will run from June 2nd, and last for 3-4 months. Planning for the exhibition is now well under way, and many items are being loaned. Anyone who has anything interesting, which they may be prepared to lend to the Museum, should contact the Exhibitions and Information Officer, Miss Michaela Butter, at the Castle Museum, Nottingham, NG1 6EL. (Phone: Nottingham 41881, ext'n 45). As the exhibition will also cover fairs in general,

(Cont. overleaf.)

it is not vital that any material is connected with the Goose fair, although this would obviously be especially welcome. The sort of things at present needed include any old carved or painted work, old 'swag' (preferably from the period pre-1939), photographs, paintings, drawings, and so forth. Further information will be given in future issues.

DERBY DAY 200 EXHIBITION

Another exhibition planned for this year is the Derby Day 200 Exhibition, which will be held at the Royal Academy of Arts, in London, from 5th April to 1st July. The exhibition is to mark the 200th running of the Derby, and the organisers would like information and photographs relating to the fair held in conjunction of this famous race at Epsom, especially with respect to the changing of its site from the middle of the course to its present position opposite Tattenham Corner. They are also most anxious to secure the loan of a Galloper horse, if anyone can help. The person to contact is Mr Lionel Lambourne, Assistant Keeper, Department of Paintings, the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London S.W.7.

Morrison's' Punch & Judy Show

The following is an extract from the "Museums Bulletin", November 1978, and may be of some interest to members.

Inverness: Duncan Morrison's Punch and Judy Show, which travelled round the Highlands and beyond from the 1870's to 1975, has been donated to Inverness Museum. The puppets, thirteen in all, including such relatively rare figures as the Ghost, Doctor, Judge and Devil, were hand-carved from wood found by the wayside while the show travelled round. Also acquired are the bright red and yellow striped 'frame' or booth and dozens of photographs of the Morrison family dating back to the 1880's. A recording of the text of the show, by Mr Will Hay, the last practitioner, has been made and will feature in a new audio-visual display.

GALLOPERS PROJECT - 5

Because of the pressure on space in this issue of "Century of Tobers" part 5 of the Gallopers Project is much shortened, and in fact only gives details of a few sets previously covered, but about which I have had further information forwarded. I will go on to cover surviving Four-abreasts in the next issue, and in the meantime, please keep sending in any information about Gallopers. My thanks to Messrs Ken Smith and Philip Bradley for the information reproduced here.

G34 Butlins Ltd. Bognor Regis

As previously stated, Woolls Bros. acquired this set in 1935, but it came from Phil Phillips, of South Wales (and was not sold to him).

G39 Butlins Ltd. Minehead

The four Allen sets referred to were new to William Wilson (Packham Rye), two for Pat Collins, and the fourth for John J. Studd. They were all electric from the outset, and used German horses and other carved work. The G39 set was the one new to John J. Studd, son of Jacob Studd, who acquired them after disposing of his father's No. 1 Scanic Railway. Arnold Brothers acquired the set c.1930-2, to travel with their Unairplanes, and from 1936, their Jodgers. The set travelled extensively on both the Isle of Wight and on the surrounding mainland, regularly attending such fairs as Southampton Common, and until just after the war, Salisbury. In 1947 the set was sold to Billy Manning, then C. Manning had it for some years. As Mannings it travelled to a limited extent; one year they got it into Nottingham Goose fair. It later went to Minehead, where it remains to this day. In the mid-1930's Arnolds had the German carved work on the roundings and centre covered in

sheet aluminium, and decorated in a style then way ahead of its time. It has remained thus "plated-in".

G48

Arthur Barnard

Colwyn Bay

This set has been at Colwyn Bay since at least 1941, and possibly longer. It is now known that it was previously owned by Rowlands, of Cornwall, and now looks not greatly different, externally.

ROCKET RESTORATION PROGRESS

Philip Knightbridge has sent me the following progress report on the restoration of the ex-Ling Moonrocket, which he is at present undertaking.

1. Uprights, rafters and principals: these are all rotten, but measurements and details of irons have all been noted down. Where a component was wholly or partly missing, its details could be worked out by reference to the other half of the machine.
2. Centre truck: now partially dismantled. A farm tractor with hydraulic fore-end loader has recently been purchased, so that heavy items can now be lifted off the truck, in preparation for sand blasting, which I hope to do myself this summer. It may be possible to devise a system making use of the tractor for handling some of the heavy parts in the build up of the machine.
3. Front and Popeye Rocket: the eight front boards and the Popeye rocket have been rebuilt, the work being carried out by Onsite Developments, who also have the complete set of gates at their works for attention. It is expected that the boards, together with Popeye and his rocket will appear in one or two exhibitions, eventually in redecorated form.
4. 29' double deck frame truck purchased; formerly the Dodgem car truck of London section showman Billy Nichols. It has been stored on a farm for the last five years. The wheels have been replaced by Bedford coach wheels. The truck will be ideal for carrying the Rocket cars, in two layers, plus uprights, rafters, etc., on top, and there are brackets on the sides which would take the two large principals. The truck requires sand blasting, a new floor, and an improved braking system.
5. Rocket cars: the old rotten upholstery has been removed from these, revealing that the bulk of the wood framing of the cars is sound.

To continue this project, Philip tells me that some financial assistance is needed. This could be in the form of either sleeping or working partner(s), or alternatively donations would be most gratefully received. Photos of the ride, plus any useful information are also needed to help in the renovation. Anyone interested should contact Philip direct, c/o Contractmix Ltd., Alveston Hill Farm, Stratford-on-Avon, Warks. We hope to be able to keep members informed of progress in future editions of this magazine.

MFD Newsletter published

Modelmakers may be interested to know that Vic King recently published his first 'Model Fair Designs Newsletter'. It is intended that this will become a quarterly issue, and interested persons can obtain one year's subscription by sending 60p to the address given on page 29. The first newsletter gives a general discussion of its aims, some advice on obtaining various parts required for models, and a description of the 1/12th model Dragon Scenic being built by Mr Roy Legg, of Leebury, Berks.



THE MODEL TOBER

PART ONE: CHOICE OF SCALE

by Vic King

The first in a new series for modelmakers, in eight parts.

The aspiring fairground modelmaker, about to make a start on his, or her, first model should be strongly advised to think long and hard about scale. It is a well-known fact that in the first instance many modelmakers think in terms of fairly large scales, such as 1/12th or 1/8th. This is particularly the case if the modelmaker has previous experience with building carts or caravans. When asked why, they will more than likely reply that scales smaller than this are too fiddling, and anyhow, it's possible to put more detail into a larger model. I would go a little further and add that it is essential to include a great deal of detail in a large model if it is to look at all authentic.

With smaller models I have found that they can look very authentic and really eye catching using far less detail.



Mr Philip Bradley's 1/42nd scale model fair.

(P.W. Bradley)

There is also the very important factor of space. Most fairground modelmakers are initially obsessed with just one model - the old time Gallopers, but they are inclined to forget that Gallopers are a relatively small machine when compared with most others. If you are content to build just one good model and leave it at that, or even a typical "Village Fair" comprising Gallopers, Chairs, Cakewalk, Swings and Sidestuff, one of the larger scales will be O.K. as the Gallopers will be the largest machine, and at 1/12th scale these will build to about 38" in diameter. However, the snag comes if you then decide to go on from here and build a more modern machine, such as a saltzer or skid, when you will find that the diameter will be 45 or even 50 inches, not including the steps.

Thus a good general rule when considering scale would be: single models or small village fair projects - scales of 1/16th up to 1/8th give greater scope for a large amount of detail and for very ambitious lighting effects, particularly in the case of modern machines; Complete model fairs - scale of 1/16 only if you have an almost unlimited amount of space, and wish to work with a large amount of detail. Otherwise choose 1/24th scale or less.

Let us examine some of the smaller scales generally used and look at their merits and disadvantages.

The smallest accurate scale models I have seen are what is commonly called 4mm scale (approximately 1/76th) and are normally constructed to complement OO gauge model railway layouts for trackside effects. Almost always these are permanent fixed structures and are seldom made to work (with one or two notable exceptions). In a field setting beside a railway line they can look extremely attractive, and it is possible to purchase or scratch build a good selection of attendant transport items in die cast or white metal kit form. Models of this size are virtually impossible to demount in an authentic manner, or to illuminate effectively. An excellent article on modelling to this scale was written by Philip Bradley, and published in the Model Railway Constructor magazine in June 1967 (Editor's note: we hope shortly to be able to reprint this excellent article).

Other popular small scales are 1/48th and 1/42nd, and here again one of the main advantages is the good choice of commercially available transport items. With these two scales it is possible to fit reasonably authentic driving mechanisms, and to demount the models in fairly accurate manner. However, as with 4mm it is really not possible to do much in the way of lighting, except perhaps a few small internal lamps to illuminate the interior.

A small scale favoured by a number of modelmakers, and one which I originally worked with myself is 1/32nd ($\frac{1}{8}$ " = 1"). This is perhaps the smallest scale with which you can achieve all of the desirable aspects of the hobby, i.e. authenticity, demountability, and reasonably effective lighting (up to about 100 lamps per model). However, transport items are a bit of a problem at this scale, although some vehicle kits are available.

Without a doubt, the most popular scale for the more prolific modelmaker is 1/24th ($\frac{1}{2}$ " = 1"). Models constructed in this scale range from about 19" diameter for Gallopars to 27" diameter for the larger Scenic Dragons. There are probably more models currently being built in this scale than in all other scales put together. The great advantage is portability, as most 1/24th scale models when erected will pass through a standard door opening, and fit comfortably into the boot of a car. With this scale it is possible to have all of the desirable features of the hobby including very effective lighting schemes of up to 250 lamps per model. There are also many commercially available kits of transport items in 1/24th or 1/25th scales and a good selection of vintage toy models, all of which can be easily converted to fairground specification. The "Kamod" steam tractor is within the scope of this scale, and many interesting conversions have been made by adding a dynamo bracket, rebuilding and lowering the cab, and adding dummy belly tanks. In addition, there are a number of interesting radio controlled and electrically powered model vehicles in the model shops which are also ideal for fairground conversions.

Having chosen the scale which will best satisfy your modelmaking aspirations, you will need to decide upon your first model, and if possible, formulate a long term modelling strategy. In my next article, I will endeavor to give some advice on this from a beginners point of view, and discuss the various methods of obtaining the information that you will require to enable you to make a start on this fascinating hobby.

KITTY de SMILO'S SHOW -

In response to Ken Smith's query about the above on page 6 of the No. 4 "Century of Tubers, Mr Philip Bradley writes: This show was a Mirror Piece, bearing a big canvas flash "If you can't laugh, see a doctor".

Our second visit...



With Michael Bonhoff

The development of the German amusement industry is probably best reflected by its ride production. Obviously, fairground rides of the past and present have always been limited to variations of two basic movements: round and round, and up and down. Thus it is an old problem of the ride designers and manufacturers to find new combinations of the two. Fortunately in our time, new engineering, the use of lighter materials, and electric or hydraulic drive, not to forget the more recent computerisation, have brought about a much wider range of possibilities in this field, compared to the steam age.

In the old days, mainly the British, and later also the American designs had a considerable influence on the development of the early amusement rides in Germany, examples being the Sea-on-Land, the Gondole Switchback, and the wooden Big Dippers. In return, the German showmen and manufacturers made their contributions in the form of portable Chairplanes, and the legendary Moonrockets.

But the change from wood to steel as the main component of amusement devices also resulted in a complete change of design. After the last war orders for new machines were piling up, as large numbers of rides had been destroyed. However, as most of the old manufacturers in the East either no longer existed, or soon proved unable to satisfy the demand for modern equipment, a new steel ride industry was established by medium sized companies in southern Germany. In the course of the last 30 years a steady progression and development has also led to other companies in the central and northern parts of the country to turn towards the production of amusement rides. (By the way, I am planning to write about the manufacturers and their range of productions in a forthcoming issue of "Century of Toberns".

The initial ideas for new equipment very often came directly from the showmen, but only a few showmen actually build their own rides at their winter quarters. The majority turn to the specialised manufacturers, who have the necessary experience and technical know-how, as well as the money, to be able to turn ideas and drawings into reality. These companies also seem to have enough ideas of their own to develop at least one novelty a year. Naturally this represents a great financial risk for the pioneers on both sides, because for every successful novelty there are dozens of failures and short-lived experiments.

About 75% of the total ride production is being exported to all parts of the world, including Scandinavia, Russia and Japan. The main customers of West German equipment, however, are showmen and park owners in the United States and Canada. Therefore the rides offered have to be suitable for both travelling and for being installed at permanent sites.

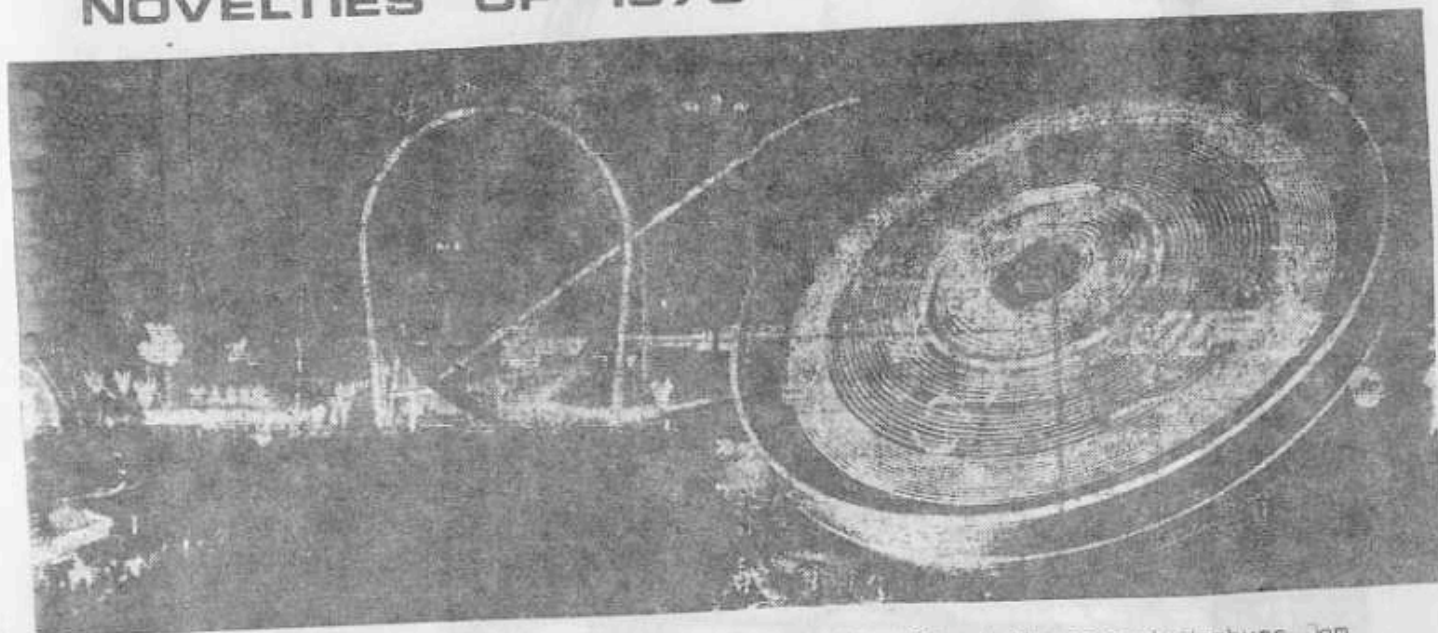
The German showmen order approximately thirteen million pounds worth of new equipment every year. As this country has an obvious lack of amusement parks (there are only five major parks) the main demand is for portable lightweight constructions. The focus is on quick build-ups and pull-downs, requiring fewer men, and trailers. In contrast to some devices at permanent sites the size of the largest component of portable rides is naturally governed by maximum vehicle dimensions, as well as by considerations of handling. The fact that all modern round rides build off their own centre truck offers a maximum of comfort. The centre of the Mack-built "Holiday Star" Maitzer and "Music Express" Autodrome, for instance, measures about 53' long, and is equipped with a removable rear axle. It carries the complete roof structure, which can simply be folded out at ground level, and raised hydraulically into pos-

ition. Open rides like the "Enterprise" or "UFO" can be built up in a day or two, and pulled down overnight. And even such huge constructions as the 130' high giant Ferris wheels, Zeppelins, and portable Roller Coasters can be built up and dismantled comparatively quickly due to precision engineering, with most of the heavy components remaining on trailers or container units used for transport.

Another aspect that has to be considered these days is certainly the capacity per hour, because new rides have to pay for themselves in the shortest possible time. Apart from the fact that a successful novelty is quickly being copied or improved on, the popularity of the average adult ride ranges between six and ten years. After that time the owner would have to sell his ride, and exchange it for a modernised version, if he wants to stay competitive. As I mentioned in my last article, the showmen in Germany are in the somewhat difficult situation of having to apply for space on the fairgrounds again year after year (i.e. there is no "Guild ruling"). Thus the rush for new equipment is also influenced by the decisions of the Markets and Fairs Departments in charge of the country's major grounds. By choosing the required attractions they indirectly call for brighter, more exciting and usually larger rides, because especially the novelties are being treated with preference in opposition to other applicants. As a result of this system, each season a number of rides vanish from the fairgrounds, making room for the latest and most sophisticated attractions currently available.

However, it must be a misbelief that the most novel and the largest attraction is always the best. Rising costs for new rides usually result in higher fares for the patrons, and for every additional metre of required frontage another showman may lose his place in the line-up, because the fairgrounds just don't grow in the same way as the attractions do. Although the fast development of the German ride industry is quite impressive, one should also dedicate some thought to these aspects.

NOVELTIES OF 1978



The Schwarzkopf-built Looping Star, and Huss-built UFO at the recent Hamburg Dom Fair (see over, and also last issue).

The new "Giant Swingboats" have turned out to be amongst the most successful rides so far. These huge replicas of sailing ships carrying between 40 and 56 passengers can be described as updated versions of the old Steam Yachts. A prototype called "The Flying Dutchman" had been invented by Dutch-born Rinke Kallenkoot, and had first appeared in 1977. By the end of the 1978 season I counted no less than 13 rides of this type in Germany. There are four different versions: the Huss-built "Pilot", a twin set "The Vikings" from Zierer, the original twin "Dutchman" built

by Ihle Bros. and the Schwarzkopf version "Santa Maria" which runs up and down a U-shaped rail.

Novelties among the round rides were the UFO (pictured in the last issue), and Autodrome type of machine with small two-passenger boats that can be turned forward and backward by the operator when the ride is in full swing. Also new for Germany was the mobile "Cinema 180" show which is being manufactured under licence in both Switzerland and West Germany.

The most sensational new attraction, however, was undoubtedly the Schwarzkopf-built "Looping Star" (pictured here). This portable (!) Roller Coaster requires a ground space of 250' by 106'. Maximum altitude is 83' above ground level, followed by a simultaneous free fall and a turn through the 67' loop. Two 14-segment trains, each carrying 28 passengers, reach a top speed of 54mph. The ride is said to be worth roughly three million Marks (about £770,000).



The Schwarzkopf-built "Looping Star", new in 1978.

Kevin Scrivens recalls a recent visit to the **133^{RD.} CANNSTATT VOLKFEST**

The town of Cannstatt is situated on the outskirts of the city of Stuttgart, former capital of the kingdom of Wurtemberg, which lies in Southern Germany, not far from the Austrian border. Two of the greatest products of the area are wine and beer, and it is in late September that the harvest of the vast vineyards takes place.

To celebrate the harvest and welcome the introduction of the new season's beer the Cannstatt Volksfest was introduced 133 years ago, during which the locals drank as much of the new wine and beer, and ate as much, as possible. In this enviable frivolous celebration it is not surprising that fairground amusement machines began to make an appearance, as at the more sober English trade fairs.

The amusement part of the celebrations has grown, and the town now boasts one of the largest fairs in Europe, which is held annually, from the end of September to the middle of October. At this year's event there were over fifty adult riding machines, and numerous shows.

The drinking and eating aspect has also grown, and on the fairground are several enormous beer halls with bench seats for thousands, and a central stage for a band, and singers and dancers. These halls are set up by various breweries, and exterior and interior decoration are of a high quality to compete with neighbouring halls. From around two o'clock on every day of the week, until around midnight, the halls are packed with young and old, male and female, from countries all over Europe, and occasional visitors from further afield. Everyone seems to be happy, with a litre steine of new beer in one hand, and some delicious form of German food in the other; they sway and sing for hours. In the evenings when a particularly favoured German tune is played by the band most people feel compelled to stand and link arms and sway, while more energetic ones dance on the tables.

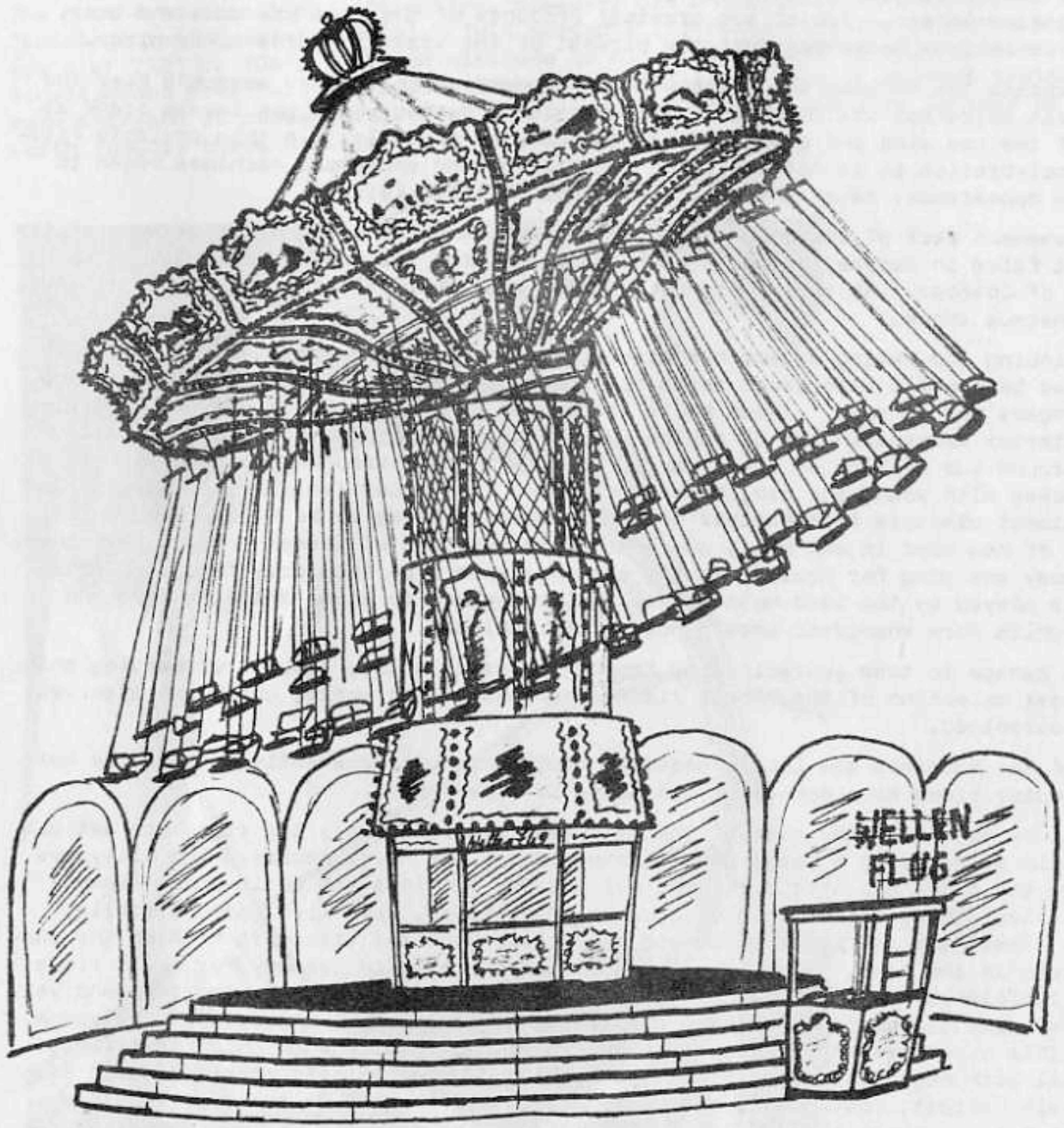
If you manage to tear yourself away from the beerhalls long enough surrounding them is a vast selection of the finest riding machines in the world, which are also very well patronised.

Many of the machines are local, based in Stuttgart, but apparently some of the more spectacular rides have come long distances to appear here.

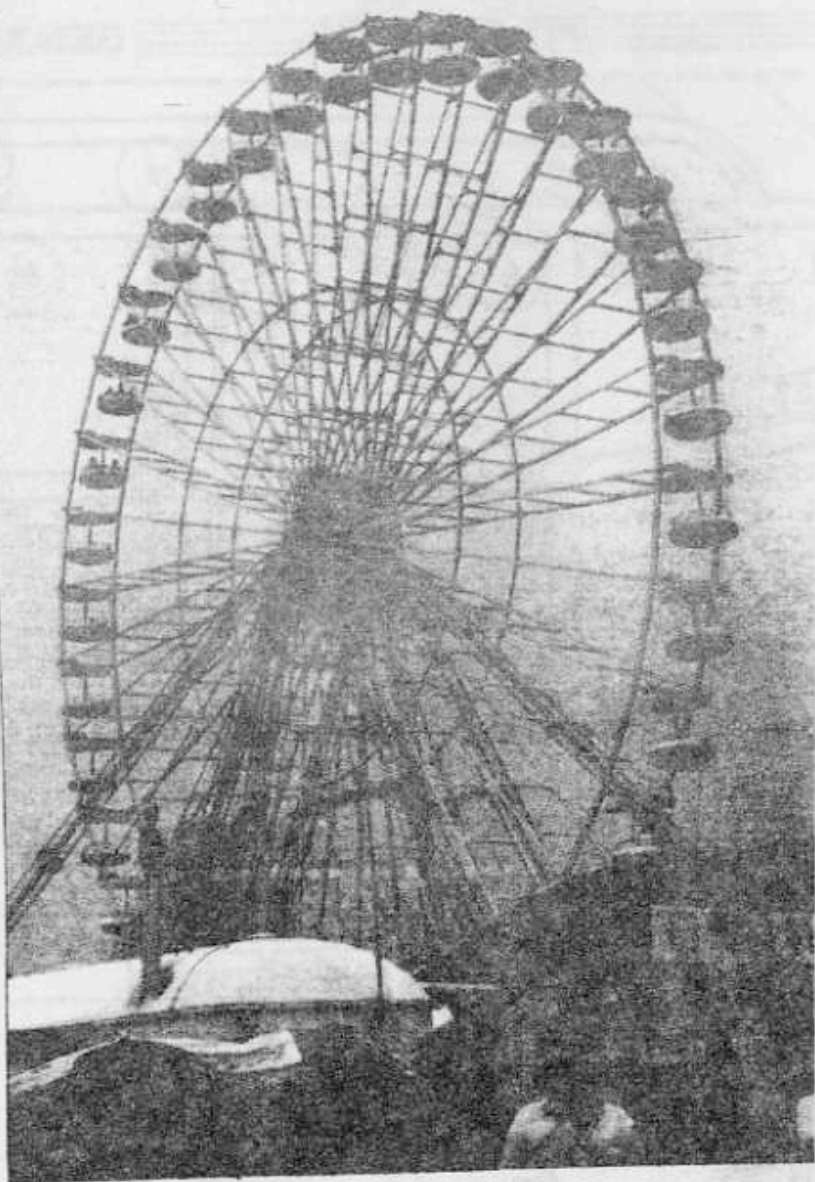
As will be seen from the plan of the fair (see centre pages), the rides are set out in a grid pattern, in a large park at the side of the River Neckar. The alleyways between the rides are hard surfaced, but the machines are built up on (level) grass. Everything stands on side ground: adult rides, juveniles, games, stalls, shows. These are all built up around the living vans and transport forming the squares seen on the plan. I believe it is common practice in Germany for adult rides to be positioned thus, and due to this there is no rear access to any ride, and very few have side access. On the open rides, such as Skydivers, Enterprises, Calypsos, etc., this gives tremendous scope for back scenery, advantage of which is taken to the full with magnificent painting and lighting. The enclosed machines, such as the Musik Express, Mont Blanc, etc., are almost all sheeted at the rear, and have centre scenery across the middle of the ride, giving a tunnel of love effect.

I shall wander around the plan of the fair, making what comments I can about the various rides.

As one approaches the fairground, whether on foot, by tram, train, or bus, A. Steiger's Big Wheel (1) can be seen while you are still some distance away. This is not surprising, considering it is 145' high. It is an example of the largest type of Big Wheel travelling anywhere in the world, and is built in Germany by the notable firm of Anton Schwarzkopf. The huge frame supports 36 circular cars, each seating 4-6 people. The car can be revolved around its centre pole at the occupants' discretion to obtain a better view. The four vast support arms for the wheel are lifted hydraulically, and the base of each is on a packing truck, seven of which are used to transport it. The ground area covered by the ride is 80' by 82'.



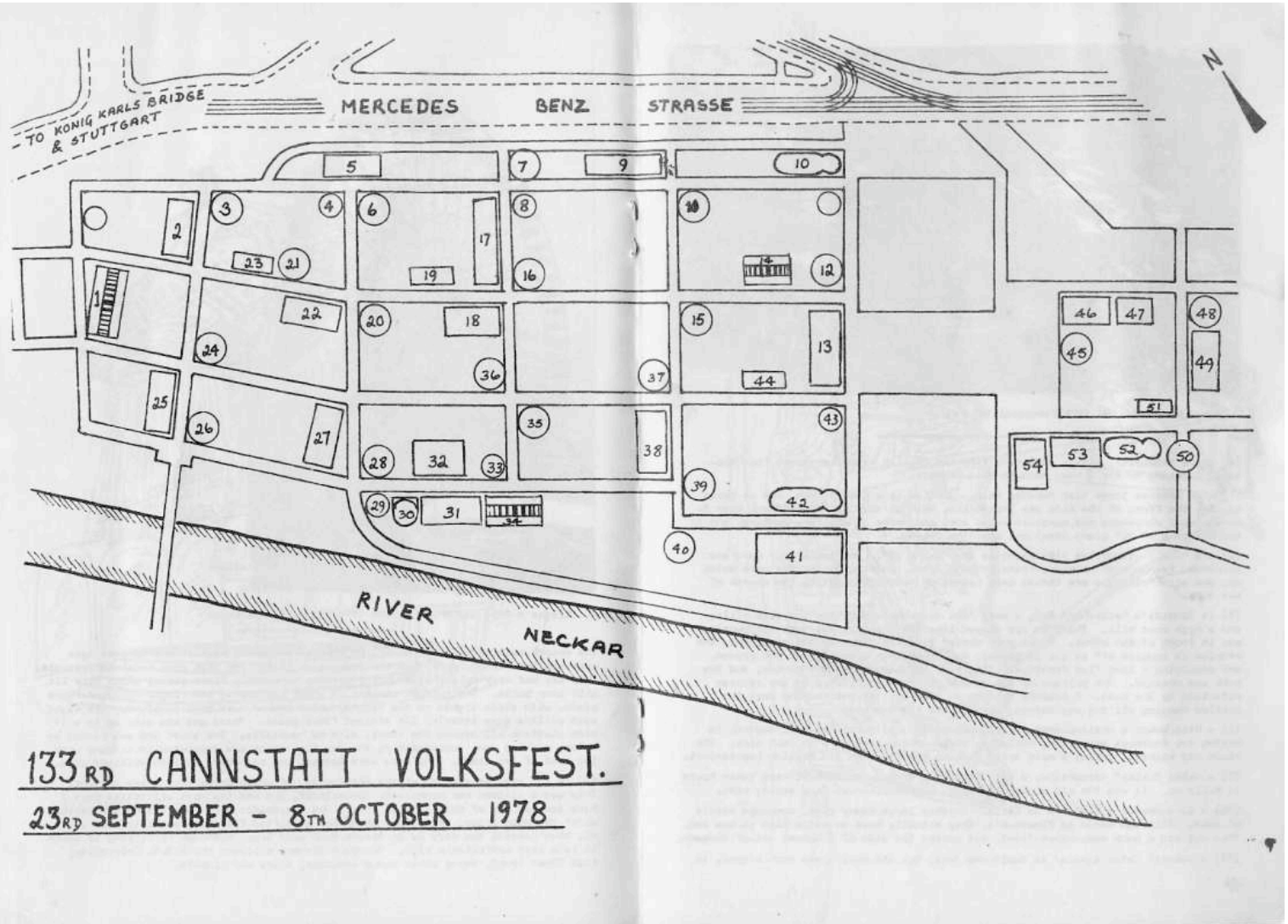
Birkeneiders' "Wellen Flug".

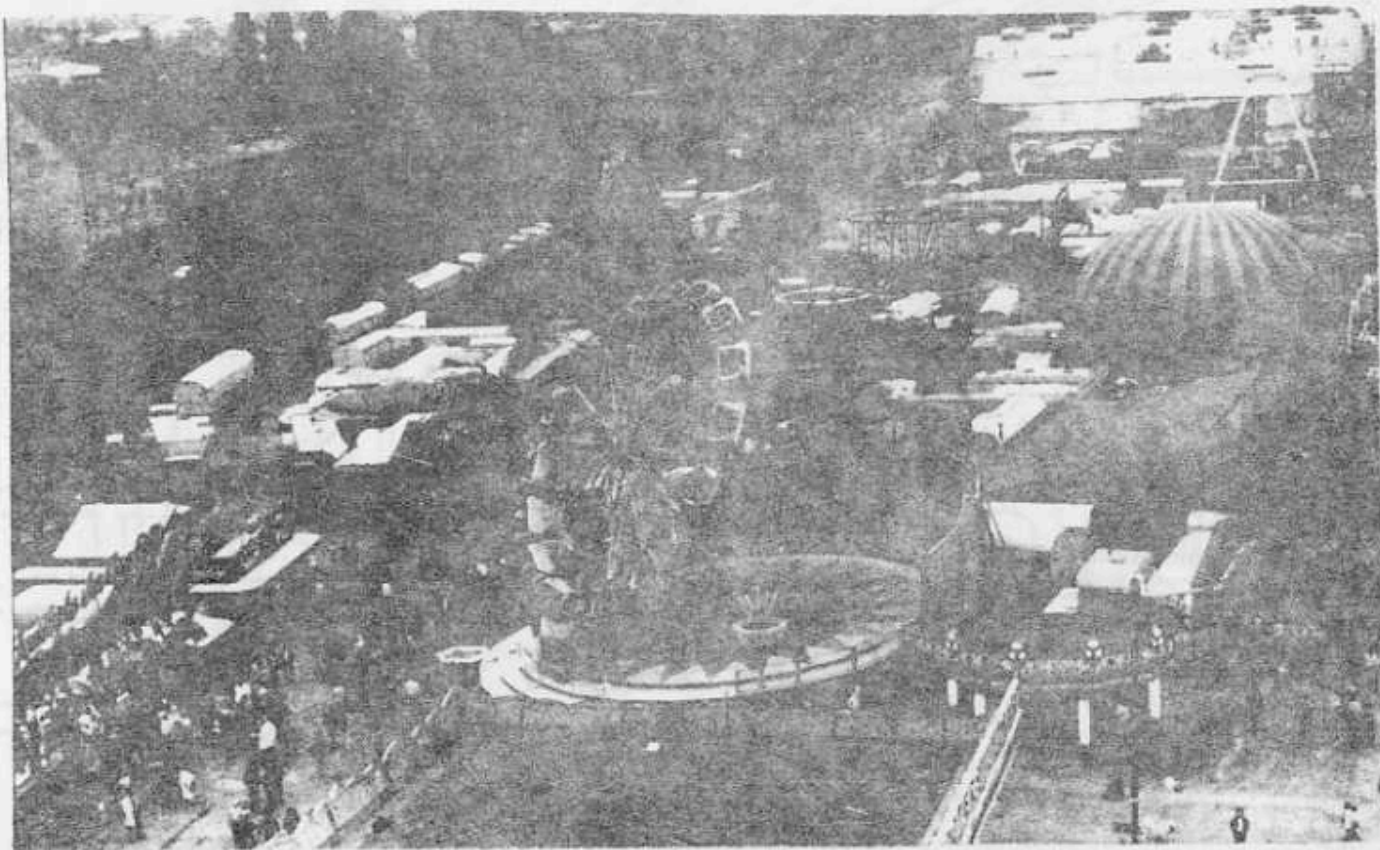


A. Stieger's 145' Big Wheel at the 1978 Cannstatt Volkfest.

The second machine you come to (2) is Wakers' Dodgems. Most of the Dodgems here were similar structurally, but the decoration transforms them into total individuals. This set had very colourful rounding boards, presumably fibre glass, which were lit with tiny bulbs. The section sloping in under the boards was ridged coloured fibre glass, with strip lights on the ridges, which looked very good at night. The eight main pillars were interior lit striped fibre glass. There was one step up to a 3' wide platform all around the track, with no handrails. One short end was formed by a long packing van, incorporating the pay box, which was decorated in keeping with the rest of the track. The cars were German, and resembled English Whitaker cars.

(3) is the smaller version of the Enterprise, of which there were three present. This was a sixteen car example by Schwarzkopf, and had the most attractive cars I have seen on any of this type of ride. The two-seater cars hang around the perimeter of the main frame, which when in motion is lifted from horizontal to dead vertical, thus causing the cars to go upside down over top. Although terrifying to watch it is a very comfortable ride. The back scenery depicted the U. S. S. Enterprise, from "Star Trek", among other space vehicles, stars and planets.





A general view of the 1978 Cannstatt Volksfest.

(4) was a Meteorite, little different from the English examples, apart from superior lighting to any I have seen in this country.

(5) - an immense three tier Monster Hole. Similar to a Ghost Train, but on three levels, the front of the ride was incredible, both in size and decoration: huge 3-dimensional dinosaurs and monsters waved arms and heads at would-be punters, and in the centre a 20-30' giant leant out over the crowds.

(6) - a highly attractive ride known as the "Swing Up". The two seater cars are suspended from a high spinning frame on long arms. Once in motion the cars swing up, and alternate cars are thrust even higher by hydraulics during the course of the ride.

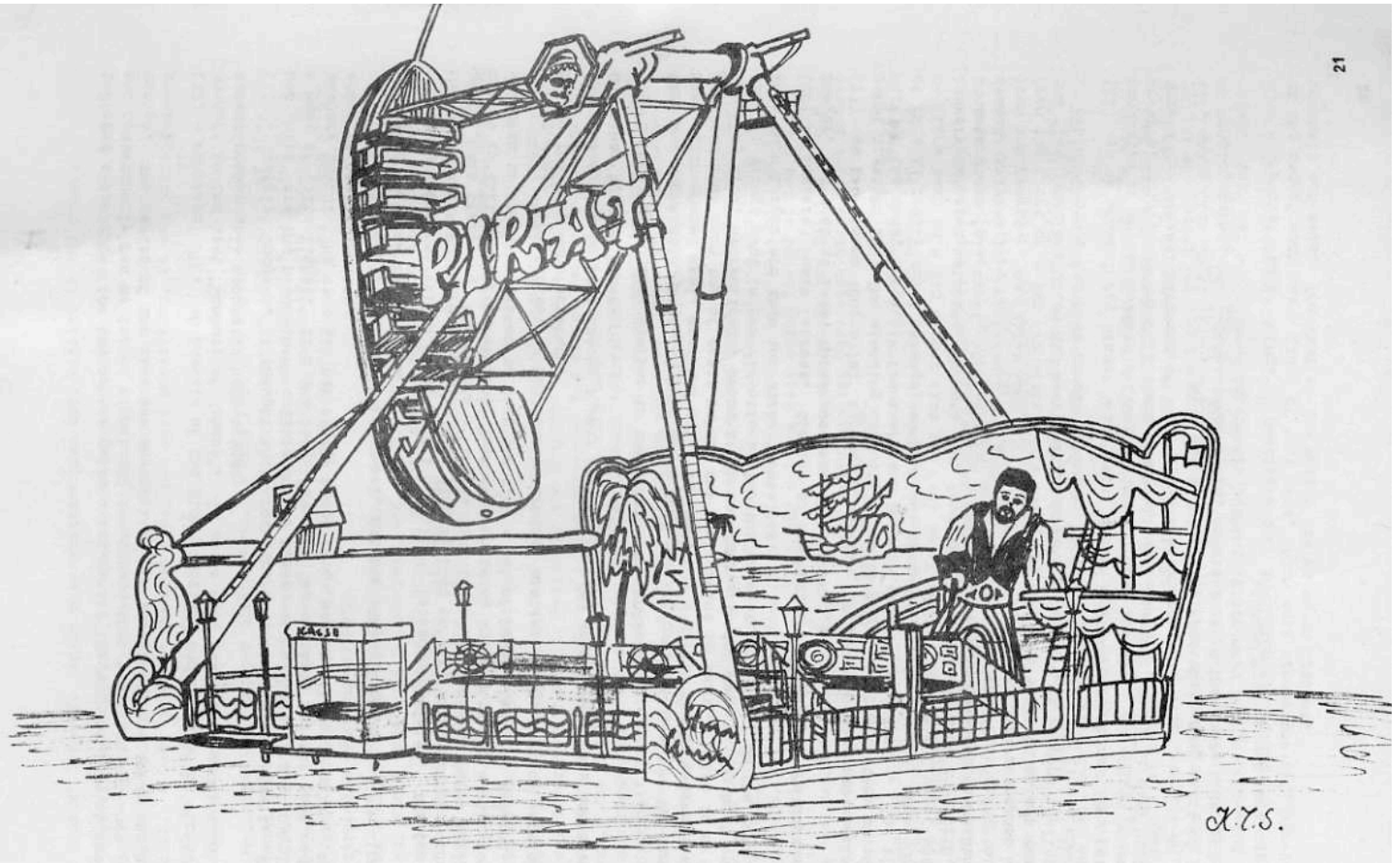
(7) is Schmidt's Matterhorn Bob, a very fast switchback with two low side hills, and a high rear hill. The cars are shaped like bob sleighs, and seat two people, one in front of the other. As on most modern circular rides on the continent, the machine is squared off at the perimeter, making maximum advantage of the ground, and providing a long flat frontage. This ride had scenery in the centre, and the back was sheeted. The polygon at the centre of the ride rotated in the reverse direction to the cars. A notable feature on the front of the machine were the icicles hanging all the way across, beneath the front boards.

(8) - Otto Weker's Chairplanes, an exceptionally well decorated set, unusual in having two enormous swan cars, replacing three sections of cars at each side. The steps had kickers, making a more solid looking machine than its British counterpart.

(9) - Mainz Rukles' Serpentine; a very large big dipper, which must have taken hours to build up. It was the old style of dipper, with individual four seater cars.

(10) - C. Wockerer's Figure-8 Go Carts. Another large heavy ride, composed mainly of wood. Although known as figure-8's, they actually have an extra loop at one end. This set had a much modernised front, not unlike the side of a German set of Dodgems.

(11) - Weker's Jets: similar to Hurricane Jets, but the centre was much higher, so



X.S.

J. Schmidt's "Pirat".

the arms slope down from the centre quite a lot, while the machine is stationary, and consequently can be raised higher off the ground than a British set when in motion. The centre of the ride was shaped like a huge rocket, and there was back scenery.

(12) - Kinzlers' UFO. An example of the ride described and pictured by Michael Bonhoff in the last "Century of Tobers". It was a most attractive machine, with exceptionally well decorated back scenery.

(13) - Distels' Dodgems. I thought this track the most attractive present. Blue and white were the predominant colours on the boards and pillars, and at night was a mass of white lights. It had a large fleet of German cars, and one side was a scenery board. The cars all had fairly large flags on the collector poles, which added to the attraction.

(14) - Jonts' wheel - a large 20 car wheel, but the smallest present. The circular cars were the same as Steigers.

(15) - Birkenaders' Wellen Flug. A set of tilting telescopic Chairs. The top of the machine was composed of highly decorated moulded panels, with plenty of scroll-work. Once revolving, the centre of the machine lifts up, and when fully extended begins to tilt Satellite fashion. Each chain holding the chairs had a coloured flag attached to it which seemed to give the ride a lot of body. See also drawing.

(16) - Josts' Enterprise. A big 20 car machine, similar to the smaller version, but not by the same manufacturer.

(17) was a flat Go Cart track; a very attractive ride with more lights and scenery than the Figura-8 types.

(18) - Kritz's Dodgems; similar to the other sets mentioned.

(19) - J. Schmidt's Pirat. A huge swing boat seating over 40 people. The Pirate boat, with shaped keel, mast and sail, is open, but a safety bar is automatically lowered over each row of seats before the boat begins to swing. Drive is by a spinning tyre, hydraulically brought into contact with the keel of the boat each time it swings past in one direction. The top axle is very high, so the boat swings in a much larger arc than the Steam Yachts did.

(20) - Kinzlers' Musik Express. Similar to the Matterhorn Bob, but the cars are longer, and seat at least three people side by side.

(21) was the Dinema 180; a 180° cinema, consisting of a huge dome which people are asked to stand in. The standing capacity is quite high. A film is then shown on half of the dome, above, in front of, and to each side of the patrons. The effect of this is really quite strange, as you feel that you are the camera; consequently on films such as a Big Dipper ride you feel as if you are on a Big Dipper, and it is very numerous watching everyone sway from side to side, and back and forth, and in some cases fall over! One film from a helicopter flying over the Grand Canyon caused everyone to jump forward and gasp when they thought they were going to fall down the canyon. The fairly long show was brought to a close with a speeded up film from the front of a San Francisco cable car going down the steep hills and across the flat junctions which had everyone swaying wildly. When it suddenly halted about 2" behind another car most people fell over forwards, and then the lights came on.

(22) was an unusual Big Dipper Switchback, though not a gravity ride. The cars consisted of an old western railway engine and open coaches. The engine housed a powerful motor, and the full train was hauled up, down and around at very high speeds for several circuits of the long, twisty track.

(23) was a flat Ghost Train, which had a marvellous front featuring a lot of moulded hanging rocks, and 3-dimensional moving monsters as on the three tier "monster hole". Each car had a demon apparently pushing it around.

(24) - Drexels' Flower Swing. A development of the Octopus, but with five arms; at the end of each was a group of four cars, which spin around the arm, as well as on their own axis. The rest of the motion was as on an Octopus.

- (25) - Grunds' Dodgems. Again a very attractive set, similar to the others.
- (26) - Rosenzwiegs' Zeppelin II. Another Schwarzkopf ride, 90' high to the top of the tower. The cars are five Zeppelins attached nose to tail around the tower. When loaded at ground level, the Zeppelins revolve around the tower, and slowly move up it. A very pleasant looking ride, but very unexciting, it was not doing very good business at Cannstatt.
- (27) - Wakers' Dodgems.
- (28) - Mullers' Petersburger Sleigh Ride. A very fast and smooth modern Mont Blanc. Exceptional features were the fretwork at the front, covered in hundreds of tiny white bulbs, the uprights in the shape of cast iron lamp standards with four glass bowls on each, and the cars shaped like small sleighs, complete with runners. The rear of this machine was sheeted, and it had centre scenery. I found it one of the most attractive machines present.
- (29) was a highly carved German Carousel; the animals: horses, ostriches, lions, giraffes, etc., were only two-abreast, and the machine did not have top motion galloping action. The animals were however pivoted on the rods which they were attached to from the bottom platform, and could be rocked back and forth. There was a small fair organ alongside the ride which was constantly in play.
- (30) - Armins' Wall of Death. An old structure fitted with a modern front, the show featured motorcycles and go carts.
- (31) was a 3-D film ride, which had an extremely long and high frontage, which was very well decorated and lit. Basically the interior was like a large Ghost Train, but instead of monsters there was a film screen at the end of each straight section of track. The two seater cars had hoods which were pulled down over the occupants, and these hoods had a square hole in front of each rider which had one half green and the other half red glass. Once inside the ride, and viewing the films through these coloured glasses a very realistic 3-D effect was given to them. The films were mainly of things coming towards you quickly, such as daggers, spears, eggs, and even a bra!
- (32) was the Flying Dutchman, a set of two giant swing boats, basically very similar to the Pirat. However, the design of the boats was different, as was the seating arrangements. Of the three double sets I saw in Germany, only this one had both boats utilising the one top axle. It had a large fair organ fitted at one end.
- (33) - Von Bergs Rolling Star. Another Meteorite, similar to the British machines, but it had some back scenery, and a more solid looking base with steps right across the front, and platforms and shutters at each side.
- (34) was the Jupiter Wheel, a 24 car ride which was a smaller version of the 36 car Schwarzkopf one, and I believe also its predecessor. This also had a large fair organ to one side of it.
- (35) - Lehmanns' Calypso. A very attractive ride, of which few examples have been seen in Britain. The platform of this ride was inclined to the rear, and once in action tilted up even further. High back scenery, spot lights at the front of each car, and masses of running lights made it a most attractive ride at night.
- (36) was the Starlift: a 12 section Skydiver which could have been British if not for the back scenery. It was a smart, well maintained machine, but probably the least spectacular ride present.
- (37) - Wakers' Holly Gully. A Satellite or Trabant, but what a ride! The base was a huge flat inclined platform with only one step at the front, the rear half was high scenery, with light brackets above that. The conventional Satellite cars had a hood over alternate cars, with lights all around them, and there were lights on the outside of each car as well as in the centre. As the centre piece was a large hula-dancer, the ride seems to hang from her hips; she was complemented by palm trees on the scenery boards.
- (38) - Schiedts' Dodgems.

(39) was the Melodie Swing; a huge 20 car Skydiver, with high back scenery, lights everywhere - around the tops of the hoods, under the cars, at the back of the cars, and of course all over the arms. An immaculate ride, but perhaps too large, as I never once saw it full.

(40) the Polyp. Basically the same as (24), but with a fishy theme. All the cars had big fishy eyes and lips, and at the centre was an octopus type of head.

(41) was the Looping Star, the latest of the Schwarzkopf gravity rides, and the most exciting as the long track has a 360° loop in it. Although built in Germany it was painted red, white and blue, and with a liberal amount of white stars, and the words "Great American" appeared on it in several places. This was the dearest ride at the fair, at 5 Dm (£1.25) per person, but there was always a very long queue for it.

(42) was another Figure-8 Go Cart Track, a very bright and much modernised ride, in contrast to the other examples present. This had an all round roof, which eliminated the disjointed appearance seen on the other two.

(43) was an old wooden set of Chairplanes, but very well decorated, and immaculately kept. It had new chains, and new tubular chrome chairs.

(44) was a Ghost Train, almost identical to (23). One thing I particularly liked was the mechanical gorilla on the proscenium knocking two human skulls together.

(45) was another 20 car Enterprise similar to (16). This one, known as the Mond Lift 2, had exceptionally well lit scenery boards which were a mass of running lights.

(46) - Roschmanns' Dodgems.

(47) was a Joy Wheel. I was suprised to see this, and another at Munich the day after. I believe the old British ones had a circular enclosure, but this one was square, with quite a large front depicting tumbling people, while the devil looks on from above.

(48) Torgier. I have never seen anything like this before, the closest thing it resembles is the Wembley Whirl, or Devil's Disc, which I am told just used to spin round fast. This was an open flat disc, with seats all around the perimeter; it begins to spin on the level, and once it has gained speed it tilts, and then bounces up and down, and keeps reversing direction. I could not see why it was so popular, but it attracted plenty of people.

(49) was the Aqua Jet, a large water Dodgem. The fast motor boats also had wheels, and at the end of each ride a metal grid rode out of the water, so people could walk to and from the boats.

(50) the Toller Wirbel (Mad Whirl); the same as (24) with a flower theme for decoration.

(51) - Ulhausens' Over the Tops. Similar to English sets, but had an overall canopy, which made it look much higher and more attractive.

(52) was a Figure-8 Go Cart track. The plainest of the three present, this one had no-front at all, just the basic structure.

(53) - The Total Destruction of the World - "Fun House" (?). Another immense long, high front; this featured the Eiffel tower, which fell forward over the crowd, and then went back.

(54) was the Super Jet, a Schwarzkopf gravity ride, not particularly attractive, but a very good ride.

Of particular interest in the Juvenile section were the Pony Circuses, of which there were several present. These are circular enclosures, complete with rounding boards and tilts, which enclose a sawdust ring, with a string of ponies or donkeys. Once the children are seated, the ponies are led for several circuits around the ring.

There were several sets of Juvenile Swings, but they were unlike British ones. The boats were pointed at each end, and had a high metal frame around them. They were

not operated by ropes but patrons have to stand and swing them. On most sets there was a section at one end with no top boards above it which was used for adults. The reason there were no top boards was that adults take the boats right over the top, swinging a full 360°; Germans seem to enjoy being upside down more than the British.

There were some games not seen on British grounds, but most were similar, the enclosures however were usually a folded out trailer, built up highly and covered with lights.

Refreshment stalls were numerous and varied, the food was delicious, and most stalls sold wine and beer. Many of the refreshment vans were at the front of an open square formed by packing wagons, or the backs of caravans, which were equipped with tables and chairs and strings of lights. Some even had an overall canopy. There was also several portable Cafes, some quite enormous, and at least one with two floors; from the upstairs you could eat and drink and watch much of the fair around you.



The small 16 car version of the "Enterprise".



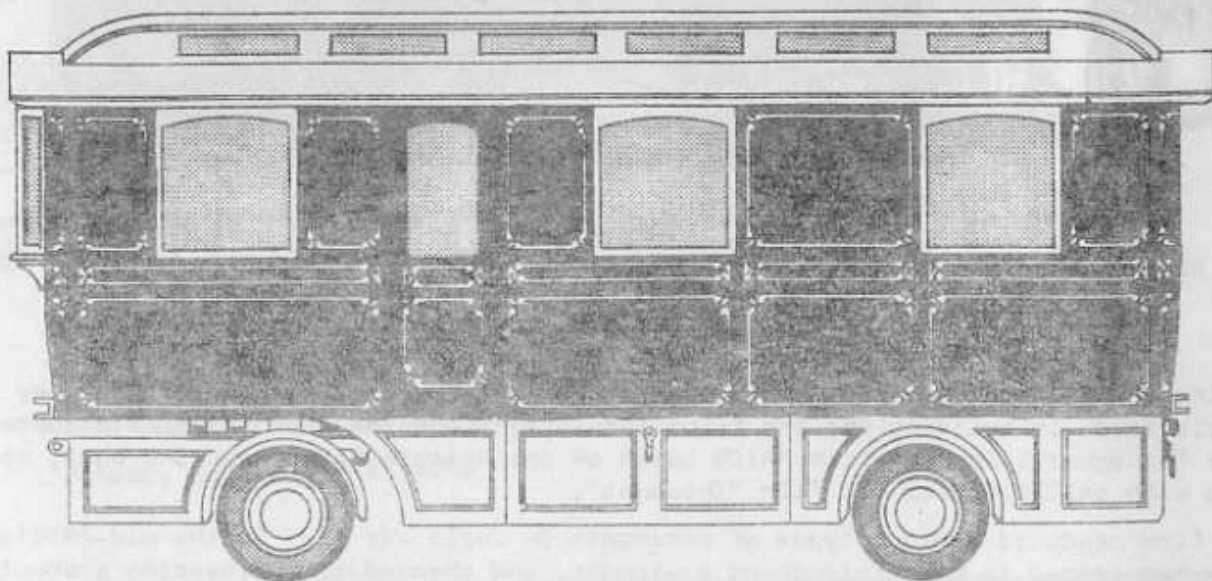
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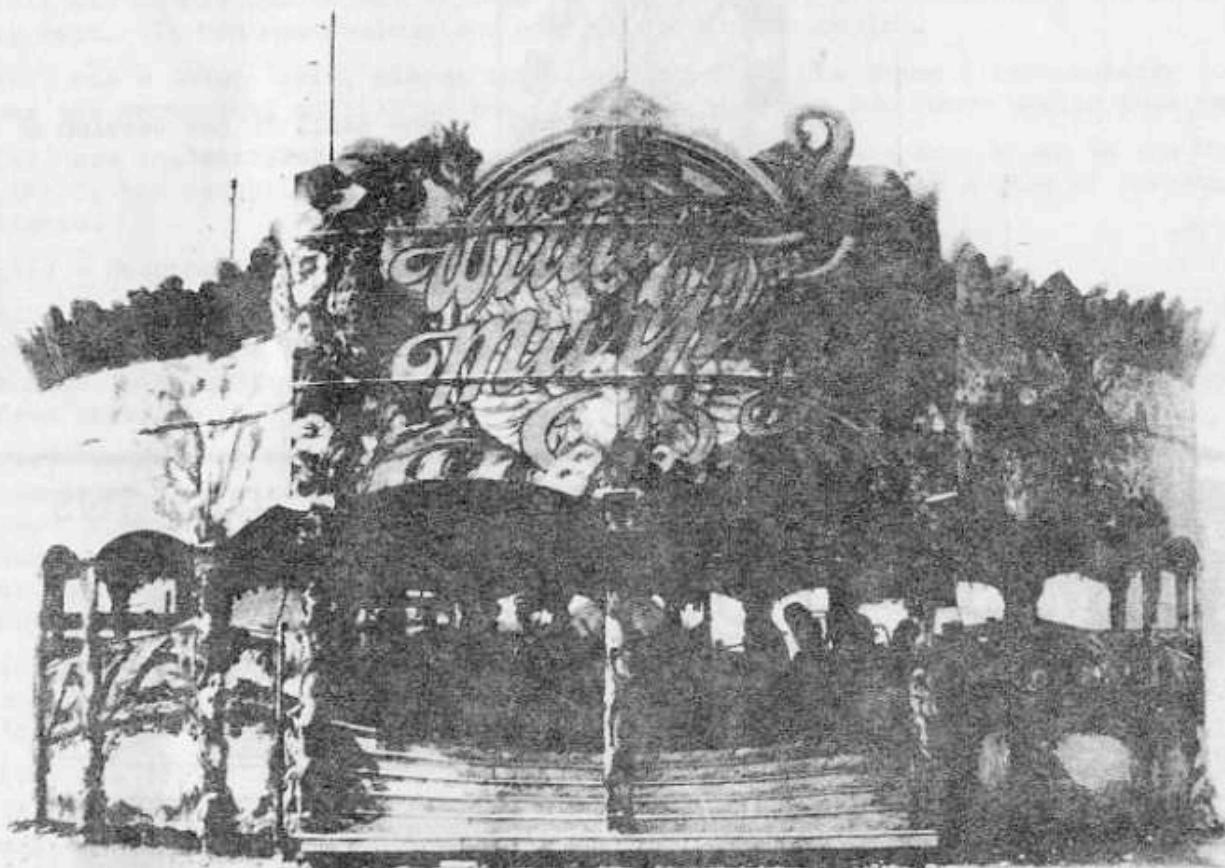
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George Orton, Sons, & Spooner Ltd.

The following notes are the result of research carried out in Burton-on-Trent by member Craig Cooper.

The firm was founded by George Orton, of Haasham, Leicestershire, who began as a wheelwright. By 1875 he was established as a coach builder in Princess Street, and in 1911 the firm was described as Orton and Sons, Showmans Builders.

C.J. Spooner, a wood carver of Swan Works, Meadow Road, had been associated with Ortons from 1894, and in 1925 these two firms amalgamated. The firm, now known as George Orton, Sons, and Spooner Ltd., Victoria Crescent, Burton-on-Trent, manufactured fairground amusements such as Galloping Horses, Scenic Railways, Big Dippers, Walls of Death, Noah's Ark, and Dodgem Tracks. They were among the pioneers of pre-fabrication in so far as all of their equipment had to be made easily and quickly demountable, and stowed on trailers to be pulled to the next fairground.



Mrs William Murphy's Noah's Ark at Orton's Works prior to delivery. (15. Simnet)

During the 1914-18 war they made moveable aircraft hangers. In the 1930's they specialised in building for the films industry, producing such items as a wooden tank for advertising the film "All's Quiet on the Western Front" and the boat, complete with calliope, for the film "Showboat".

The firm produced various types of armaments in World War II. By the mid-1950's they had ceased to make fairground equipment, and changed to engineering products, including cladding for power stations, locomotive cabs, mechanical handling equipment, and other industrial devices.

R. Winson writes:

I joined the firm as office boy in 1919. The showmen we dealt with then I remember as colourful people, with a native wit for business. There was Patrick Collins who later became an Alderman of Walsall, and a Member of Parliament. He left nothing to chance. He knew what his customers wanted. Then there was Fred Cox from Derbyshire, and George Tuby from Yorkshire. Our two main artists were A.S. Howells and H. Darby, who used fast tube colours from Germany. The horses were carved and painted. The Scenic Railway cars also carved, coated with gold or silver leaf, painted with flamboyant colours, and then finished with eggshell varnish, thus enabling the gold or silver to shine through.

Albert Sidney Howell came from Bristol to Burton in 1913. He was a skilled artist with an ability to paint from memory, with especially life-like representation of Jungle animals. He also decorated the ceilings and wall panels of the luxurious living wagons built by Urtons for show people. He was a very hard working man, who in addition to his job cultivated five allotment gardens, and mended all his families shoes. He often went to bed at midnight and rose at 5.30am. He died in 1959, aged 83. He had three sons and five daughters who inherited his talents. His son Sidney worked at Branston Artificial Silk factory as a draughtsman, and then joined his father at Urtons. When Urtons ceased to produce equipment for showgrounds, Sidney was employed by Blackpool Corporation, to design the sea front illuminations, his conception of the Ocean liner "Queen Mary" entering New York harbour being particularly successful. He then returned to Burton to work as technical illustrator at the National Coal Board, Bretby. His section painting of the surface to coalface of a mine was displayed at the Tokyo Exhibition.



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Barry Brown looks at...

James A. Crow & Sons' Transport



James Crow's Atkinson four-wheel tractor, ALR 177B, at Hull fair, 12/10/75. (M. Smith)

This branch of the Crow family are probably more well known for their smart rides at the Spanish City Amusement Park, at Whitley Bay, but James Crow does visit a few fairs each year, usually with a set of jets, and uses some interesting tractor units for transporting his ride.

A few years ago James Crow was running an immaculate red painted ex-W.D. Diamond T tractor. The last time I personally saw the Diamond T was in 1970, passing through Darlington, en route to Hull with the Hurricane Jets loads; unfortunately this was the first and last time I saw it. The tractor is believed stored in their yard.

At the 1974 Newcastle Town Moor fair, James Crow made an appearance with a Mont Blanc type ride, now in Taylors ownership. He used two tractors with this. One was a rare semi-bonnetted six wheel atkinson, reg. no. ALR 175B, and the other a four wheel Scannell "Highwayman" reg. no. VXD 551; both ex Pickfords. The tractors were both smartly painted red and lettered in yellow, and with the Mont Blanc ride both towed two large draubar trailers. These two tractors have also been used with the Jets.

As is well known, James Crow later purchased the Pat Collins Tipping Vampire Jets, with which he is using two of the semi-bonnetted Atkinsons: the above mentioned ALR 175B, and the "newer" ALR 177B, which is a four wheeler. This new Atkinson replaced the Scannell, which was sold to Ronnie Church, but he disposed of it after a season and is now in preservation.

This article just covers the more interesting vehicles used by James Crow; I would certainly like to hear from anybody regarding the Diamond T tractor as I have been unsuccessful in getting information and photos on this particular vehicle.

An Introduction to the History of Fairground Automatics

by John Hayward

Most members of the Association will, I'm sure, be familiar with such names from the past as Halstead, Frederick Savage, and Orton and Spooner (all these were, of course roundabout manufacturers). But what of such names as Caille, Bryans, or Oliver & Co? These too were names important in Britain's amusement industry, over the same period, though perhaps in a less conspicuous way. They all made automatic, mechanical penny-in-the-slot amusement machines, which were once such a familiar feature of Edwardian seaside piers.

The development of slot machines proceeded virtually hand-in-hand with that of the fairground ride, though they caught on a little later in this country; being developed originally in Europe and in the U.S.A., from where most of the early ones were imported. As with the ride, they reached their proper form around the turn of the century, and their heyday was from 1900 to 1930.

Just as many people are enthralled by the elaborate decoration and atmosphere of the old rides, so many are just as enthusiastic about the equally elaborate, early coin-in-the-slot amusements. And though hardly any old rides are still with us today, antique slot machines, by comparison, are plentiful. So collecting, researching and restoring them is very much a "live" hobby. And interest in this country has reached such a peak today that a national society (not unlike the Fairground Association) was formed in 1976 (though such associations already existed abroad, particularly in the U.S.A.; which was the most prolific producer of "automatics" in the 1920's).



A very early Fruit Machine, by Caille of the U.S.A., c.1905.

Originally the Pinball Owners Association catered mainly for electric pinball fans, but shortly after its formation branched out to cater for all automatic machine enthusiasts. Encompassing juke boxes, vending machines, and even a coin-in-the-slot optician. But throughout, the emphasis was on the past - indeed there are now several good books on these subjects. And the sheer variety of types of slot machines that have been produced over the years is absolutely outstanding. There were machines to test your strength, your lung power, even your eyes, and absolutely hundreds to "test your skill". Some told your fortune, or how much you weighed, and they dispensed almost everything (either for payment or as a reward), from electric shocks to individual cigarettes. Gambling machines came in many forms too, and the "one-armed bandit" was only one of the many types.

Two types should be of particular interest to fairground historians, since they were closely connected with the early idea of showing items of public news, in pictorial or animated forms as a form of entertainment (as did the early peep shows and later the bioscopes). Closely resembling the peep show is what slot machine enthusiasts refer to as the working model, in which a scene is depicted in model form, which comes to life, through mechanical animation, when a coin is inserted. These are usually large, contained in oak cabinets, with such titles as "The Misers Dream" or "The Executioner". Before proper movie projectors were invented the mutoscope (or "What the Butler Saw") was important, as one of the first successful forms of moving pictures. In it several hundred still photographs were "flicked" over, rather as you might skim through the pages of a book. In fact, calling them "What the Butler Saw" is rather misleading, since the contents of the early machines was designed to be informative or comical, rather than spicy. The move towards sexual titillation was not exclusive to the penny arcade, but a reflection of the general trends in fairground entertainment earlier this century.

* * *

If you would like to know more about slot machines as a hobby you can contact either the Pinball Owners Association, at 116 St James Road, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 2TT (which is the parent organisation); or if your interest is particularly in the older type of amusement machine, contact me, John Hayward, at the Penny Slot Preservation Society, 49 Nottingham Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 1ER. Telephone: 0509 67941.

* * *

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FOWLER SHOWMAN'S ENGINES: Part 5

by Stephen Smith

In the last article a mention was made of the ex-W.D. engines converted for use by Charles Openshaw. Two more engines of interest which he converted are 14424 and 14425. The former was used from 1920 until 1957 by Pat Collins, and was fitted with a bunker crane base. In 1957 it passed to Messrs. Sage and Ford, and later to A. Clark, who has removed the crane base. The latter engine is "CARRY ON" which after Codonas finished with it passed to Kevin McGivern in Ireland, and became what is reputed to be the final showman's engine used commercially by a showman; that was in 1959. Both engines are preserved today.

The Palm Beach Amusement Co. was a consortium of many well known Northern showmen, and one ride they travelled was Codona's Figure-8 which was converted to the Mad House formerly at Seaton Carew and now at Felixstowe. In 1915 they took delivery of 14515 "THE LION" which when Palm Beach folded up was taken over by Wm. Murphy, and later lie derelict at John Powell's park at South Shields. It was sold for scrap in the late 1940's.

The Birdlip engine, as 14862 was often known, had probably the most interesting history of any showman's engine. Its full history will be in the Fowler booklet, but to summarise: after a fatal accident it was rebuilt for Jacob Studt, jnr., and later passed to Bartletts, and also the Isle of Wight travellers Arnold Bros. Today it is preserved by the family of the late Monty Thackray, of Old Malton.

In 1920 "BERTHA" was new to Jack Wyatt of Stoke-on-Trent, and traveled with his Gallopers and later a Swirl. In 1934 both engine and ride passed to Mrs J. Beach. The engine was used until 1953, after which it had various preservation owners, finally passing to Mr Hal Bagot of Levens Hall, Kendal. Its sister engine, 15117, was new to Drury's of Laceby, Lincs., in 1920. In the 1920's it passed to Mr Mellor, later Hibble & Mellor. It travelled with their 3-abreast Gallopers (G20), and in 1949 passed to Mr Bettison of Creswell. It is now owned by Jack Hardy of Leeds, and still carries its showland name: "HEADWAY".

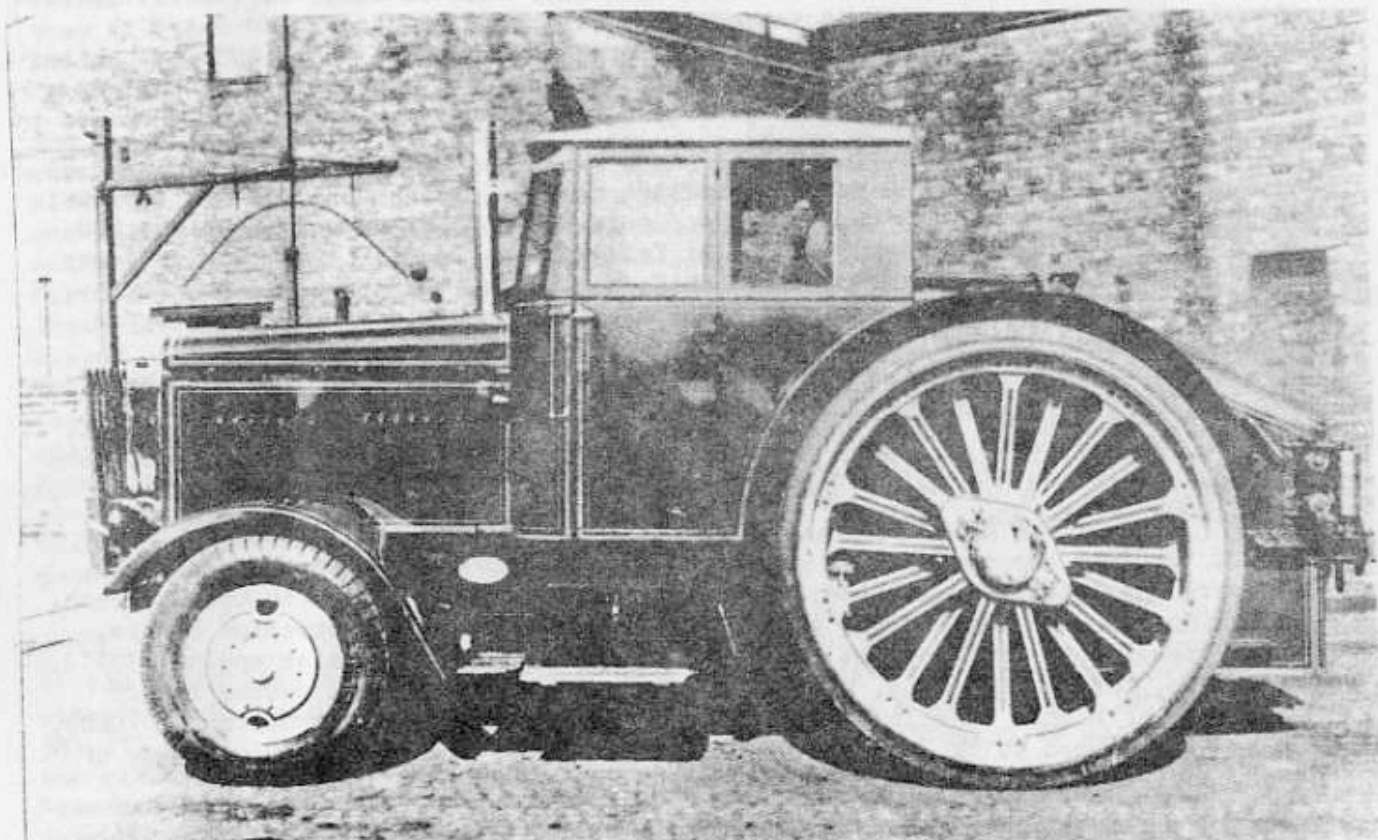
Probably the most famous pair of showman's engines "REPULSE" and "RENDOWN" (15652 and 15653) have both survived. New in 1920 to John Murphy, they travelled with his Peacock Scenic, and later an Orton Ark. The pair retired in 1942, and stood derelict until saved for preservation in the 1950's. "REPULSE" is preserved in Cheshire, and "RENDOWN" is owned by Ran Hawthorne, who has helped greatly in this Fowler project. It carries a Thompson-Malton Feast Crane and no brass supports.

In 1962 a film was made starring Michael Craig - the film was "The Iron Maiden". For many, the star was really Fowler 15657 "KITCHENER" which had been renamed for the occasion. In its showland life it was owned by Mrs H. Cadley of Alfreton, Derbyshire. The brass work on it comes from the North family's Burrell "THE COUNTESS".

"HIS LORDSHIP" was the only Fowler to carry an excitor between chimney and cylinder block. It was new to Simons & Teago, of Caernarvon, later passing to Harniess Bros. and Will Starr. It is said that the excitor was only ever used once. It was sold to Crooks of Ashworth for agricultural work, though later scrapped. The canopy was lettered "Harniess' Battling Suckeroos" which was a dodgem track with ark animal type cars on which riders sat, a unique ride.

The B6 Super Lions of 1932-4 were the zenith of the showman's engine. The penultimate in Fowler's showman's engines, they were arguably the finest showman's engines ever built. The first of the batch, 197B2, "THE LION", was used by Anderton and Rowland until about 1945. It was sold 1949/51 to its present owner, Mr Lucas, who is presently restoring it. 197B3 "KING CARNIVAL II" was new to Frank McConville for his "Over the Sticks", and later "British Airways", so the canopy proclaimed. In the 1940's it passed to a haulage contractor, and finally in 1968 to John Conner, who has restored it to virtually original condition. 199B9, "UNWARD", is the only one no longer with us. It was new in 1933 to Sam Ingham, and travelled "Le Circuit

Mont Blanc", as the canopy told us. Both ride and engine were later travelled by Morleys, and in 1941 it passed to Pickfords, who cut it down to a road locomotive. It was scrapped by George Cohen in 1950. The final steam showman's engine was in 1934 when Mrs A. Deakin put in an order for the finest showman's engine ever turned out of the Leeds' works. "SUPREME", as it was aptly named, was just that. Today it is owned by Jack Wharton, having had a long and interesting history, which will be related in the Fowler booklet.



Fowler Diesel Road Locomotive, no. 20829, supplied new to Hibble & Mellors in 1935.
(J. Fowler.)

In 1935 the last showman's engine was built by Fowlers at Leeds; it differed from every other showman's engine that they had ever built: it was powered by a diesel engine! "JUBILEE" was new to Hibble & Mellor and was a five speed tractor equipped for generating by Messrs. Saunders. Its great drawback was its speed, which compared to newer tractors was very slow. It is said that after a journey to Nottingham Goose Fair when someone had done a double journey in the time it had taken Mr Mellor to do one with "JUBILEE" he realised that it had had it. "JUBILEE" was broken up in their yard that winter. The dynamo is still in use today.

So ends the story of Fowler showman's engines. The work which it is taken from is still not complete, and all further information (especially from showmen) will be gratefully received by the author; especially any photographs which may be bought or borrowed. Please send any information to: Stephen Smith, 122 Carr Lane, Willerby, Nr. Hull, HU10 6JX.



Engine list: engines built 1914 - 1935

Makers No.	Class	Date	Name	Owners
14421	B6	1914	PRINCESS MARY	A. Downs Thuaites
14422	B6	1915	PRINCESS ROYAL	W.S. Davies N.B. Davies
14423	B6	1916	THE CHALLENGER	J. Codona
14424	B6	1916	DREADNOUGHT	Pat Collins
14425	B6	1916	CARRY ON	F. Codona
14426	B6	1916	EVENING STAR	K. McGivern J. Day
14515	B6	1915	THE LION	Mrs J. Cole Palm Beach Amusement Co. W. Murphy J. Powell
14595	A8	1917	PRIDE OF THE SOUTH	Jb. Studt John Studt
14597	A8	1916	ALBERT	J. Proctor
14603	A8	1916	-	Mrs Jones G. Matthews
14845	B6	1920	RELIANCE	E.C. Farrer
14847	B6	1920	THE ADJUTANT	F. Cox
14862	R3	1917	-	Jb. Studt, jnr. Mrs Gritt
14863	R3	1917	PRINCE OF WALES EXCEL SIOR EXCEL SIOR SHAMROCK	Bartletts Arnold Brothers)H. Symonds
14864	R3	1917	ENTERPRISE	H. Jennings
14865	R3	1917	THE LION TRYER II	H. Jennings G. Wright
14867	R3	1917	IRON DUKE	W. Murphy Toogood & Jobson
14868	R3	1917	PRINCESS	Mrs J. Jones R. Holdsworth
14873	R3	1917	EMPERESS	W. Smart
14877	R3	1917	LITTLE MARGARET	E. Greenway W. Marshall J. Butterworth
14879	R3	1917	KING EDWARD VII	W. Smart Pat Collins Hill Brothers
14880	R3	1917	PREMIER	N. Henry J. Shipley B. Cole
14886	R3	1917	PRINCESS MARINA DRAGON	W. Conoley Pat Collins
14893	R3	1917	-	W. Reynolds
14899	R3	1917	VISCOUNTESS	A. Hibbert
14902	R3	1917	ROYAL JOHN	Williams A. Brett
14916	TE2	1917	KATHLEEN JEWELICIOUS	W. Smart)F. Gray
14969	TE	1918	RELIANCE	Pat Collins
15116	R3	1920	BERTHA	J. Wyatt
15117	R3	1920	HEROJAY	Mrs J. Beach M. Mellor Hibble & Mellor Ltd.

Makers No.	Class	Date	Name	Owners
15118	R3	1920	VICTORY	W.S. Davies
			PRINCESS ROYAL	N.B. Davies
15121	R3	1920	ROYAL JUBILEE	J.J. Butterworth
15298	A9	1919	RENOWN	J. Codona
15301	A9	1919	BRITANNIA	J. Booth
15316	A9	1918	DUKE OF YORK	G. Wallis
15317	A9	1918	DEFENDER	Holmes Brothers
15318	A9	1918	LADY ALICE	Simons & Greatorex
15319	A9	1919	QUEEN MARY	R. Townsend
15320	A9	1919	DEFIANCE	H. Holmes
				S. Llewellyn Ross & Sons
15321	A9	1919	BERTHA IRENE	J. Farrar
15324	A9	1919	RENOWN	W. Biddall
				R. Hewitt
				J. Biddall
15325	A9	1919	BLUE BIRD	P. Case
				C. Evans
15372	A9	1919	JUBILEE	J. Corrigan
				John Collins
15374	A9	1919	PEACE	Connelly Brothers
15375	A9	1919	SUPREMACY	J. Codona
15465	A9	1920	KING COPPER	Toogood & Jobson
15642	A9	1920	TRANMORE	D. Baker
			LIGHTNING	R. Gilham
15652	R3	1920	REPULSE	J. Murphy
15653	R3	1920	RENOWN	J. Murphy
15654	R3	1920	DOLLY	J. Monte Williams
			THE LIONESSE	Anderton & Rowland
				G. Rogers
				Billy Williams
				R. Wilson
15656	R3	1921	PRIDE OF WALES	J.T. Danter
15657	R3	1920	KITCHENER	Mrs H. Dadley
15658	R3	1923	HIS LORDSHIP	Simons & Teago
				Harniess Bros.
				Will Starr
15663	R3	1920	THE MASCOT	(Chas. Openshaw)
				W. Murphy
				J. Powell
15713	A9	1924	PRIDE OF BANNON	D. Donnelly
				M. McMohan
16103	B6	1924	ENTERPRISE	J. Studt
			THE LIONESSE	J. Murphy
				J. Powell
19782	B65	1932	THE LION	Anderton & Rowland
19783	B65	1932	KING CARNIVAL II	F. McConville
19989	B65	1933	UNWARD	S. Ingham
				E.L. Morley
20223	B65	1934	SUPREME	Mrs A. Deakin
20829	Diesel	1935	JUBILEE	Hibble & Mellor Ltd.

Any member who has purchased a copy of our 'Membership Survey' should note that two errors appeared in it. Firstly, the address of Albert Davies should read 64 (and not 61) McKinnell Crescent, Rugby; and secondly, the address of Pete Tei (Tate) should read 168 Loscoe Denby Lane, and not 68 as stated.

Since the list was printed there has been one change of address: Ross Jones can now be found at 12 Elm Grove, Denton, Manchester, M34 3WU.



FOCUS

Neil Corner's Scammell Showtrac JFJ 367, ex Anderton & Rowland, at Northallerton Gals, June 1976.

(M. Slater

SMALL ADS

START a collection of Fairground ride & transport photos this winter. Rides are constantly being improved, changing hands, and vehicles replaced. Write today for my current lists, enclosing S.A.E. to: A.E. Davies, 64 McKinnell Crescent, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV21 4AA.

This small ads service is available free to all members; please forward all ads for the next edition in plenty of time please.

Rates for display ads will be forwarded on request.

IMPORTANT NOTICE RENEWALS

Members with PINK membership cards are reminded that their subscriptions are now due, and payable not later than 31st March.

The above members (nos. 101 - 257) are asked to send their subscription, along with their membership card, or a piece of paper bearing their name and address to the Chairman, Mr Graham Downie, at 1 Holly Court, Frome, Somerset. An SAE should also be enclosed, so that receipts and membership cards may be sent out immediately.

Members with YELLOW membership cards (nos. 300 - 368) are reminded that their subscriptions will be due from 1st April and payment should be made in the way described above.

STOP PRESS

Anthony Harris's Skid is believed sold to James A. Crow & Sons.

George Hatwell is thought to have recently acquired an Ark, from Butlins.

Bob Wilson will shortly be taking delivery of his new continental Dodgem; A new waltzer is also on order, from Turnagain, of Oxford. The old Maxwell Spinning Top Waltzer is going to Wilsons (Redditch) Ltd., and will be delivered as soon as the new one is ready (probably around July 1979).

"THEN AND NOW"

There are still a few of the above photo sets left. These were specially produced for the Fairground Extravaganza by 'TATE' and contain 6 pairs of views; the first taken in the early 60's, and the second in the past year or so. Machines included are Hirst's Ark, Ashley's waltzer, Codona's Ark, Meakins' Ark, Silcock's waltzer, Beach's Caterpillar.

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