HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT

NAME:	Semaphore Carousel	**PLACE:**	26552

ADDRESS:	Kaurna Country
	Esplanade, Semaphore

This heritage assessment considers that the place meets criteria (a) and (b). Refer to Summary of State Heritage Place for final approved wording, including criteria statements.

View of Semaphore Carousel showing 'galloping' horses.

Note: unless otherwise indicated the images in this report were taken during the site visit on 2 November 2022.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Statement of Heritage Significance:

The Semaphore Carousel demonstrates important aspects of the State's history of leisure and entertainment, specifically the development of seaside resorts as places for South Australians to use new leisure time for daytrips and holidays. The Carousel was first located at Henley Beach from 1928 before being permanently relocated to the Semaphore foreshore in 1938. The Semaphore Carousel is a rare surviving example of the carousels that were a popular attraction at South Australia's seaside resorts and followed the traveling show circuit. It is also the only carousel known to have been manufactured in South Australia, albeit with horses carved in Melbourne.

Relevant South Australian Historical Themes

5. Developing South Australia's economies

> 5.11 Developing South Australia's tourism industry

6. Developing Social and Cultural Life

> 6.5 Participating in sport, leisure and recreation

Comparability / Rarity / Representation:

Carousels

Merry-go-rounds or carousels (also known as roundabouts, gallopers, hurdy-gurdies or riding galleries) are associated with the emergence of and growing access to leisure time in South Australia from the late nineteenth century. This new time enabled the working and middle classes to take day-trips and holidays with the seaside being a popular destination. In addition to typical seaside activities, amusements and amusement parks (funfairs) were built to provide new and different forms of entertainment, with carousels being one type of such entertainment.

Carousels were also a popular childhood experience that marked a special event such as attendance at an agricultural and horticultural show, a visit to the Magic Cave at Christmas time (from the 1930s), or a shopping trip into the city that may have included a visit to the Cox Foy's roof garden playground and funfair with carousel, flying pigs and Ferris wheel (post World War Two). Smaller carousels frequently moved from town to town following the show circuit, while large carousels became permanent or semi-permanent feature attractions.

There are very few carousels constructed before the mid-twentieth century remaining in Australia and even fewer in South Australia. Many carousels were imported from overseas including both the United Kingdom and North America and while only limited research has been undertaken on carousels built in Australia, it appears that Australian made carousels are rare. Consequently, the Semaphore Carousel built in Adelaide, with horses made in Melbourne, is considered to be highly unusual.

Besides the Semaphore Carousel, the only known surviving carousel from the pre-1945 period still operating in South Australia is the Carousel at the Beach House, Glenelg Foreshore, Glenelg. It was imported from England by Frederick William (Fred) Baxter and originally known as Baxter's Riding Gallery.[1] It was licenced in 1918 after arriving in South Australia from Melbourne.[2]

Known carousels which operated in South Australia pre-1945 include:

- W. J. Dark's Electric Merry-Go-Round, a transportable carousel that toured locally and nationally.[3] It was steam powered with a dynamo supplying electric light and was in service c.1909.[4]
- E. A. Brown's carousel, Glenelg, a transportable carousel, operational by 1909,[5] licenced 1913[6], and sold to Pastimes Ltd around 1914.[7] Renamed as Pastimes' Royal British Riding Gallery,[8] it was operating at Henley Beach from 1914,[9] and was relocated to Semaphore by 1925 (not the subject of this assessment).[10]
- H. Stiller's carousel, licenced 1913 and operating at Glenelg at that time, still operating in 1931.[11]
- Barr Bros. carousel, a transportable carousel that toured to regional towns including Port Pirie from 1909.[12] It was licenced in 1914 at which time it was operating at Semaphore (not the subject of this assessment).[13]
- F. D. Holland's carousel, licenced 1914.[14]
- W. Mahoney's carousel, licenced 1914 and operating at Semaphore (not the subject of this assessment).[15]
- W. Stiller's carousel, licenced 1919, still operating in 1932.[16]
- A. S. Murphy's Port Adelaide Steam Riding Gallery, a transportable carousel, licenced in 1921[17] and sold to a Launceston-based owner in 1932, it was resurfaced in1989.[18]
- E. W. Rogers' carousel, licenced 1923.[19]
- Betteridge's carousel, licenced 1927.[20]
- R. J. Smith's carousel, licenced 1929.[21]
- Magic Cave, John Martin's Department Store from c.1930. It is unclear if the c.1930s carousel is the same carousel currently operated each year at the Magic Cave in David Jones Department Store.

The location and condition of each of the above carousels is unknown.

Carousels licenced in 1913-1914 were most likely already in operation prior to the creation of the *Places of Public Entertainment Act 1913* which stipulated licencing of amusement devices, including carousels. Unidentified carousels depicted in the photographic collection of the State Library of South Australia include:

- Carousel at Hamley Bridge, c.1900-1912.[22]
- Carousel at Glenelg, c.1906-1910, steam powered.[23]
- Carousel at Glenelg, c.1910, steam power,[24] distinctive mascots on rounding boards, at Semaphore by 1925.
- Carousel at Glenelg, c.1910, steam power.[25]
- Carousel at Glenelg, c.1910, steam power.[26]

- Carousel at Glenelg, 1912, electric power.[27]
- Carousel at Glenelg, 1913, possibly the same carousel at Brighton (below).[28]
- Joy Wheel, Glenelg, 1913.[29]
- Hurdy-Gurdy at Henley Beach, 1914, hand power.[30]
- Flying Boats, 1920.[31]
- Transportable carousel at Goodwood Orphanage Fete, 1923.[32]
- Carousel at Brighton, 1929, electric power.[33]
- Small carousel at Moculta, c.1936, transportable, minimal construction.[34]
- Carousel at Melrose Showgrounds, 1938, transportable.[35]
- Small carousel at Wallaroo, 1949, transportable.[36]
- Small carousel at Wallaroo, 1945, transportable, hand-powered.[37]

During the early twentieth century, the many itinerant carousels competed for a limited number of desirable sites, notably at seaside resorts such as Glenelg, Semaphore and Henley Beach.

Selected examples of late nineteenth and early twentieth century carousels in Australia that are still in operation or exhibited include:

- Carousel, Luna Park, St Kilda, 1913, Philadelphia Toboggan Company (PTC), is one of a few examples of a PTC carousel located outside of the USA.[38] Listed in the Victorian Heritage Register.
- Canberra Merry-Go-Round 1914, Garema place, Canberra, originally based in Melbourne and relocated to Canberra in 1974.[39]
- 'The Gallopers',1882, built Norfolk UK, purchased and relocated to Hobart Tasmania as a dismantled wreck in 1990 and restored over five years. Retains its original steam engine. Prior to coming to Australia, it was part of travelling showmen Emerson and Hazard's attractions.[40]
- Luna Park Sydney Carousel, (Luna Park Sydney was originally located at Glenelg and relocated to Sydney in 1935), there is an original carousel, however, the current carousel appears to have been on loan from Drayton Manor Theme Park since 2013.[41]
- Darling Harbour, 1892, horses 1885 G&J Lines and Co London, arrived in Australia in 1894 and travelled the agricultural show circuit, including the Royal Easter Show, it retains its original operating mechanism and has been located at Darling Harbour since 1988. Listed in the NSW Heritage Register.[42]
- Geelong, built in 1892 by Armitage Herschell Co New York, arriving in Australia c.1920 and located on the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria for a number of years, before joining the traveling show circuit. It was then left in a paddock near Echuca. It has now been restored and is a feature of the Geelong foreshore.[43]
- Perth Zoo Carousel, 1947, the carousel is identified in the listing of the Perth Zoo in the Western Australian Heritage Register. It was built by Percy Wright who from 1918 manufactured three merry-go-rounds in his backyard at Palmyra, Perth.

- 'The Grand', a late nineteenth century carousel relocated to the EKKA (Brisbane Showgrounds) in 1951 and replacing the 1877 carousel located at the showgrounds.[44]
- Melbourne Zoo Carousel, built in England and arrived in Australia in 1886 following the show circuit until it was installed at the zoo in 1952. It is listed in the Victorian Heritage Register.[45]
- Merry-go-round horse (1920s), WA Museum Collection, remains of carousel built by Percy Wright that operated seasonally at Point Walter, South Beach and Leighton Beach, from the 1920s until 1948, when it was sold to Bicton tearooms. From 1964-1977 it was abandoned and left to deteriorate before being salvaged in 1977.[46]

Seaside resorts

Most of the places included in the Register due to their association with South Australia's burgeoning seaside tourist trade in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are those built for accommodation. The popularity of the seaside as a holiday destination resulted in both the conversion of existing dwellings and the construction of many purpose-built guest and/or boarding houses and hotels. A number of guest and/or boarding houses and hotels built and/or in operation at that time still exist, including the following State Heritage Places:

- Albert Hall (Oriental Hotel),16 South Esplanade, Glenelg, 1878, (SHP12558)
- Dwelling (former Del Monte Palace Guest House), 209 Esplanade Henley Beach, 1911, (SHP14638)
- Dwelling (former Kangarilla Hotel, later and Temperance Hotel and guest house), Dashwood Gully Road, Kangarilla, c.1865, (SHP14258)
- Dwelling (Mindacowie Guest Hotel), 48 Goolwa Road, Middleton, 1911, (SHP14054)
- Arnella Guest House (former Port Elliot Hotel), 28 North Terrace, Port Elliot, 1852, (SHP14164)
- Port Noarlunga Hotel (former Milliari Guest House), 29 Saltfleet Street, Port Noarlunga, c.1890, (SHP14496)
- Dwelling (Karatta House), 7 Karatta Road, Robe, c.1850, (SHP10464)
- Anchorage Guest House (former Aurora House, later Warringa Guest House), 20-23 Flinders Parade, Victor Harbor, c.1910, (SHP11750)
- Franklin Harbour Hotel, 53 Main Street, Cowell, 1881, (SHP14215)
- Ramsgate Hotel, 157 Esplanade, Henley Beach, 1897, (SHP14637)
- Largs Pier Hotel, 198 Esplanade, Largs Bay, 1882, (SHP10638)
- Tumby Bay Hotel, 1 North Terrace, Tumby Bay, 1904, (SHP14247)
- Grosvenor Hotel, 32-44 Ocean Street, Victor Harbor, 1896, (SHP12767)

State Heritage Places that are associated with seaside tourism that are not accommodation include:

- Victa Cinema (former Ozone Theatre), Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri Country, 37-41 Ocean Street, Victor Harbor (provisionally entered in the Register) (SHP

26556). The theatre was constructed 1923-1934, in part, to supplement the range of amusements provided to holiday makers at Victor Harbor.

- Semaphore Palais, Kaurna Country, Esplanade, Semaphore (SHP 13952), constructed as a tea room, bathing facilities and dance hall to supplement the amusements and bathing facilities at Semaphore.
- Second Newland Memorial Uniting (former Congregational) Church, Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri Country, 20-28 Victoria Street, Victor Harbor (SHP 14090), the church was designed and constructed in the 1920s much larger than the needs of the local community to enable the seasonal influx of visitors to Victor Harbor to continue to worship while on holiday.

Semaphore

There were once dozens of accommodation options for holiday makers in the Semaphore area, including hotels, boarding houses, flats and camping sites at Semaphore South and Largs Bay. While Evancourt (see below) and the hotels were purpose built as accommodation, it appears that many holiday accommodation options were more temporary with different owners or renters of homes taking advantage of the opportunity to make a living from letting or sub-letting rooms.

There are three State Heritage Places at Semaphore that have some association with seaside tourism.

- Semaphore Palais, Esplanade, Semaphore, tea rooms, bathing facilities and dance hall, 1922 (SHP 13592).
- Semaphore Jetty, significant infrastructure supporting customs and pilot functions, it was also widely used for promenading, and with later addition of swimming baths and kiosk (both since removed) was a major attraction for seaside visitors and local residents, 1859-1860 (SHP 14360).
- Semaphore Cinema (Semaphore Library & Shops (former Semaphore Ozone Theatre, former Semaphore Institute, sometime Town Hall)), 1884, Semaphore Road (SHP 10602). As the Town Hall the building was used as a venue for events that supported tourists to Semaphore and as a cinema provided additional amusement options.

Selected examples of other places that demonstrate aspects of Semaphore's history as an important seaside resort for day-trippers and holiday makers that are not heritage listed include:

- Evancourt, Esplanade, Semaphore, originally known as the Semaphore coffee palace and then Wondergraph café, provided accommodation with a public café ground floor facing the beach, c.1910 with c.1930 additions, recommended for further investigation for State Heritage listing in 1989, provisionally entered in the Register 23 April 1992, submission opposing listing upheld and removed from the Register 16 June 1992.

- Semaphore Hotel, Semaphore Road, building first opened 1867, with a number additions built later. Entire hotel razed and rebuilt 1927[47], recommended for further investigation for State Heritage listing in 1989.
- Federal Hotel, Semaphore Road (formerly Jetty Hotel), parts built 1866, extended 1880s, major additions 1925, recommended for further investigation for State Heritage listing in 1989.
- Semaphore Odeon Star Cinema, 76 Semaphore Road, originally the Wondergraph Theatre, later the Star Theatre, built 1920, interior fully remodelled 1952 and further alterations 1955, 1992 and 1998.
- Basilia Building, originally known as Bray's Building, Semaphore Road, shops with residences above used pre- and post-WW2 for short term boarding, recommended for further investigation for State Heritage listing in 1989, rejected 18 March 1992.[48]
- 95 Esplanade, Semaphore, was a guest home, it has been recently demolished.

Selected examples of State Heritage Places that represent tourism more broadly in South Australia include:

- Naracoorte Caves Complex, Naracoorte, (SHP 26549), in addition to being a designated place of geological, palaeontological and speleological significance, the caves are also recognised as being associated with the early development of cave tourism in South Australia.
- Arkaroola, near Leigh Creek, (SHP 26404).
- Umpherston Sinkhole, 160 Jubilee Highway East, Mount Gambier (SHP 14734). A geological feature that is a notable tourist destination due to the terraced garden created at the bottom of the sinkhole.

Assessment against Criteria under Section 16 of the *Heritage Places Act 1993*. All Criteria have been assessed using the 2020 Guidelines.

(a) it demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should be closely associated with events, developments or cultural phases which have played a significant part in South Australian history. Ideally it should demonstrate those associations in its fabric.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion if they are of a class of things that are commonplace, or frequently replicated across the State, places associated with events of interest only to a small number of people, places associated with developments of little significance, or places only reputed to have been the scene of an event which has left no trace or which lacks substantial evidence.

The Semaphore Carousel demonstrates two historical themes 'Developing social and cultural life' and its subtheme 'Participating in sport, leisure and recreation', and 'Developing South Australia's economies' and its subtheme 'Developing South

Australia's tourism industry'. The emergence of leisure time in the late nineteenth century arose after changes to working conditions enabled a growing number of people to access public holidays and annual leave. Consequently, people sought new places and ways to spend their leisure time. South Australia with its extensive coastline and sandy beaches offered many opportunities for the development of seaside resorts. Semaphore was an early and popular destination due to its close proximity to Adelaide, boasting a jetty (SHP 14360) from 1859-1860 on which to promenade and then later swimming baths (1888) and a kiosk (1914). The extension of the railway to Semaphore in 1878 with its station adjacent to the foreshore further enhanced Semaphore's popularity.

To provide activities other than the beach and to increase opportunities to support businesses a number of improvements to the foreshore took place, including the establishment of a range of amusements. Some of the amusements were permanent and operated year-round, such as concerts at the rotunda, while others were itinerant setting up on the foreshore during the summer, including three carousels by the early twentieth century.

Carousels (transportable) were a typical amusement at South Australia's seaside resorts in the summer including at Glenelg and Henley Beach and also followed the show circuit offering entertainment across the state (see Comparability/ Rarity / Representation). Unlike these transportable carousels that are believed to have been made in the UK or USA, the Semaphore Carousel was made in South Australia, with horses carved in Melbourne and constructed at a permanent site on the Henley Beach foreshore in 1928 by local businessman Len Northey. In 1938, Len Northey relocated the carousel to its new permanent home on the Semaphore foreshore taking advantage of the tourists who flocked there for a day-trip, holiday or the annual Semaphore Illuminated Carnival. The Semaphore Carousel remains a part of the Semaphore foreshore amusements that South Australians still enjoy.

While there are a number of State Heritage Places that demonstrate the theme of developing social and cultural life, and the development of South Australia's tourism economy, there are few places other than those used for accommodation that represent the importance of South Australia's seaside resorts as a way to spend new leisure time, see Comparability / Rarity / Representation. Like the Semaphore Palais (SHP 13592) built in 1922, the Semaphore Carousel (subject of this assessment) strongly represents the activities that attracted people to South Australia's seaside resorts demonstrating this important aspect of the evolution of South Australia's history.

It is recommended that the nominated place **fulfils** criterion (a).

(b) it has rare, uncommon or endangered qualities that are of cultural significance.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should demonstrate a way of life, social custom, industrial process or land use which is no longer practised, is in danger of being lost, or is of exceptional interest. This encompasses

both places which were always rare, and places which have become scarce through subsequent loss or destruction.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion if their rarity is merely local, or if they appear rare only because research has not been done elsewhere, or if their distinguishing characteristics have been degraded or compromised, or if they are at present common and simply believed to be in danger of becoming rare in the future.

The Semaphore Carousel is associated with changes in work practices that enabled the introduction of and increase to leisure time and the ability of greater numbers of South Australians to access holidays. Specifically, the Semaphore Carousel demonstrates the introduction of amusements as a means to attract day-trippers and longer holiday makers to particular South Australian seaside resorts. Initially located at Henley Beach (1928) and then from 1938 at Semaphore, the Carousel offered, and still offers, alternative opportunities for day-trippers and holiday makers to spend their leisure time while at the beach.

Carousels were and remain a popular attraction in South Australia, with travelling carousels often following the show circuit around the state, while permanent (fixed) or semi-permanent carousels still operate on the Semaphore (subject of this assessment) and Glenelg foreshores. With the exception of the Semaphore Carousel which was made in South Australia with horses manufactured in Melbourne, the carousels operating in South Australia in the late nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century are believed to have been imported from the UK and USA. Carousels built during this heyday of early amusement rides are becoming increasingly rare globally. The carousels at Semaphore and Glenelg are the only known carousels remaining in South Australia from this period.

Although carousels are still being manufactured overseas, the Semaphore Carousel is the only known South Australian-made carousel, albeit with horses carved in Melbourne. Nationally, it is also a rare example of an Australian-made carousel, with the only other known Australian-made carousel still in operation located at the Perth Zoo. Some dilapidated horses from a second Perth made carousel are in the collection of the Western Australian Museum, see Comparability / Rarity / Representation.

The Semaphore Carousel is a very rare example of an Australian-made and the only known South Australian-made carousel in existence. While it is possible that another South Australian-made carousel could be manufactured in the future, this is highly unlikely to occur, nor would a new-built carousel have the same cultural significance. The Semaphore Carousel is an extremely rare South Australian-made carousel demonstrating the amusements that enticed people to day-trip or holiday at the new seaside resorts that emerged in response to access to leisure time arising from fundamental shifts in work practices.

It is recommended that the nominated place **fulfils** criterion (b).

(c) it may yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the State's history, including its natural history.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should provide, or demonstrate a likelihood of providing, information that will contribute significantly to our knowledge of the past. The information should be inherent in the fabric of the place. The place may be a standing structure, an archaeological deposit or a geological site.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion simply because they are believed to contain archaeological or palaeontological deposits. There must be good reasons to suppose the site is of value for research, and that useful information will emerge. A place that will yield the same information as many other places, or information that could be obtained as readily from documentary sources, may not be eligible.

The Semaphore Carousel was manufactured in 1928 and spent a decade at the Henley Beach foreshore before being relocated to the Semaphore foreshore in 1938. The carousel with its pavilion is largely extant and built using machinery and materials that could be easily obtained in South Australia in the late 1920s, with its horses commissioned from and carved by a Melbourne-based rocking horse maker. The carousel is well documented through a variety of records including newspapers, reports, and photographs. Thus, it is unlikely to yield information that is not already well known that would contribute meaningfully to the state's history, including its natural history.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (c).

(d) it is an outstanding representative of a particular class of places of cultural significance.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should be capable of providing understanding of the category of places which it represents. It should be typical of a wider range of such places, and in a good state of integrity, that is, still faithfully presenting its historical message.

Places will not be considered simply because they are members of a class, they must be both notable examples and well-preserved. Places will be excluded if their characteristics do not clearly typify the class, or if they were very like many other places, or if their representative qualities had been degraded or lost. However, places will not be excluded from the Register merely because other similar places are included.

The Twentieth-Century Historic Thematic Framework A tool for assessing heritage places, suggests that the class of place the Semaphore Carousel belongs to is funfair, amusement park, theme park, exposition, or showgrounds, rather than being a class of place in its own right. While the class of place is of cultural significance to South Australia representing ways for South Australians to spend their leisure time, the

carousel is only a single element of the class. As a single element of a class of place it cannot be considered to represent the class at an outstanding level.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (d).

(e) it demonstrates a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment or is an outstanding representative of particular construction techniques or design characteristics.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should show qualities of innovation or departure, beauty or formal design, or represent a new achievement of its times. Breakthroughs in technology or new developments in design would qualify, if the place clearly shows them. A high standard of design skill and originality is expected.

Places would not normally be considered under this criterion if their degree of achievement could not be demonstrated, or where their integrity was diminished so that the achievement, while documented, was no longer apparent in the place, or simply because they were the work of a designer who demonstrated innovation elsewhere.

The Semaphore Carousel was not the first electrically-driven carousel in South Australia, however, it is believed to have been the first all-electric carousel, with drive, lighting and music all powered by electricity, allowing the Carousel to be controlled remotely from an operator's box near the door and eliminating the need to employ a hand to collect fares. Built in 1928, the Semaphore Carousel is also understood to have been the first carousel in South Australia, and possibly the first in Australia to employ amplified music, representing a creative adaptation of a newly-available technology which appeared in the mid- to late-1920s.

While the physical form of the Semaphore Carousel, including the shape and arrangement of the centre console and position of the carousel controls reflects these innovations, and while the original electric drive, controller, operator's box and speaker apertures with fretwork decoration are extant, significant features such as the original speakers, amplifier and phonograph player have been lost. Thus, the Semaphore Carousel no longer demonstrates technological innovation in its physical fabric to a high or outstanding degree.

The all-electric nature of the Semaphore Carousel was noted as an innovation in contemporary press reports and while national carousel authority Patricia Mullins considers the mechanism and drive of the Semaphore Carousel to be 'unique and historically important features,' the Carousel is not considered to have received sufficient critical recognition for its technological innovation to meet the threshold for listing at the State level under criterion (e).

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (e).

(f) it has strong cultural or spiritual association for the community or a group within it.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

> *The place should be one which the community or a significant cultural group have held in high regard for an extended period. This must be much stronger than people's normal attachment to their surroundings. The association may in some instances be in folklore rather than in reality.*

> *Places will not be considered if their associations are commonplace by nature, or of recent origin, or recognised by a small number of people, or not held very strongly, or held by a group not widely recognised, or cannot be demonstrated satisfactorily to others.*

The Semaphore Carousel has been important to the many South Australians who have had the opportunity to ride it. However, there is no evidence to suggest there is a community or group who can demonstrate a strong and direct association with the carousel that would be considered to be enduring and resonate with the broader community.

The Henley Beach Rotary Club has operated the carousel since 2014, however, its members would be more likely to have an attachment to one of the many projects that the club has funded through its fundraising efforts over the years. The local Semaphore community was concerned about the future of the carousel in the 2010s when its operators had to stop running the carousel due to ill health and proposals to relocate it to the Rundle Mall emerged. However, it is doubtful that this group would be considered to have a direct and enduring association with the carousel that is stronger than many other places in the Semaphore area that are also important to this group.

There are people who are passionate about carousels and in particular historic carousels, however, there is no evidence that such a group exists in South Australia. The Henley Beach Rotary Club does host a social media page for the carousel which has 1,700 followers, however, its followers interact little with the page. There is also the historic carousel in Glenelg that carousel aficionados could also be said to have an attachment with.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (f).

(g) it has a special association with the life or work of a person or organisation or an event of historical importance.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

> *The place must have a close association with a person or group which played a significant part in past events, and that association should be demonstrated in the fabric of the place. The product of a creative person, or the workplace of a person whose contribution was in industry, would be more closely associated with the person's work than would his or her home. Most people are associated with many places in their lifetime, and it must be demonstrated why one place is more significant than others.*

Places will not generally be considered under this criterion if they have only brief, incidental or distant association, or if they are associated with persons or groups of little significance, or if they are associated with an event which has left no trace, or if a similar association could be claimed for many places, or if the association cannot be demonstrated. Generally the home or the grave of a notable person will not be entered in the Register unless it has some distinctive attribute, or there is no other physical evidence of the person's life or career in existence.

The Semaphore Carousel is associated with clothing manufacturer-turned-amusement proprietor Leonard (Len) Robert Northey. After losing his manufacturing business in a fire and opening a silent picture show in the Henley Town Hall, Northey built his Carousel to diversify his amusement business on the foreshore at Henley Beach, thus increasing its profitability. The success of the Semaphore Illuminated Carnival lured Northey from Henley Beach to Semaphore and he played a key role in sustaining the Carnival over the next two decades through his involvement on the Semaphore Carnival committee.

Northey was one of many amusement proprietors active in South Australia during the interwar period, some of whom also operated successful amusement businesses at Semaphore, Henley Beach and at other places around the state. Thus, Northey's amusement business is considered to be of Local rather than State significance. Meanwhile the Semaphore Carousel is considered to be indirectly related to Northey's association with the Semaphore Illuminated Carnival.

The Semaphore Carousel is tangentially associated with the Semaphore Illuminated Carnival as it may have been the lure that attracted Len Northey to relocate the Carousel to Semaphore in 1938 after being located for a decade at Henley Beach. While the Semaphore Illuminated Carnival is an enduring event that attracted many people to Semaphore from 1920-1960s, the Carnival is unlikely to be considered an event that made a strong, notable or influential contribution to South Australian history as it is one of many such kinds of events that has occurred at different times in South Australia's history and at many places. In comparison, an event that has made a notable contribution to South Australia's history is Proclamation Day which is demonstrated by the Old Gum Tree Site (SHP 10547).

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (g).

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION
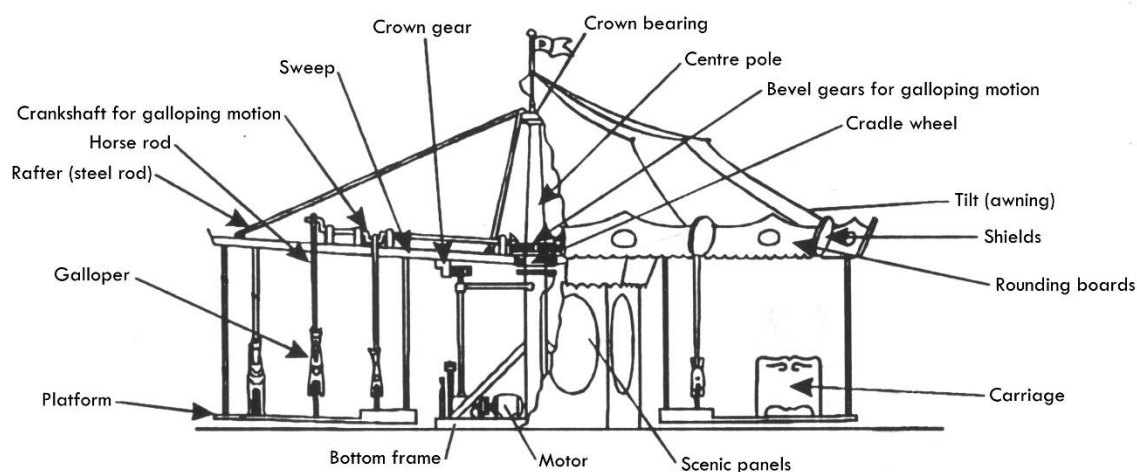
Components of a typical carousel

Source: adapted by Heritage South Australia from https://www.dentzel.com/

The Semaphore Carousel is a timber and steel, electrically-driven platform carousel with 36 horses (originally 40 horses and two carriages), arranged in three-abreast configuration with *galloping* (vertical reciprocating) motion. The Carousel is comprised of a stationary *centre* (hub) and a rotating *spinning frame.*

The centre stands on a concrete pad and is in turn comprised of a timber and steel supporting structure with a steel *centre pole*, *crown bearing, crown gear* and *cradle wheel.* The centre is enclosed within Oregon pine, cedar and pressed metal *scenic panels* forming an octagonal *console*, features of which include:

- coved upper soffit in pressed metal,
- pressed metal lower panels,
- double mirror panels on four sides at head height,
- bevelled and etched upper mirrors,
- speaker apertures in four sides at head height, with plywood fretwork inserts representing a lyre and cloth backing [original speakers removed],
- fielded console panels,
- mirrored glass jewels to fielded panels,
- fluted and beaded decoration and bosses to panel and field edges [original fabric],
- applied ornamental rosettes, scrolls, figures, and painted panels [not original fabric],
- access door in one lower panel,
- fixed internal ladder.

The spinning frame is suspended from the crown bearing and is comprised of Oregon *sweeps* (spokes) slotted into the cradle wheel, locked together with Oregon *quarterings* (spacers) and encircled by decorative pressed metal *rounding boards.* The sweeps are stayed to the crown bearing with steel rod *rafters*. Features of the spinning frame include:

- pressed metal shields [early fabric, replaced c.1938],
- stopped chamfers to sweeps and quarterings,
- drop panels suspended from the sweeps and quarterings by hooks [not original fabric],
- cambered Oregon pine platform suspended from spinning frame on brass *drop rods* with diagonal braces,
- *galloping motion* including crankshafts mounted above, with carved wooden horses suspended from the crankshafts on brass *horse rods*,
- barley-twist drop rods, horse rods and braces, all chrome-plated,
- lattice 'ceiling,'
- leather or vinyl saddles and reins; cast stirrups, and horsehair or synthetic tails to horses [replaced progressively over time reflecting ongoing use],
- slots in platform allowing horse-rods to swing outwards with centripetal force.

180 bulb batten holders are positioned on the sweeps, rounding boards and centre console of the Carousel [original positions but not original fabric, replaced recently].

The Semaphore Carousel is housed in an octagonal timber and corrugated steel pavilion, with clerestory windows and timber-framed sliding doors on seven sides (originally on all sides) and a lean-to shed [not original fabric] on the northern side. Five of the remaining sliding doors are now fixed in position. The pavilion is surmounted by a timber mast which originally supported two banks of 'walking' lights. Additional features of the Carousel pavilion include:

- operator's box, including ticket window, revolving hourglass timer, and tram-style speed controller,
- freestanding timber roof support posts [not original fabric],
- asphalt surface.

Elements of Significance:

Elements of heritage significance include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- Carousel,
- Horses,
- Carriages
- Original and early mechanical and decorative components, features, fittings,
- Octagonal pavilion, doors and operator's box, including controller, ticket window and hourglass timer.

Elements not considered to contribute to significance of place include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- Bulb batten holders,
- Applied ornamental rosettes, scrolls, figures and painted panels,
- Drop panels hooked to sweeps,
- Paint finish,
- Freestanding timber supports to pavilion,
- Solar panels and lean-to shed to north.

HISTORY

Seaside Tourism in South Australia

The seaside has been a popular tourist destination in South Australia since the mid-nineteenth century. Initially, only those with the time and financial resources had the ability to take holidays. However, the introduction of half-day holidays for bank clerks in 1854, up to three weeks' annual leave for public servants from 1874, and the introduction of a range of public holidays throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries made holidays and day-trips at the beach an option for a much larger portion of the population.[49]

The proximity of Glenelg to the city made it an early and popular seaside destination for South Australians. However, improvements to roads and the construction of railways provided new opportunities for tourism, and places such as Henley, Grange, Semaphore, Largs Bay, Victor Harbor, Port Elliot and Middleton also became popular seaside locations for holidays and day-trips. As the market broadened, towns vied with each other by enticing holiday makers with a range of accommodation options as well as a variety of different activities and attractions to visit once there. The introduction of the car in the early twentieth century further increased accessibility and broadened the range of potential holiday destinations.[50]

Semaphore

Located at the southern end of Le Fevre Peninsula and west of Port Adelaide, Semaphore was surveyed in 1849. The area was named 'The Semaphore' after 1851, taking its name from the short-lived hotel of the same name built adjacent to the foreshore with an associated flagstaff that signalled ship arrivals. Development was initially slow and focused on the area closest to Port Adelaide. However, the area near the sea grew more quickly from 1856 after the construction of a signal station in that year and the Semaphore Jetty (SHP 14360) in 1859-1860.[51]

While the jetty was built to serve customs and pilot officers it also quickly became a focus of seaside activities, with day-trippers specially conveyed to the seaside at Semaphore from Port Adelaide on some public holidays. Popular activities included picnics with temporary booths established to provide food and beverages for purchase, promenading on the jetty, cockling and from the mid-1860s, both sea and land-based races.[52]

When the railway line was extended from Port Adelaide to Semaphore in 1878 the popularity of Semaphore for holidays and day-trips further increased, as did its potential for suburban development.[53] A range of beachside amusements and facilities were constructed in response to increasing numbers of visitors to Semaphore and as a means to ensure continued patronage of local businesses. Some included the construction of swimming baths (an enclosed area of ocean) at the sea end of the jetty in 1888 and a two-storey kiosk with restaurant and dance floor also on the jetty in 1914. The baths were not replaced after suffering storm damage in 1917,

however the kiosk remained operational until being damaged in a storm in 1946 and then burned down in 1947.[54]

Semaphore Jetty showing the baths c.1905 (left) and kiosk c.1932 (right).
Source: SLSA B4290 & PRG1642/15/62

While the jetty offered a range of activities, the foreshore around the jetty and between the sea and the Esplanade became the focus of a variety of amusements and activities to entertain visitors. Initially known as the Semaphore Reserve from the early 1860s, a part of the reserve was renamed Todd Reserve in 1896 after Mayor Todd.[55] A bandstand or rotunda was built in 1888, opening on 18 January 1889 offering a venue other than the jetty for regular concerts.[56]

Prior to the 1920s, permanent structures offering facilities and amusements were fewer and less sophisticated than in the decades following the First World War. Early examples include the Ozone Open Air Pavilion (vaudeville theatre c.1909-c.1920), the Wondergraph Open Air Picturedrome (theatre) from 1910, large timber framed, gable roofed structures providing shelter and refreshments, a toilet block and some bathing boxes. In 1919, a new rotunda was built by the Municipal Tramways Trust (MTT) and opened on 15 December. The rotundas offered a place for other events and acts to be performed and shelter for beach goers when not being used for performances. Permanent swings were also built around this time.[57]

The MTT rotunda was the first of a host of further improvements to the foreshore, with landscaping and lawns laid around it, a new bathing pavilion and kiosk opened in 1922 (also referred to as the Semaphore Palais), and construction of a seawall commencing in 1923.[58] In 1925, Amusement Devices Limited tendered a proposal to lease large portions of the foreshore to create an amusement park. The sites proposed for the park were located where the annual temporary amusements operated during the summer months, causing great concern for local traders who were worried their livelihoods would be harmed rather than assisted by the amusement park. The Port Adelaide Council ultimately rejected the proposal.[59]

In the years that followed, cheap jack, bagatelle, darts, the Semaphore Carousel (subject of this assessment), the Whipper, mini golf (located on the car park and then later the Wondergraph site in the early-1930s) and a helter-skelter, all become

permanent amusements that operated for different periods of time on the foreshore. With the exception of the Carousel, none remain.

B 5466

Semaphore foreshore showing shelters, helter-skelter, and hireable canvas tents to provide shade, c.1930. The carousel top left is one of the transient carousels that frequented the foreshore in summer prior to Northey relocating the Semaphore Carousel from Henley Beach.

Source: SLSA B5466

Bringing people to semaphore

While the seaside with its opportunities for promenading, playing in the sand, swimming, cockling and other informal activities were inducements to spend the day or longer at Semaphore, annual organised events became a mainstay in enticing people to choose Semaphore over other seaside locations. Organised sporting competitions were an early such occurrence beginning in the 1860s.[60] In 1892, the first annual sporting carnival featuring land and sea-based events was held on the public holiday for the Prince of Wales' birthday in November.[61] The Semaphore Sports Day continued into the twentieth century, transforming into the Semaphore Carnival, with the date it was held changed to the Foundation Day public holiday held on or close to January 26.[62]

In 1920,[63] the introduction of electric lighting resulted in a name change to the Semaphore Illuminated Carnival with a host of temporary amusements also provided along the foreshore. In the 1920s, the carnival ran for between one and two weeks with a Sports Day and other events, such as a children's fancy dress procession held as concluding events on the Foundation Day public holiday.[64] In the early 1930s the duration of the carnival was reduced to three days to reduce costs, but quickly returned to ten days. In the late 1930s, the carnival was held around Christmastime, returning temporarily to the end of January in 1946 due to shortages and restrictions.[65] In 1946, the carnival was known as the Semaphore Victory Carnival.[66]

In the late 1940s and early 1950s the carnival seems to have been run variously at Christmastime, the end of January or for the whole month of January. By the mid-1950s the carnival ran from mid-December to the end of January and featured sideshows that operated day and night during this period. It seems that the Illuminated Carnival ceased as an organised event in the early 1960s. However, the side shows continued and in recent decades they have been known collectively as the Semaphore Summer Carnival operating over the summer school holidays.[67] In recent years a family fireworks display held on Australia Day marked the end of the Summer Carnival, however COVID, the impact of fireworks on animals (including pets) and emerging environmental concerns have resulted in its recent cancellation.

Organised annual holidays for mine workers and their families from Broken Hill and on occasions other rural communities provided a boost to regular and temporary traders over summer, including the foreshore amusements at Semaphore. Beginning in 1936 and continuing into the early 1950s, the Broken Hill Zinc Corporation picnic committee arranged for special trains to transport its workers and their families to Adelaide for a holiday.

In 1936, approximately 1,300 people stayed at Semaphore and Largs Bay in camps established near the beach and in the many guest homes and hotels. In 1937, 500 Pinnaroo residents camped at Semaphore in January, while in 1939, 8,000 people from Broken Hill travelled to Adelaide for their summer holiday with connecting trains taking many to Semaphore and Henley Beach.[68] These large, organised holidays seemingly declined in popularity in the 1950s due to rising private car ownership, with individuals and families making their own arrangements.

A brief history of carousels in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries

The development of Australian carousels followed broader developments in international carousel technology. The earliest modern carousels with simple horses, known as dobbies, were driven by hand or animal power and existed by the early nineteenth century.[69] The first recorded steam-driven carousel was developed by Frederick Savage around 1867. Savages of King's Lynn emerged as one of the leading British manufacturers of carousels during the nineteenth century.[70]

Most carousels were portable structures designed for rapid disassembly, allowing them to be moved easily from place to place by road, rail or ship. Savage devised the *centre truck*,[71] a single mechanical unit comprising bottom frame, centre pole and bearings, steam engine, overhead crown gear and cheese or cradle wheel, all mounted on wagon wheels. The centre truck formed the hub of most nineteenth- and early twentieth-century carousels. Sweeps or swifts (spokes) were slotted into the cradle wheel, locked together by timber quarterings and encircled by decorative rounding boards, forming the supporting structure of the *spinning frame,* the moving part of the carousel. The timber platform, where present, was constructed in segments and suspended from the sweeps on drop rods. The centre pole of a steam-driven carousel typically doubled as a flue and was hinged, allowing it to be collapsed for transport.

Believed to be E. A. Brown's steam-driven carousel, Glenelg, c1910, later sold to Pastimes Ltd and known as Pastimes' Royal British Riding Gallery, note central flue.

Source: SLSA B 52632

W. J. Dark's road train at Willunga, 1907. The third wagon behind the traction engine is the centre truck of Dark's Electric Merry-Go-Round (note hinged centre pole/flue collapsed for transport), while the fourth wagon contains disassembled carousel components including sweeps, rounding boards, scenic panels, rods and horses.

Source: SLSA B 24129

Semaphore Carousel, 26552
Heritage South Australia, DEW, February 2023

Carousel horses, and sometimes other animals such as cockerels, ostriches, and cats (sometimes bearing fish or birds in their mouths) were originally suspended from the sweeps on rods or fixed to the carousel platform. From the mid-1880s, horses or other animals were suspended from overhead crankshafts imparting vertical motion, known as galloping or jumping motion. When fitted with horses, these carousels were known as 'gallopers'.

Carousels in South Australia, with an emphasis on the beachside suburbs

One of the first recorded appearances of a carousel in South Australia occurred at Glenelg on 28 December 1857, during a festival to commemorate the twenty-first anniversary of the proclamation of South Australia.[72] Over the following years and especially from the early twentieth century, carousels became regular features at beachside localities (notably Glenelg, Henley Beach and Semaphore) during the summer months and at large, organised fairs, fetes and picnics throughout the state.

It is claimed steam-driven carousels were introduced into Australia by 'pioneer showman'[73] Frederick William (Fred) Baxter and his cousin William Baxter, after Fred's arrival in Australia from England in about 1885.[74] Fred Baxter is also credited as importing the first carousel with galloping motion into Australia.[75] After operating carousels interstate, Fred Baxter brought a steam-driven carousel (known as Baxter's Riding Gallery, built c.1902[76]) to Glenelg in 1918 due to competition on the St Kilda (Vic.) foreshore.[77]

Widespread adoption of electric motors for lifts, cinematograph entertainment and electric tramways from c.1910 and the development of electrical infrastructure around the same time encouraged their diffusion into the fairground amusement industry. Electrically-driven carousels were operating in South Australia by 1914[78] and some steam-driven carousels were later fitted with electric drives.

Initially, carousel music was supplied by steam- or electrically-driven organs. Later, with the commercialisation of the electro-magnetic phonograph pickup, carousels with Panatrope (electrically amplified phonograph) music appeared in South Australia in the late-1920s.[79] The Semaphore Carousel (subject of this assessment) is claimed as the first South Australian carousel to possess amplified music.[80]

Prior to the relocation of Northey's carousel to Semaphore in 1938, various itinerant carousels appeared on the Semaphore foreshore from the early twentieth century onwards. James William Barr is believed to have operated the first,[81] hand-driven carousel on the Semaphore foreshore from around 1900.[82] After selling the hand-driven carousel, he operated a steam-driven one at Semaphore from around 1907.[83] Later from 1921, Alexander[84] S. Murphy operated the Port Adelaide Steam Riding Gallery at Semaphore. Built by the Armitage-Hershell Company, Tonawanda, New York during the 1890s, Murphy's Riding Gallery featured 24 horses and two carriages.

A series of photographs forming a panorama, taken in January 1925,[85] depicts three carousels on the Semaphore foreshore, namely one believed to be Barr's steam carousel, Pastimes Ltd's Pastimes' Royal British Riding Gallery, and a large, unidentified, electrically-driven carousel.

Panorama of Semaphore foreshore, January 1925, showing three carousels: (L-R) unidentified electrically-driven carousel, Barr's carousel and Pastimes' Royal British Riding Gallery. The location of the current Carousel covers the former Pastimes' and Ferris wheel sites.

Source: SLSA B 2436, B 2437, B 2438, photomontage by Heritage South Australia

During the Depression of the early 1930s numerous South Australian carousels are believed to have been sold, scrapped, or placed in storage, leaving only four licenced in South Australia: W. Stiller's, H. Stiller's, Baxter's and Northey's.[86] During 1932 Alexander Murphy sold his Riding Gallery to a Launceston owner, who placed the ride in storage. Adelaide antique dealer Peter Jenkinson rediscovered the Riding Gallery in 1989 and returned it to Semaphore in the hope it would be restored and placed on display. It is believed the Riding Gallery was later sold overseas.[87]

Besides the Semaphore Carousel, only one other carousel active during the interwar period has operated continuously into the twenty-first century, namely Baxter's Steam Riding Gallery (Glenelg). During his lifetime Baxter maintained the steam engine on his carousel when most others had been converted to other sources of power, believing steam power 'provided unending fascination for the boys.'[88] After Baxter's death in 1937, the Riding Gallery was operated by his son Arthur Baxter. Usually based at Glenelg, during the late 1940s and early 1950s (and possibly afterwards) the carousel was moved to the Wayville Showgrounds temporarily each year to appear at the Royal Adelaide Show.[89]

From 1982 Baxter's Riding Gallery operated at Glenelg's Magic Mountain amusement park (demolished 2004). Following restoration, Baxter's Riding Gallery was installed in replacement venue The Beach House from 2006.

The Semaphore Carousel

The Semaphore Carousel was built in 1928 for Leonard (Len) Robert Northey. During the early 1920s Len Northey was an Adelaide-based clothing manufacturer in partnership with his brother Albert Edwin, trading as Northey Brothers Limited from October 1923.[90] In April 1925, Northey Brothers' premises of the top floor of a two-story

Currie Street building were gutted by fire, resulting in £3,000 damage.[91] Northey Brothers Limited subsequently went into liquidation.[92]

Afterwards Len and Albert Northey[93] leased the Henley Beach Town Hall (SHP 10558, completed 1922[94]) where they screened silent films, trading as Henley Pictures from 1926.[95] Concurrently, Albert was an elected member of the Council of Henley and Grange for at least twenty years from about 1925,[96] later serving as mayor 1946-1948.[97] Albert was also a local builder and contractor[98] living at Henley Beach.[99]

The success of Baxter's Glenelg carousel reportedly inspired Northey to build his own 'bigger machine'[100] at Henley Beach, allowing him to diversify his business interests.[101] At the end of 1927, most likely before commissioning his carousel horses and mechanism, Northey applied to the Corporation of the Town of Henley and Grange for a five-year lease on a site for a carousel at Henley Beach. The Corporation accepted Northey's application, charging an initial annual rent £80, increasing by £10 each year over five years.[102]

With this agreement in place, the Corporation of the Town of Henley and Grange extended an existing[103] 'amusement platform'[104] to accommodate Northey's carousel during mid-1928, comprising a clayed surface over sand fill.[105] The Corporation also built an electrical switch house for the carousel, measuring 8 by 5 feet.[106] Other foreshore improvements implemented around the same time included concrete bathing houses, foreshore lighting and an underground power supply.[107]

Meanwhile, Northey commissioned the mechanism and 40 horses for his carousel. Unable to find a local craftsman, Northey commissioned Robert (Bob) Bartlett of Robert Bartlett & Co., Melbourne to create the horses at a cost of £20 per head.[108] Having worked as a rocking-horse maker since 1913, the carousel horses commissioned by Len Northey represented Bartlett's 'first venture into carousel horse making.'[109]

Bartlett based the design for Northey's horses on German Heyn horses from Weinger's carousel outside Luna Park on the St Kilda (Melbourne) foreshore. Bartlett made the bodies from 'easily carved and fairly knot-free' sugar and yellow pine while legs, ears 'and often heads' were carved from harder Kauri pine. The horses for Northey's carousel were plainer than the prototype Heyn horses[110] to reduce the cost[111] and perhaps also save time, considering the size of the order. Bartlett applied steam-bent veneer strips 'instead of carved caparisons,' added glass eyes and metal 'jewels,' and most of the horses 'were painted as eye-catching dapple-grays' using his 'new spray gun,' with a few black, cream and chestnut horses[112] included for variety.

The spinning frame of Northey's carousel revolved around a 10-inch diameter, ½-inch section high tensile tramway power pole, obtained second-hand from the Municipal Tramways Trust (MTT).[113] Reputedly, the crown gear was cast in Whyalla[114] and overhead crankshafts forged by Forwood Down & Company,[115] while machining was carried out at the South Australian Railways' Islington Workshops.[116] Northey also imported twisted brass rods from England,[117] which were later chrome-plated to

eliminate the need for regular polishing. Carpentry and final assembly was likely carried out by Len and his brother, contractor Albert Northey.

In early May 1928 Len Northey wrote to the Corporation requesting permission to build a 'shed' (pavilion) on the platform 'almost immediately' so that 'construction of the machine may be finished in the shed':

> The reason is quite obvious as with the wet weather commencing it is almost impossible to do construction work with the timber satisfactorily outside, to prevent it from shrinking and buckling, besides the fact that the machinery would not be improved outside.

The Corporation granted permission to build the pavilion, which Northey described as:

> …all new materials ... painted inside and outside, to be shaped eight sided and half of each side would be a sliding door, width of shed side to side 64ft., joint to joint 70ft., 22ft. high in centre walls 10ft., roof and walls galvanised iron except one foot of wall would be glass right round to show coloured lights[118] [bulbs were mounted inside around the perimeter of the shed so as to be visible from outside].[119]

When the carousel was completed, its 'weather-proof' pavilion with large sliding doors made it suitable for use 'in any kind of weather.'[120] Unlike Baxter's Riding Gallery at Glenelg, which could be mounted on a wagon chassis to facilitate regular relocation, Northey's carousel is believed to have stood on a concrete pad and was intended to be a permanent structure.[121]

Northey's carousel is understood[122] to have been the first in South Australia to employ amplified music and was possibly the first to do so in Australia.[123] Music was supplied via a phonograph and valve amplifier to four speakers mounted behind openings in the central console. This innovation was made possible by the appearance of electro-magnetic phonograph pickups in the mid- to late-1920s.[124] When completed in November 1928, the carousel was 'electrically fitted' so that Northey could 'issue tickets, set the machine in motion and start the music simultaneously'[125] from an operator's box near the door, meaning he did not need to employ a hand to help him operate the ride.

There is no evidence to suggest Northey's carousel was originally driven via a horizontal belt looped around the circumference of the platform, as has been claimed.[126] It has also been claimed that the current drive, comprising a lift motor and gearbox dating from 1915, was salvaged from a building destroyed by fire in 1930.[127] Given the availability of reliable documentation of the Northey Brothers Limited fire in 1925, it is suggested the current drive may be the original drive, salvaged from the Northey's Currie Street premises after the fire. The current motor throttle controller in the operator's box appears to be from an electric tram, rather than an electric lift as suggested by oral history.[128]

On 22 December 1928, Northey paid £3 to licence his carousel, with a capacity of 60, for one year. The carousel was operational at Henley Beach by 29 December 1928, when it was described as 'new'.[129] Later, in August 1930, Northey promoted his carousel in the amusement pages of the *Advertiser* as 'the big de luxe [sic] merry-go-round … open each afternoon.'[130]

Northey's agreement with the Corporation of the Town of Henley and Grange, prepared by Northey's own solicitor,[131] included a clause preventing the construction of similar 'riding devices' on the Henley Beach foreshore by rival amusement proprietors. For example, in September 1929, the Corporation refused A. S. Belcher permission to build a 'Dodgem Riding Device' on the amusement platform adjacent to Northey's carousel.[132]

Northey's carousel at the Jubilee Oval, 1936, note original shields on rounding boards replaced c1938.

Source: Semaphore Carousel historical display

For South Australia's Centenary in 1936, Northey was invited to move his carousel to the Jubilee Oval, located behind the Jubilee Exhibition Building on North Terrace,[133] a potentially lucrative business opportunity. For its temporary appearance at Jubilee Oval, the carousel received a canvas *tilt* or canopy[134] to keep the rain out while the octagonal pavilion remained behind. After its appearance at the Jubilee Oval, Northey's carousel returned to Henley Beach where it remained until 1938.[135]


Northey's carousel at Henley Beach, 1938.

Moving to Semaphore

Northey was lured[136] to move his carousel to Semaphore by the growth of the Semaphore Carnival in the late 1930s, in turn buoyed by the Broken Hill holiday crowds[137] which travelled to Semaphore by train. A proposal to lease a portion of the Todd reserve on the foreshore in 1936 for a permanent carousel was met with 'indignation' by the local community who argued that the reserve 'belongs to the rate payers and the public generally, and should not be closed for the sake of a few pounds in revenue'.[138]

However, it seems the opposition was short-lived, as on 4 November 1938, the *Advertiser* reported Northey's 'large merry-go-round' would open at Semaphore for the first time, at the eight-day Semaphore Carnival beginning on 24 December.[139] A photograph published in *The Citizen: Port Adelaide & District News Pictoria*l on 31 December 1939 shows Northey's carousel pavilion in course of reassembly in its current position,[140] on the lawns south of the Semaphore Palais (SHP 13952).
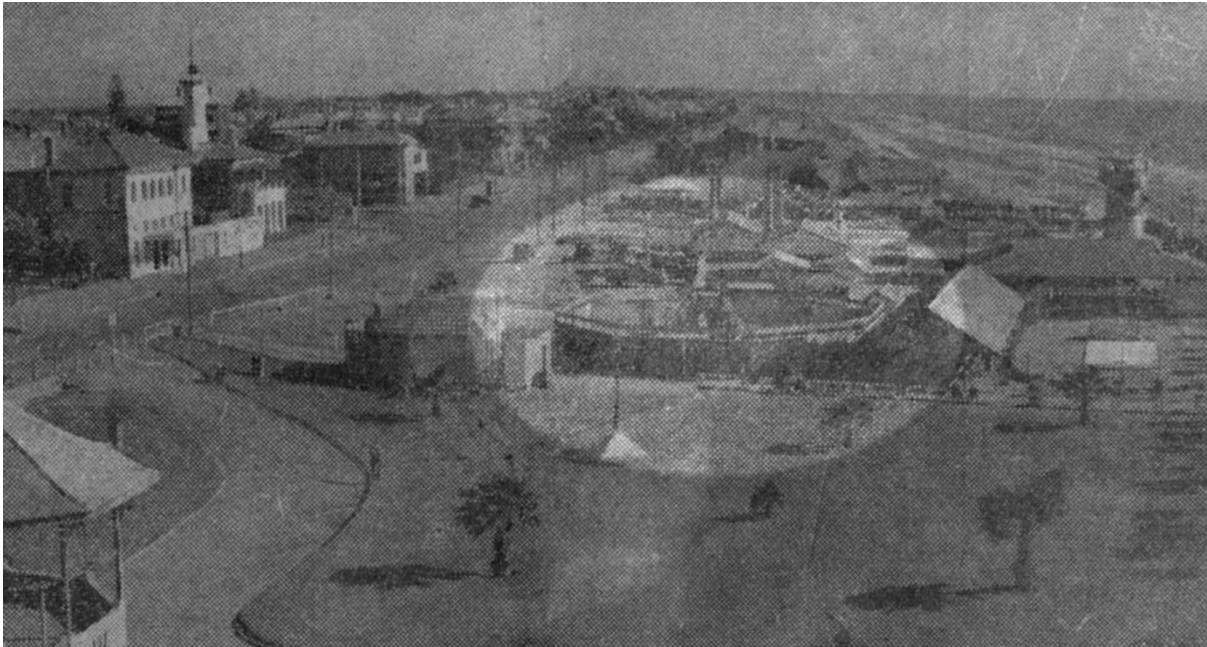
Northey's carousel under reconstruction at Semaphore, December 1938.

Source: "Carnival Site" in *Citizen* 31 December 1938 p. 1 http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article236745358

Northey duly applied for renewal of his licence on 23 December, granted the following day, allowing him to reopen his carousel at Semaphore. Meanwhile he also opened a 'jumping speedboats' ride at Glenelg, known as 'Speedboat Limited' and a 'penny arcade for slot machines' at Henley Beach in time for the summer of 1938-1939.[141]

Following the highly successful[142] 1938-1939 Semaphore Carnival, Len Northey consolidated his interests at Semaphore by leasing the Semaphore Palais from the Corporation of the City of Port Adelaide in 1940.[143] After deciding the move to Semaphore would be a permanent one, Northey cut up his carousel's canvas tilt to make shelter shades for beach hire.[144] Pressed metal shields on the Carousel's rounding boards were also replaced around this time.

Known locally as 'the Merry-go-round Man,' Len Northey played an important role in maintaining the momentum of the Semaphore Carnival in the post-war years as Chairman of the Semaphore Carnival Committee.[145] He died in 1966; afterwards his son, Robert Douglas Northey (b.1927) took over responsibility for the Carousel.[146]

Later years

After about seven years, Robert Northey sold the Semaphore Carousel at an auction held in Tanunda in 1974.[147] It was purchased for $22,000[148] by father and son, Brent (snr) and Brent (jnr) Leighton. Brent (jnr) maintained and operated the Carousel into the late-1980s when Ernie and Kath Makepeace took over,[149] however, ownership remained in the Leighton family. Ernie Makepeace regularly repaired broken horse legs 'using fibreglass sections which seamlessly match the design of the horses.'[150] The horses are now understood to be protected beneath thin fibreglass shells. Ernie also suspended drop panels from the sweeps and added applied decoration to the platform edges, carriages and centre panels.[151]
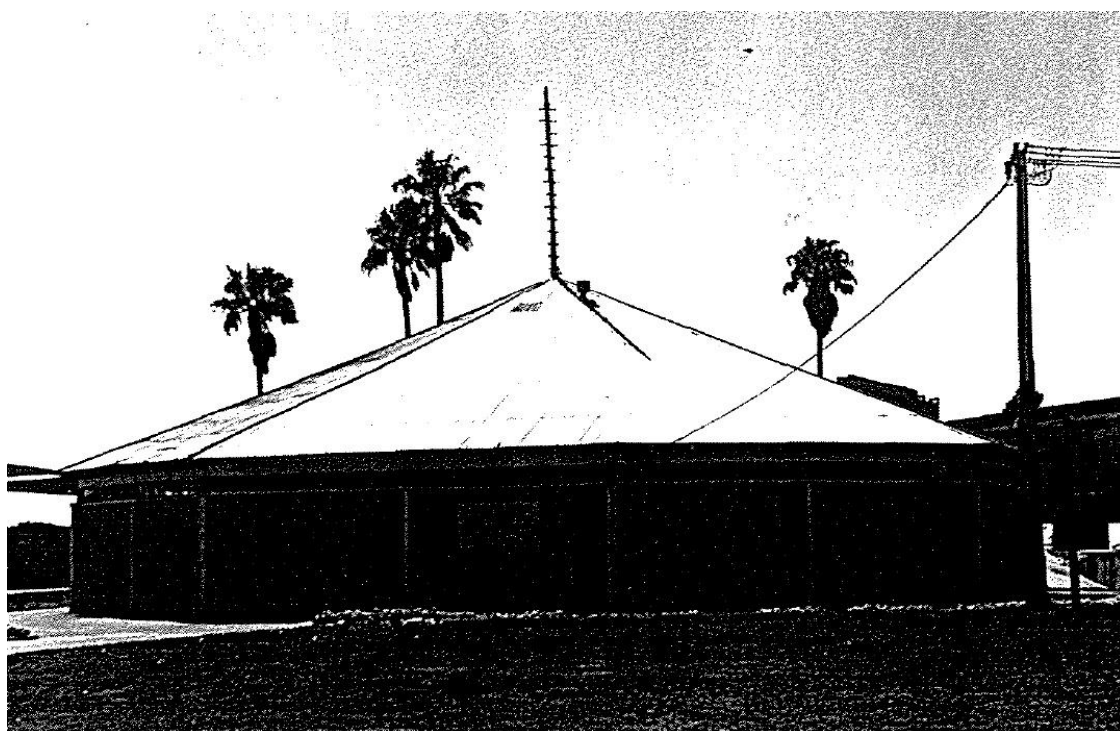
Semaphore Carousel Pavilion, 1989, note 'walking lights' on mast.

Source: McDougall & Vines (1989) *Greater Port Adelaide Conservation Study,* Architecture Museum Collection

During the early 2010s Kath's ill health led the Makepeaces to retire and Brent Leighton (jnr) advertised the Semaphore Carousel for sale in February 2011. Later that year, Peter Lohman and partner Dea Wilke took over operation of the Carousel. In October 2011 Adelaide City Council investigated buying the Semaphore Carousel and relocating it to Rundle Mall under the Gawler Place canopy.[152] Doubts surrounding the future of the Carousel in the early 2010s led to community concerns that the ride could be 'dismantled and the individual horses auctioned off.'[153]

Retired businessman Frank Schirripa purchased the Semaphore Carousel in March 2014. Since then, the Carousel has been operated by the Rotary Club of Henley Beach, who have used the proceeds 'to fund a range of local and international charity projects.'[154] In recent years the Carousel was modified to accommodate wheelchairs by removing four horses and partially removing the carriages.

Today the Semaphore Carousel is believed to be the largest in Australia[155] and one of two surviving and operational pre-1945 Australian-built carousels. It is also the only operational carousel fitted with Bartlett carousel horses.[156] Highly regarded by carousel enthusiasts internationally, the Semaphore Carousel is considered to have unusually smooth mechanical action.[157]

Chronology

Year	Event
1849	Area now known as Semaphore surveyed.
1850	Platform dobbies operating in Britain.
1854	Half-day holidays for bank clerks introduced in South Australia.
1857	Construction of Semaphore Signal Station.
1857	28 December, early recorded appearance of a carousel in South Australia.
1859	Construction of Semaphore Jetty (SHP 14360) commences.
1860s	Organised sporting competitions occur at Semaphore.
1867	Frederick Savage of King's Lynn develops the steam-driven carousel.
1874	Annual leave introduced for South Australian public servants.
1878	Port Adelaide railway line extended to Semaphore.
1880s	Galloping motion developed.
1885	Frederick William (Fred) Baxter arrives in Australia from England, importing the first steam-powered carousel into Australia.
1888	Construction of baths at seaward end of Semaphore Jetty.
1889	18 January, bandstand or rotunda opens on Semaphore Reserve.
1892	9 November, First annual sporting carnival held at Semaphore.
1896	Part of Semaphore Reserve renamed Todd Reserve after Mayor Todd.
1902	Baxter's Riding Gallery imported from England.
1909	Semaphore Open Air Pavilion (later Ozone Pavilion) opens.
1910	Semaphore Wondergraph Open Air Picturedrome opens.
1913	Robert (Bob) Bartlett enters business as a rocking-horse maker.
1914	Electrically-driven carousels operating in South Australia.
	Kiosk opens on Semaphore jetty.
1917	Semaphore baths damaged by storm.
1918	Baxter moves his Riding Gallery from St Kilda (Vic.) to Glenelg.
1919	15 December, Municipal Tramways Trust bandstand opens at Semaphore.
1920	24-26 January, first Semaphore Illuminated Carnival.
1921	Port Adelaide Steam Riding Gallery is licenced to Alexander Murphy.
1922	23 December, Semaphore Bathing Pavilion (Semaphore Palais) opens.

1923   October, Leonard (Len) Robert and Albert Edwin Northey commence trading as Northey Brothers Limited.

1925   The Brunswick Panatrope, the first fully electric phonograph, is introduced.

January, three carousels operating on Semaphore foreshore including Barr's carousel, Pastimes' Royal British Riding Gallery and an unidentified electrically-driven carousel.

April, Northey Bros. premises gutted by fire.

August, Amusement Devices Limited tenders unsuccessful proposal to lease large portions of the Semaphore foreshore to create an amusement park.

1926   Len and Albert Northey lease the Henley Beach Town Hall to screen silent films, trading as Henley Pictures.

1927   13 December, Len Northey accepts lease of Henley Beach foreshore carousel site.

1928   Len Northey commissions Robert Bartlett & Co., Melbourne to create 40 carousel horses at a cost of £20 per head, Bartlett's first foray into carousel horse-making.

May, Northey applies to the Corporation of the Town of Henley and Grange to build carousel pavilion.

September, Corporation of the Town of Henley and Grange extends amusement platform to fit Northey's carousel.

November, Northey's carousel completed.

22 December, Northey's carousel licenced to carry 60 persons.

29 December, Northey's carousel operational at Henley Beach.

1929   March, the first 'talking' pictures screen in Adelaide.

1930   August, Northey's carousel advertised as 'the big de luxe [sic] merry-go-round … open each afternoon.'

Original electric drive of Northey's carousel reputedly replaced with current lift motor drive.

Numerous South Australian carousels are scrapped, sold or placed in storage during the Depression.

Alexander Murphy sells Port Adelaide Steam Riding Gallery to Launceston (Tas.) owner.

1936   Northey's carousel appears at the Jubilee Oval to celebrate South Australia's Centenary.

Northey's carousel returns to Henley Beach.

Broken Hill Zinc Corporation picnic committee arranges for special trains to transport workers to Adelaide.

1937   January, 500 Pinnaroo residents camp at Semaphore.

May, Death of Fred Baxter.

1938	**December, Northey's carousel moved to Semaphore foreshore.**
	24 December, eight-day Semaphore Carnival commences; record-breaking crowd of 350,000 attend.
1939	December, 8,000 people from Broken Hill travel to Adelaide for summer holidays.
1940	Northey leases Semaphore Palais from the Corporation of the City of Port Adelaide.
1947	Semaphore jetty kiosk destroyed by fire.
1950s	Large, organised holidays to Semaphore decline due to rising private car ownership.
1950	Baxter's Riding Gallery appears at the Royal Adelaide Show.
1966	**Len Northey dies, Robert Northey takes over operation of Semaphore Carousel.**
1974	**Semaphore Carousel sold to Brent (snr) and Brent (jnr) Leighton at an auction held in Tanunda, for $20,000.**
1982	Baxter's Riding Gallery installed at Magic Mountain, Glenelg.
1980s	**Late in the decade, Ernie and Kath Makepeace take over operation and maintenance of the Semaphore Carousel.**
1989	**Semaphore Carousel is noted as having state heritage significance in the Greater Port Adelaide Heritage Survey.**
2006	Baxter's Riding Gallery installed at The Beach House, Glenelg following restoration.
2011	**February, Brett Leighton (jnr) offers Semaphore Carousel for sale.**
2014	**Semaphore Carousel purchased by Frank Schirripa.**

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SITE RECORD

NAME:	Semaphore Carousel	**PLACE NO.:**	26522

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE: Carousel and pavilion

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1928, relocated 1938

REGISTER STATUS: Nominated 8 August 2022

CURRENT USE: Carousel

1928–Present

BUILDER: Leonard R. Northey (builder)

Robert Bartlett & Co. (horses)

1928

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: City of Port Adelaide Enfield

LOCATION:

Street No.:

Street Name: Esplanade

Town/Suburb: Semaphore

Post Code: 5019

LAND DESCRIPTION:

Title Reference: CR 6230/172 A103 D42723

Hundred: Port Adelaide

PHOTOS

| **NAME:** | Semaphore Carousel | **PLACE NO.:** | 26522 |

Semaphore Carousel Pavilion, showing clerestory windows, sliding doors (closed) and mast.

Source: DEW Files 23 December 2022

Overall view of carousel, showing centre console, pressed metal rounding boards (top), platform and horses.
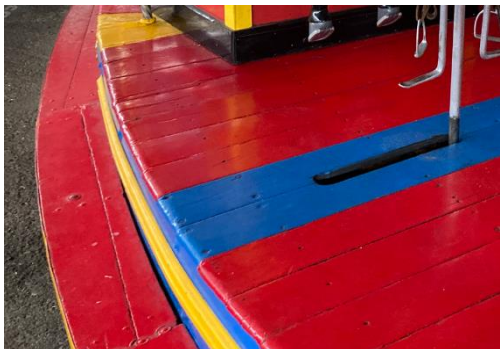
| **NAME:** | Semaphore Carousel | **PLACE NO.:** | 26522 |

Pressed metal rounding boards (detail).

Original speaker aperture with decorative fretwork inserts (lyre motif) and cloth backing.

Oregon plaform, showing slot allowing horse rods to swing outwards with centripetal motion.

Pressed metal cladding of lower centre console and access door.

Typical connections between crankshaft and barley-twist horse rods, with oil cups.

Pressed metal soffit to centre console, with applied decoration [not original fabric].

| **NAME:** | Semaphore Carousel | **PLACE NO.:** | 26522 |

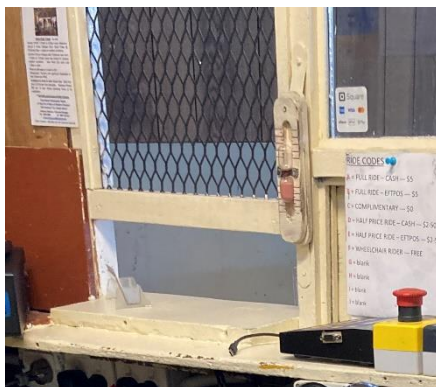

Typical horse.

Sweeps, quarterings, lattice ceiling [original fabric] with drop panels [not original fabric].

Operator's box.

Carousel controller (ex MTT tram controller).

Ticket window with revolving hourglass timer (on right).

Carriages (removed from platform).

| **NAME:** | Semaphore Carousel | **PLACE NO.:** | 26522 |

Land Parcel Semaphore Carousel Esplanade, Semaphore (CR 6230/172 D42723 A103 Hundred of Port Adelaide)

LEGEND   **N ↑**

Parcel boundaries (Indicates extent of Listing)

Detail (see below for elements of significance for Semaphore Carousel)

Existing State Heritage Places 1) Semaphore Palais (SHP 13952); 2) Soldiers Memorial Clock (SHP 143621); 3) Semaphore Pier (known as Semaphore Jetty) (SHP 14360)

NAME:	Semaphore Carousel	**PLACE NO.:**	26522

LEGEND   **N ↑**

▭ Extent of the elements of significance associated with the Semaphore Carousel (CR 6230/172 D42723 A103 Hundred of Port Adelaide)

▭ Shed/lean-to to carousel pavilion, considered to not contribute to the significance of place

Elements of heritage significance include (but are not necessarily limited to):
- Carousel,
- Horses,
- Carriages
- Original and early mechanical and decorative components, features and fittings,
- Octagonal pavilion, doors and operator's box, including controller, ticket window and hourglass timer.

Elements not considered to contribute to significance of place include (but are not necessarily limited to):
- Bulb batten holders,
- Applied ornamental rosettes, scrolls, figures and painted panels,
- Drop panels hooked to sweeps,
- Paint finish,
- Freestanding timber supports to pavilion,
- Lean-to shed to north,
- Solar panels,
- All other buildings, shelters, amusements, landscaping in the immediate vicinity of the area identified as significant.

[1] Photographed in c.1918 soon after installation: https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/PRG+280/1/18/11; photographed c1925: https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+50413; reverse angle c1929: https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+50418.

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[21] GRG67/33 File 19/1929 (Reference Book p. 71) SRSA

[22] Depicted in https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/PRG+1377/78/63

[23] Depicted in https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/PRG+280/1/11/102; https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/PRG+280/1/30/151

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[25] Depicted in https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+42160

[26] Depicted in https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+42160

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[29] Depicted in https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/PRG+280/1/7/300; https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+11395

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[99] Sands and McDougall's South Australian Directory (1926)

[100] Brett Leighton, Notes (1989)

[101] It has been claimed that Northey invested in a carousel 'rather than wait' for motion pictures with a synchronised soundtrack, known as talking pictures or 'talkies,' to 'wipe out' the silent film industry (Couper-Smartt, *Commodious Harbor* p. 578). However, Northey could not have foreseen (Dylan Walker, *Almost an Institution: Sustaining Rural Exhibition in South Australia (1897-1935)* (2017) pp. 83-85) the demise of silent cinema when he commissioned the carousel in 1927 or early 1928. Talking pictures did not arrive in Australia until early 1929, initially greeted with considerable scepticism among exhibitors, and their long-term viability was not assured until the high price of synchronised sound reproduction technology came within reach of suburban exhibitors from September 1929 (Dylan Walker, *Almost an Institution* pp. 83-85).

[102] GRS838/00001/Unit 5 SRSA

[103] GRS838/00001/Unit 7 n. p. SRSA

[104] GRS838/00001/Unit 6, p. 56 SRSA

[105] GRS838/00001/Unit 7 n. p. SRSA

[106] GRS838/00001/Unit 7 n. p. SRSA

[107] GRS838/00001/Unit 6, p. 27; Unit 7 n. p. SRSA

[108] Brett Leighton, Notes (1989)

[109] Patricia Mullins, 'Future Uncertain for South Australia's Unique Semaphore Beach Carousel', *Carousel News & Trader* February 2012 p.27.

[110] Patricia Mullins, 'Future Uncertain', *Carousel News & Trader* February 2012 p.27.

[111] Brett Leighton, Notes (1989)

[112] Patricia Mullins, 'Future Uncertain', *Carousel News & Trader* February 2012, p.27.

[113] Brett Leighton, Notes (1989)

[114] This claim first appears in John Couper-Smartt, *Commodious Harbor* p.578.

[115] Brett Leighton, Notes (1989); Forwood Downs possessed a crank press c.1900: https://archival.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/brg/BRG201_ForwoodHoldings_serieslist.pdf

[116] Signage at Semaphore Carousel.

[117] Brett Leighton, Notes (1989)

[118] GRS838/00001/Unit 6, p. 8 SRSA

[119] John Dallwitz, Heritage South Australia Photographic Collection Film 109/3, 15 August 1979

[120] 'Sideshow Season on Beaches, Variety in Entertainment and Amusement, Revenue used to Improve Foreshores', News 22 November 1928, p.23.

[121] 'Sideshow Season on Beaches'.

[122] 'Old horses never die, they just go around merrily', *Messenger* 10 August 1988, Port Adelaide Enfield Local History Collection

[123] Brett Leighton, Notes (1989)

[124] https://www.herrickpickups.com/origins-of-the-electro-magnetic-pickup/

[125] 'Sideshow Season on Beaches'

[126] An oral source (Brett Leighton Notes, 1989) claims this initial system proved unsuccessful, leading to its replacement with the current drive in 1930. However, no physical or documentary evidence is available to support the existence of any such carousel drives in South Australia during the twentieth century (no such systems appear in numerous historical photographs of carousels held in the State Library of South Australia's pictorial collection). It is unlikely such a 'hazardous' (Couper-Smartt, *Commodious Harbor* p. 578) system would have been granted a licence under the *Places of Public Entertainment Act 1913*. The steam belt drive story first emerged in the late 1980s around the time Murphy's Port Adelaide Steam Riding Gallery resurfaced; the story and may have been inspired by a nineteenth-century advertisement obtained by Peter Jenkinson and associated with the Riding Gallery, depicting an Armitage-Hershell carousel driven by a portable 'donkey' steam engine via a horizontal belt.

[127] Brett Leighton, Notes (1989)

[128] Brett Leighton, Notes (1989)

[129] 'Record Crowds at Beaches', News 29 December 1928, p.3.

[130] 'Amusements', *Advertiser* 23 August 1930, p.2.

[131] GRS838/00001/Unit 6, p. 2 SRSA

[132] GRS838/00001/Unit 6, pp. 55-60 SRSA

[133] Signage at Semaphore Carousel.

[134] Couper-Smartt *Commodious Harbor* p. 578; the Carousel carries a canvas roof in photographs of its appearance at Jubilee Oval.

[135] https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+7517

[136] According to local folklore, Northey relocated his carousel to Semaphore when the Corporation of the Town of Henley and Grange increased the carousel's site rental by one shilling (Ashley Walsh, 'Semaphore's Historic Carousel' ABC Local Radio 9 November 2008 https://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2008/11/09/2414408.htm). However, since the annual site rental cost over £120 per annum, and site rental growth was foreseen in Northey's original five-year lease, it seems unlikely Northey would have gone to the considerable effort and expense of relocating his carousel over a such a trivial increase.

[137] 'Semaphore On Top, Simple Story Told in Headlines, Now No. 1 Beach', *Citizen* 31 December 1938, p.1.

[138] 'Semaphore Indignation at Plan to Lease Site for Merry-go-round', *News* 19 November 1936, p.14.

[139] 'Plans for Summer at Seaside Resorts, Preparations for Large Crowds, Improvements Made, *Advertiser* 4 November, 1938 p.14.

[140] 'Carnival Site', *Citizen* 31 December 1938, p.1.

[141] GRG67/33 File 243/1928 SRSA

[142] Corporation of the City of Port Adelaide(1956), *Centenary History of Port Adelaide 1856-1956* Port Adelaide SA: Corporation of the City of Port Adelaide p.102.

[143] Hamish Ramsay (1988), *Semaphore Palais Conservation and Feasibility Study* Unley SA: Hamish Ramsay p.13.

[144] Brett Leighton, Notes (1989)

[145] 'The Merry-Go-Round Man', *Progressive Times* 1 February 1950, p.25.

[146] GRG67/33 File 243/1928 SRSA

[147] 'Old horses never die'

[148] James Quast, 'Saddling up for another year', *Portside Messenger* 9 January 2002, p.3.

[149] Patricia Mullins, 'Future Uncertain', *Carousel News & Trader* February 2012, p.29.

[150] Patricia Mullins, 'Future Uncertain', *Carousel News & Trader* February 2012, p.29.

[151] Patricia Mullins, 'Future Uncertain', *Carousel News & Trader* February 2012, p.29.

[152] 'Fun times ahead in Rundle Mall revamp, Shopping boost in roundabout way', *Sunday Mail* 16 October 2011.

[153] Couper-Smartt, *Commodious Harbor* p. 578.

[154] Couper-Smartt, *Commodious Harbor* p. 579.

[155] 'Old horses never die'

[156] Patricia Mullins, 'Future Uncertain', *Carousel News & Trader* February 2012, p.30.

[157] Brett Leighton, Notes (1989).