

Louie Humphries talks to Tom Wisner about the Amusement Park.

Mr. Wisner: There were no major changes in the Park itself or the management of the Park in your time with the Park?

Mr. Humphreys: Oh, yes, we built that new arcade building there, made that fireproof. It hooked right on to the old arcade.

Then the restaurant part and the Bingo building and all was left the way it was. Then we built a building between that and the merry-go-round; what you call it, the fun house. Then we opened up all the sewers that we could find — storm sewers and all. And we found them — some of them end up way down in there going out on the highway, storm sewers went down through there. And we got one of those metal detectors, found it, and got to it, and saw what it was and we figured it could go so far and find another manhole. We got all that opened up and the drainage out from under the arcade building. I shot that with compressed air, and it come out down beside this new “Beach-comber” building that was built on the waterfront.

And there was about two freight car loads of cross ties built in there crossways so this water would go into that and then seep out in the sand. I’ve seen water waist deep under that arcade when that stopped up, see. I got it open and it went right out of there. Went in there and there was a bake shop, slot machine repair shop, and old musical slot machines and all.

One of them — one of the owners got it up in his office right now restored. It’s worth a fortune. And these old machines, and the old games they played, the strength of your hands; you squeeze a lever; went around so much — a lot of that was penny stuff, but it made money.

And we had ice cream stands, pop corn, snow ball machines, and hot dogs — we had anything you wanted.

We had a train down on the waterfront. They took that train out from there and then brought it up and put it in between the Arcade and back up in that little neck — up in past the water pump and down by around the new pump house and by the end of the swimming pool, run by an old T Model Ford when it was full train — 15 cents and you’d ride around there. It took 20 minutes to get around there. And had a crew standing by sitting over there under the tree. When she’d jump the track, they’d run down, set her back on, and leave. I think that’s in Fairfax, Virginia, you know, in those amusement parks. And the merry-go-round is over there across from Bowie —

Mr. Wisner: Largo.

Mr. Humphreys: Largo, over there at the race track, across from that. They got an amusement park in there and took the merry-go-round up there.

Mr. Wisner: Do you know when that merry-go-round that they took there — do you know when that was put there?

Mr. Humphreys: Oh, Lord, no, because that was put there when the old pier went out there, had that roller coaster out on that pier and all.

Mr. Wisner: Um-hmm. Mr. Shaver told me yesterday that burned.

Mr. Humphreys: Yeah, the old pier burned. Now, when that merry-go-round was put here, I would say — I’ve heard them talk about it — I know the ballroom was built in 1930.

The big restaurant in there and all was — I’ve heard older people talk — was around 1900. And the merry-go-round was already there; so, I would say around 1880 or something, or ‘85 it was brought in there. Albert rewired the whole — the whole outfit.