

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2011



Prepared Under the Direction of
Mary Jo Walker, CPA
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

Charles I. D. Looff

Charles I. D. Looff was born in Bramstedt, Schleswig-Holstein, Denmark on May 24, 1852. He learned the art of woodcarving and immigrated to New York on August 14, 1870. Looff settled in Brooklyn where he worked as a carver in a furniture factory. He began carving scraps of wood from the furniture factory into carousel animals and in 1876, assembled his wooden horses and animals onto a circular platform creating his first merry-go-round. He installed his merry-go-round ride, Coney Island's first carousel, at Vandevere's Bathing Pavilion at West Sixth Street and Surf Avenue. Over the next four decades he and five of his six children created more than 40 carousels across the United States including the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk's Looff Carousel, which thrilled its first riders on August 3, 1911.

Santa Cruz, California Beach Boardwalk

The Boardwalk's oldest ride, the Looff Carousel has enchanted visitors and riders for 100 years. The carousel is home to 73 horses and two roman chariots decorated with ram heads and cherubs. The horses are unique with colorful details, decorative, jeweled trimmings and real horse hair tails. The carousel is one of only a handful of carousels in the world still featuring a working ring dispenser, from which the riders of outside horses can grab rings as they spin, then toss them into a large clown's gaping mouth, to be rewarded by bells and flashing lights. Over the years, some of the magical, ethereal and seemingly immortal horses were lost to the ravages of time and wear, but in 1978, the Boardwalk restored its collection by acquiring horses from carousels in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and Belmont Park in San Diego. While delighting many visitors from around the world, the carousel also enjoyed some fame appearing in a variety of feature films, commercials, and made-for-television movies including "Sudden Impact" (1983), "Brotherhood of Justice" (1986), and "The Lost Boys" and "The King of Love" (1987). In 1987, the U.S. Park Service honored the Looff Carousel by designating it a National Historic Landmark.

Photo provided by Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk

County of Santa Cruz, California

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