

SEASIDE HEIGHTS



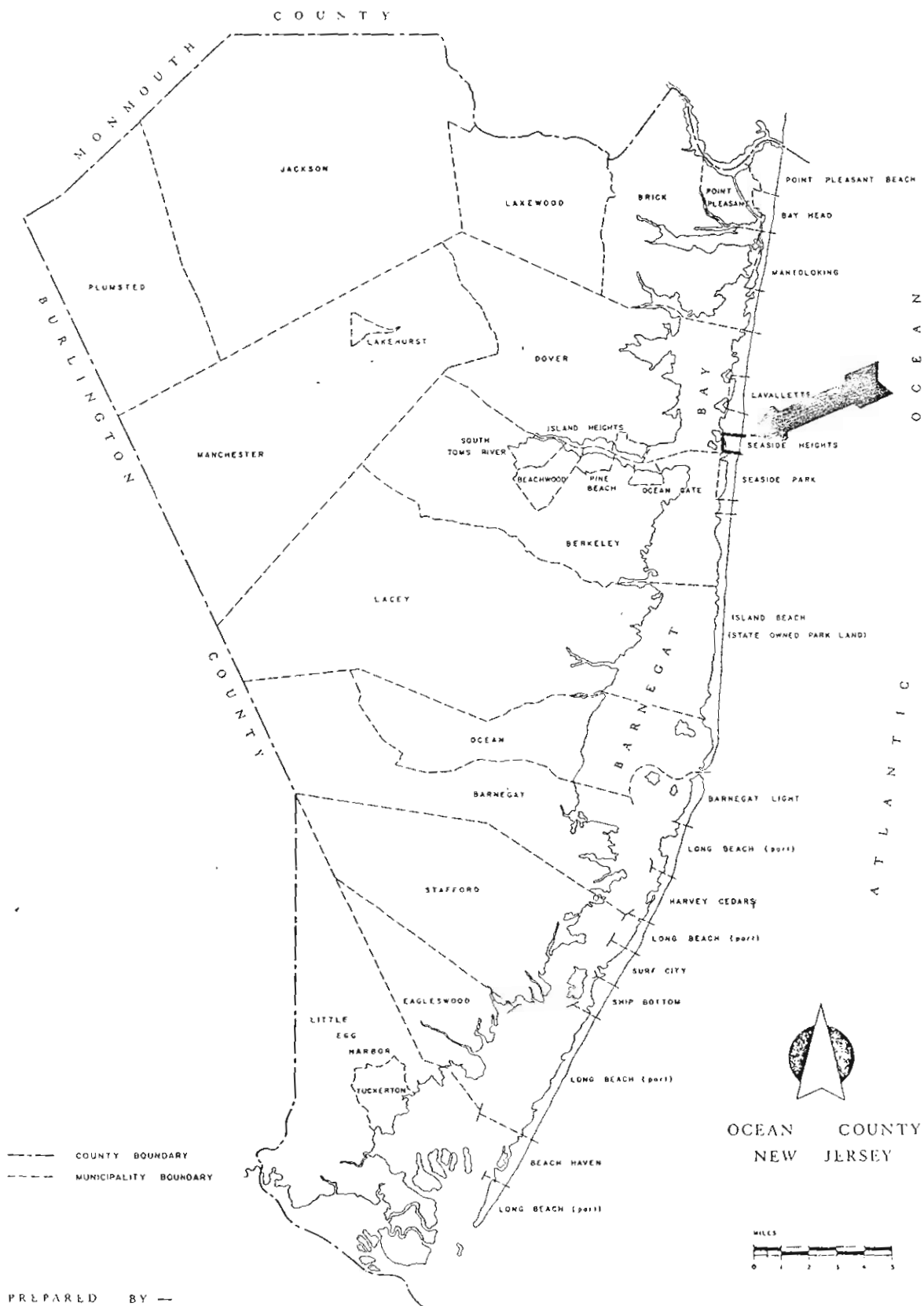
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

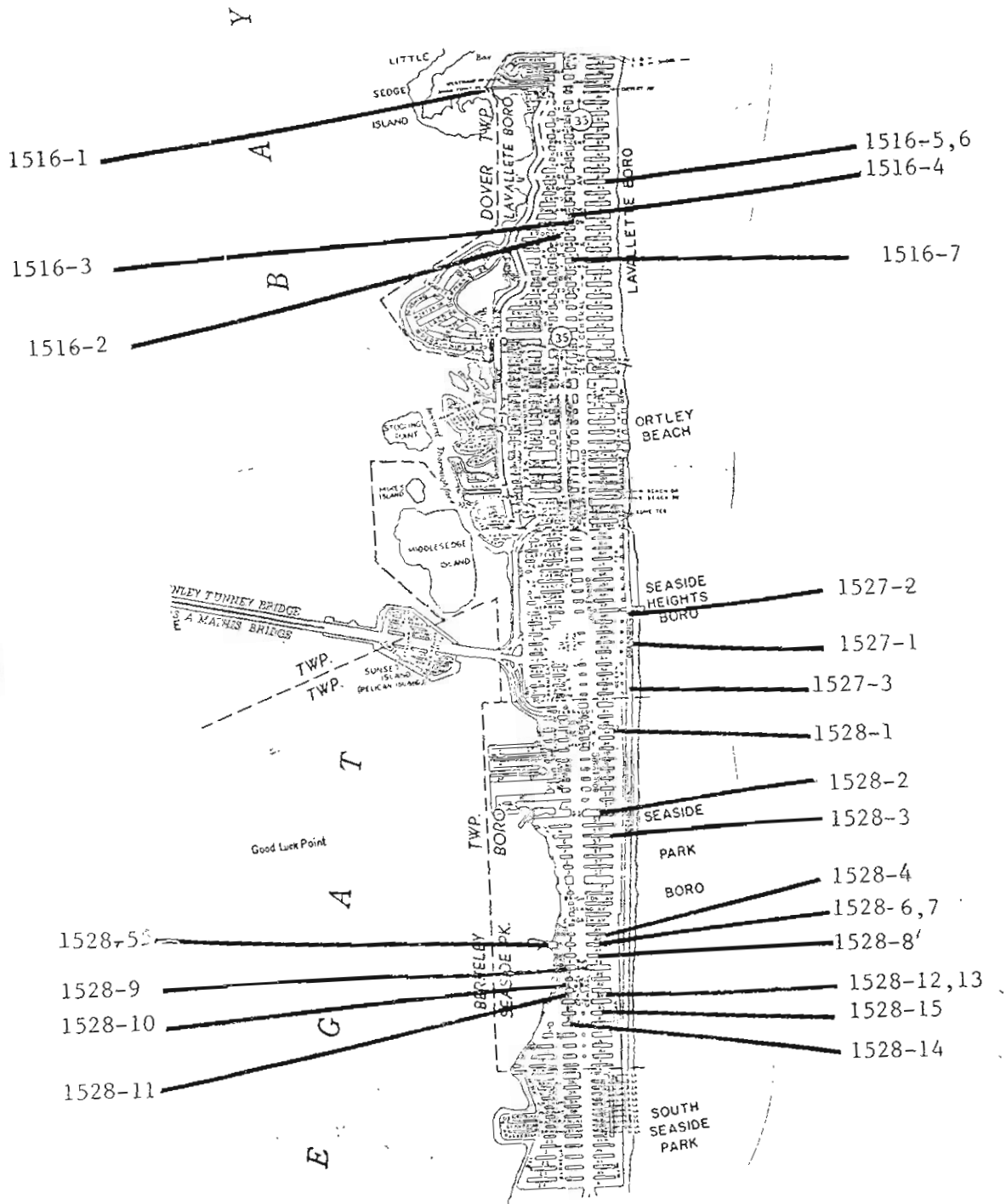
The Seaside Heights survey was conducted by Michael May. The project staff and the Ocean County Cultural and Heritage Commission would like to acknowledge the cooperation of F. William Gregor and Kenneth Wynne III who provided information that aided in the preparation of this report.

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1516 Lavallette
 1527 Seaside Heights
 1528 Seaside Park
 — Survey Form Site

SEASIDE HEIGHTS

Seaside Heights is located on a narrow strip of land known as Island Beach or the Barnegat Peninsula. Like other towns on the peninsula, Seaside Heights is a summer resort which thrives because of its proximity to the Atlantic Ocean and Barnegat Bay. Incorporated in 1913, Seaside Heights is the most recently developed town on the island; however it is the most densely populated, containing approximately 1,700 residents over 0.35 square miles. Today Seaside Heights is connected to the mainland by the Mathis Bridge, making it the most accessible of the beach towns.

Early development of the town is difficult to trace, but it is believed that the town was built on or near Cranberry Inlet, an important shipping lane in the 18th century. During the 1780s the inlet was used by the New Jersey privateers, who raided British ships. These pirates used the shores near the inlet to help trap unsuspecting ships.¹ In 1812, storms and the ocean closed Cranberry Inlet. Duck hunting and fishing were popular throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, but no permanent settlements were established until the early years of this century.

In 1909 three structures--owned by the Stimus, Semples, and Christian Hiering families--stood on the site of the present town.² Christian Heiring's house still stands on the bayfront, now housing the Seaside Bible School at Barnegat Avenue. Hiering, an investor and manufacturer, was important in the founding of Seaside Heights. In 1913 he formed the Barnegat Power Cold Storage Company, the first electric company to serve Seaside Park and Seaside Heights, and was also instrumental in the construction of the first toll bridge in 1914.³

In 1909 the southern end of Seaside Heights was planned as a beach

resort by the Manhasset Realty Company, which began to sell their 855 lots. This company, owned by a Camden family, hoped to lure Philadelphia and Camden residents to Seaside Heights and advertised the resort in these cities. At the same time the northern section of town, owned by the Cummings family and Francis P. Larkin, also began to be developed. In 1912 the first hotel was opened by the Cummings at Sheridan and the Boulevard. Within four years, Seaside Heights had become a borough in its own right.

Improvements, such as the building of the first bridge over Barnegat Bay, helped further the development of the young town. The bridge made Seaside Heights the closest beach resort to Philadelphia for those traveling by car. Other improvements included the building of a new passenger railroad station, freight station and the installation of public utilities.

In a resort pamphlet of 1915, the town boasted of its accessibility and of its summer life. The ocean was not the sole attraction for the visitor. The town also contained a yacht club at DuPont Avenue along the bayfront and an amusement center built in 1913 at DuPont and the Ocean. Visitors, as well as summer residents, could be entertained at the Seaside Park movie house which opened at Stockton and the Boulevard on July 1, 1916, where the inaugural films included "Rags" with Mary Pickford and "Work" with Charlie Chaplin.⁴ Others came for the healthy air, recommended by many doctors of the day.⁵ These visitors could be housed in one of three hotels found in town by 1915. By 1919 the first three blocks of boardwalk were completed, opening the way for more amusements and concessionaires. Today over 500 rides and 100 concessionaires can be found along Seaside Heights boardwalk,⁶ however much of it has changed due to hurricanes, winds and fire. In 1955 a fire destroyed a large portion of the boardwalk including the 1913 carousel, but the boardwalk has remained the same in character, only changing in

appearance, not in function.

Little regard for preservation is evident within the borough. Like the boardwalk, constant change to old structures has occurred. Some signs of early buildings still exist under the facades of fast-foods establishments. For example, the passenger station built in 1915, located on Central Avenue, has been converted to a luncheonette, and the Union Church, circa 1920, on Franklin Avenue is now a Swiss Chalet store. Today, most housing in Seaside Heights is one-family units owned by middle class residents. These structures date from the early to mid 20th century and are located on densely settled streets near the ocean. Today, Seaside Heights contains a large young population attracted like others before them, by its amusement center and seaside activities.

SEASIDE HEIGHTS

Footnotes

- ¹ Island Beach State Park, "History of Island Beach." p.4.(typewritten)
- ² C. Byron Wortman, The First Fifty: A Biographical History of Seaside Heights, New Jersey, (Seaside Heights: Seaside Heights 50th Anniversary Committee, 1963) p.55
- ³ Ibid., p.23
- ⁴ Ibid., p.32
- ⁵ "Barnegat Bay Resort", (Asbury Park: The Schuyler Press, 1916).
- ⁶ The First Fifty, p.37.

Bibliography

- "Barnegat Bay Resorts". Asbury Park: The Schuyler Press, 1916.
- Island Beach State Park, "History of Island Beach." (typewritten)
- Wortman, C. Byron. The First Fifty: A Biographical History of Seaside Heights
Seaside Heights 50th Anniversary Committee, 1963.

STREETSCAPE SURVEY FORM

STREET NAME: Seaside Heights Boardwalk
 MUNICIPALITY: Seaside Heights

CROSS STREETS: DuPont, Lincoln, Franklin,
 Hamilton, Webster, Sumner, Blaine, Grant
 COUNTY: Ocean

DESCRIPTION/SIGNIFICANCE: c.1919

The buildings located on the boardwalk between DuPont and Grant Avenues are mostly one-story masonry front structures, one-bay wide with garage-like doors which fold up or sideways. The buildings are rectangular in shape and their narrow ends face the ocean. All buildings are located on the west side of the boardwalk while a beach is to the right. The boardwalk, which is open only to pedestrian traffic is elevated a few feet and its shops are located up to its edge. At the rooflines of the structures are signs and advertisements often with bright lights and painted bright colors. Some two story buildings can be found along the street, usually at its corners. Sea-Breeze Bath House is a typical example, having a false front with curvilinear elements at its center and corners. 3-D advertising made of giant ice cream cones and other items sold inside are found on the Kohr's Ice Cream Store, another common scheme. Other two-story buildings are found beyond the fast-food, amusement or souvenir shops. At each end of the boardwalk are large amusement areas which are located in the center of the street. Small stands used for selling drinks and food and wooden benches are located on the boardwalk.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF BUILDINGS: 24

PHYSICAL CONDITION OF BUILDINGS: Excellent ___ % Good X % Fair X % Poor ___ %

REGISTER ELIGIBILITY: Yes ___ Possible ___ No ___ Part of Larger District ___

THREATS TO STREET: Roads ___ Development ___ Zoning ___ Deterioration ___ No Threat X Other ___

COMMENTS:

While the buildings as they exist could not be considered architecturally or historically significant per se, the phenomenon of "the boardwalk" has a long tradition along the Jersey shore and in Seaside Heights.

MAP:
 SLIDE
 REFE
 1527-
 S.H.
 Seasi
 Septe
 View:



RECC

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MAP:

SLIDES:

REFERENCES:

1527-1
S.H. Boardwalk
Seaside Heights
September 1980
View: North



RECORDED BY: M. May

DATE: 9/18/80

ORGANIZATION: Heritage Studies

NEW JERSEY OFFICE OF CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION
INDIVIDUAL STRUCTURE SURVEY FORM

HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY NO. 1527-2

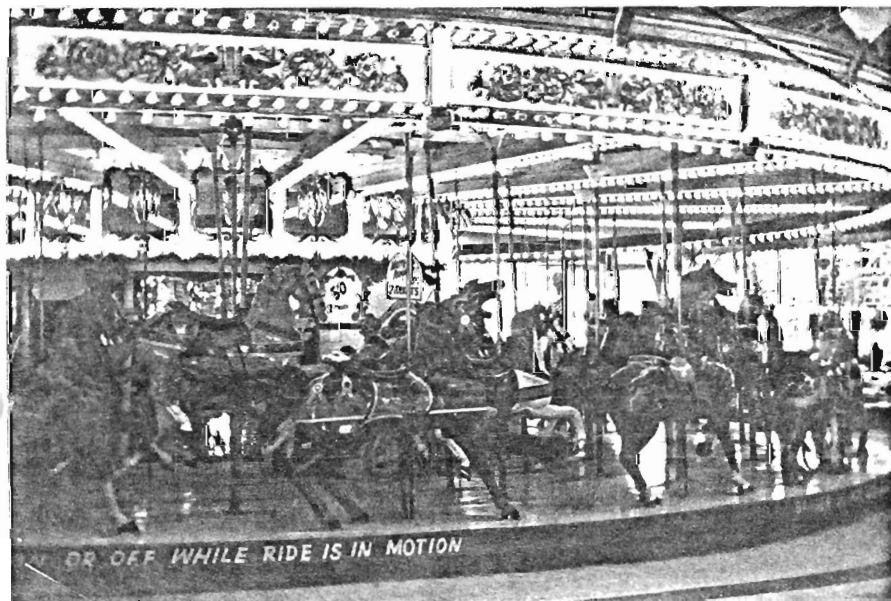
HISTORIC NAME:		COMMON NAME:	
LOCATION:	The Boardwalk & Grant Ave.	BLOCK/LOT	69/38
MUNICIPALITY:	Seaside Heights, N.J.	COUNTY:	Ocean
USGS QUAD:		UTM REFERENCES:	
OWNER/ADDRESS:	Kenneth Wynne III, Venice Amusements Grant Avenue Seaside Heights, N.J. 08751	Zone/Northing/Easting	

DESCRIPTION

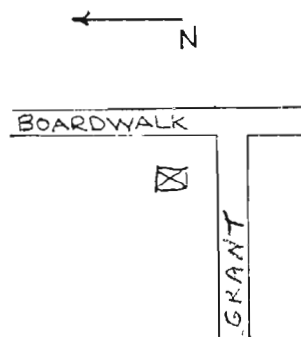
Construction Date:	c.1900	Source of Date:	
Architect:		Builder:	Illonian of Brooklyn, N.Y.
Style:	Neo-baroque/Neo-classical	Form/Plan Type:	
Number of Stories:	1		
Foundation:	rests on elevated boardwalk		
Exterior Wall Fabric:	metal, wood frame shelter		
Fenestration:	1 bay, shed dormers containing 3 windows		
Roof/Chimneys:	hipped roof, monitor		
Additional Architectural Description:			

The structure houses a carousel containing forty-eight jumping, and eight stationary animals. The figures are carved wood and painted, containing jewel-set eyes. Two sleighs with mythical sea animals are also located on the carousel. The figures rotate around a center core containing gilded foliage. The exterior crown contains neo-classical elements such as, scalloped bands, cherubim and gilded ornaments. Oval mirrors and painted seascapes and beach scenes can also be found on the exterior crown.

PHOTO Negative File No. 1527-2



Map (Indicate North)



SITING, BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION, AND RELATED STRUCTURES:

The carousel is located on an elevated boardwalk surrounded by many commercial structures. The beach and ocean are located to the east.

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: Urban ☐ Suburban ☐ Scattered Buildings ☐
Open Space ☐ Woodland ☐ Residential ☐ Agricultural ☐ Village ☐
Industrial ☐ Downtown Commercial ☐ Highway Commercial ☐ Other ☒ Boardwalk commercial

SIGNIFICANCE:

The carousel is significant as a reminder of Seaside Heights' early and current economic base, i.e. the amusements. This carousel, although brought to Seaside Heights in 1955 after a fire destroyed the original, is located on the same spot of the 1915 merry-go-round. This carousel was originally located at Coney Island and dates from the first decade of the twentieth century.

ORIGINAL USE: amusement PRESENT USE: same
PHYSICAL CONDITION: Excellent ☐ Good ☒ Fair ☐ Poor ☐
REGISTER ELIGIBILITY: Yes ☐ Possible ☒ No ☐ Part of District ☐
THREATS TO SITE: Roads ☐ Development ☐ Zoning ☐ Deterioration ☐
No Threat ☒ Other ☐

COMMENTS:

REFERENCES:

Kenneth Wynne III, Interview by M. May, Seaside Heights, October 1980

Fried's book

RECORDED BY: M. May
ORGANIZATION: Heritage Studies

DATE: 9/18/80

NEW JERSEY OFFICE OF CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION

INDIVIDUAL STRUCTURE SURVEY FORM

HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY NO. 1527-3

HISTORIC NAME: Freeman Carousel
LOCATION: The Boardwalk & DuPont Avenue

COMMON NAME:
BLOCK/LOT

MUNICIPALITY: Seaside Heights, N.J.

COUNTY: Ocean

USGS QUAD:

UTM REFERENCES:

OWNER/ADDRESS:

Zone/Northing/Easting

DESCRIPTION

Construction Date: c.1890

Source of Date: style

Architect:

Builder:

Style: Neo-classical

Form/Plan Type: carousel within rectangular shelter

Number of Stories: 1

Foundation: rests on elevated boardwalk

Exterior Wall Fabric:

Fenestration:

Roof/Chimneys: 10 sided roof, web-like vaulting

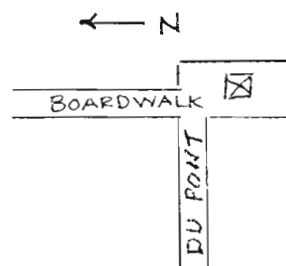
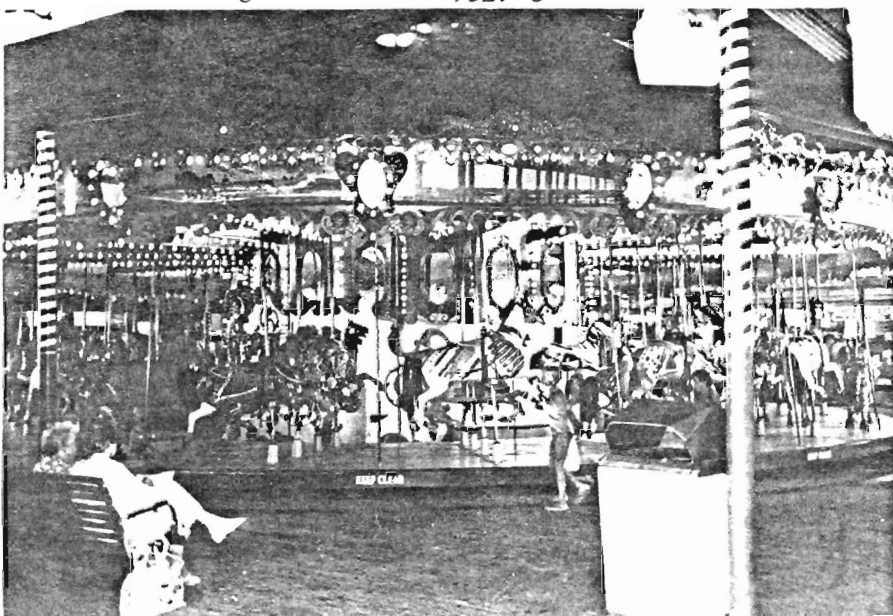
Additional Architectural Description:

Eighteen ribs with cross bracing support carousel. (Ten "candy-cane" posts). The carousel is housed within a tent-like structure built of wood. The carousel is made up of three merry-go-rounds from the turn of the century. There are thirty-six jumping animals, twenty-two stationary, and two sleighs. Most of the figures are horses in parade attire, however a zebra, a mule, a lion and male and female camels can be found. All figures are painted and contain jewel-set eyes. The sleighs contain neo-griffin and shell motifs. The center core of the carousel is enclosed and contains an organ built in 1923. The core is also decorated with pilasters containing Ionic capitals and egg and dart bands. At its crown are seascapes, c.1930. The walls of the core are now faced by modern mirrors and horses' heads. Neon-tube lighting fills the ribs of the carousel. The exterior crown is decorated with neo-griffin and floral elements.

PHOTO

Negative File No. 1527-3

Map (Indicate North)



SITING, BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION, AND RELATED STRUCTURES:

The carousel is surrounded by other amusements set close together on an elevated boardwalk.

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: Urban ☐ Suburban ☐ Scattered Buildings ☐
Open Space ☐ Woodland ☐ Residential ☐ Agricultural ☐ Village ☐
Industrial ☐ Downtown Commerical ☐ Highway Commercial ☐ Other ☒ Boardwalk
commercial

SIGNIFICANCE:

The carousel is important as a reminder of one of Seaside Heights early attractions, i.e. the amusements. Although re-constructed from three merry-go-rounds, the carousel is an excellent example of a late 19th century "carnival-ride".

ORIGINAL USE: amusement

PHYSICAL CONDITION: Excellent ☐ Good ☒

PRESENT USE: same

Fair ☐ Poor ☐

REGISTER ELIGIBILITY: Yes ☐ Possible ☒

No ☐ Part of District ☐

THREATS TO SITE: Roads ☐ Development ☐

Zoning ☐ Deterioration ☐

No Threat ☒ Other ☐

COMMENTS:

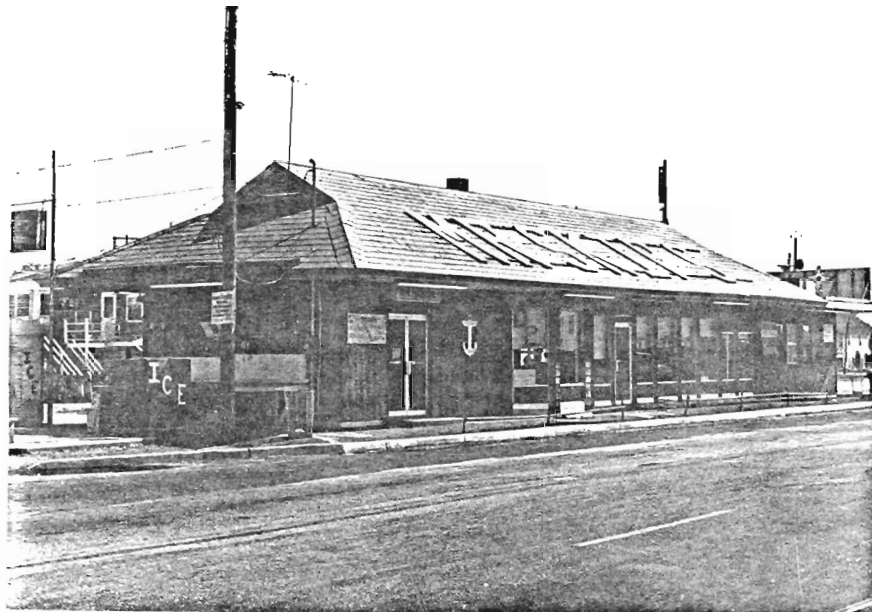
Could be part of a thematic nomination of carousels.

REFERENCES:

RECORDED BY: M. May
ORGANIZATION: Heritage Studies

DATE: October 1980

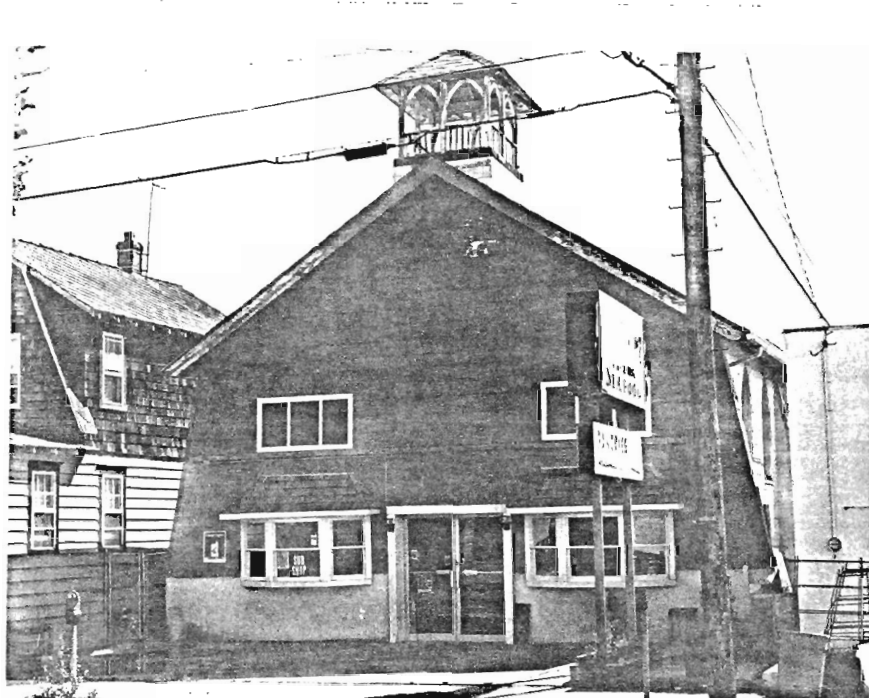
1527-L1



Railroad Station, Central Avenue

1 story, gable roof structure with flared eaves c. 1880. The building has been extensively altered, however some of its original elements, such as its central chimney, 6/6 windows and a transom above a door on the east elevation are still intact.

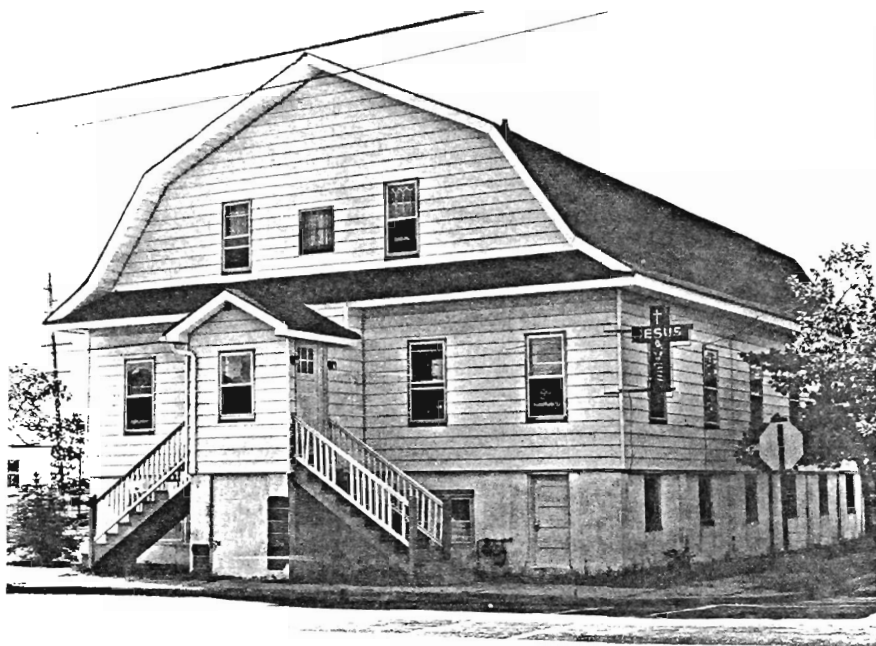
1527-L2



Union Church, Franklin Street

1 story, gable roof structure with stained glass windows on the east and west sides containing symbols of maritime life, c.1920. The building has battered walls, buttresses and a small cupola where a bell once hung. The church has been extensively altered and is now used as a restaurant. New asbestos siding, windows and doors have been added to the facade.

1527-L3



Seaside Bible Church, Barnegat Avenue

2 story, 5 bay, gambrel roof structure was one of the first three houses built in Seaside Park, c.1909. The structure was owned by Christian Hiering, founder and business leader of the town. Although now altered, some of the original tracery windows can be found on the 2nd floor.

3. REGISTERS:

RECOMMENDED FOR STATE AND NATIONAL REGISTERS

