

ago, carnival swing addition

ment. The Oberlin city crew, using their cherry picker, assembled the upper wheel. Meantime, lights and seats had been found.

"We want it to be everybody's carnival," Mr. Lotker said in *The Oberlin Herald*, as he announced that contributions would be sought to purchase molded chairs for the new swing ride under construction.

Mr. Lotker said the authority sent letters to civic organizations, asking them to purchase a chair or part of a chair for the new ride. He said contributions would be welcomed from organizations, individuals, businesses — anyone interested in helping out.

The reason for purchasing the commercially made chairs for the otherwise homemade ride, he said, was to keep the quality high and ensure safety.

"The brightly-colored Fiberglas chairs will come equipped with seat belts and safety chains," he said.

Cost of the chairs was more than \$60 each, and plans called for a 16-chair ride, so the authority needed nearly \$1,000.

Original plans were to ask businesses to buy chairs, but Mr. Lotker said this idea was changed because of a desire to give the carnival a broader base, and make it "belong to everybody."

He said the authority planned to borrow money for other construction costs, as it had for previous construction and purchases.

Blueprints were made and the ride was constructed by Matchett Welding. All-new metal

was used, said Mr. Lotker, for safety reasons. He said the ride cost some \$3,000, including the chairs, and he compared this with some \$23,000 which a similar ride would cost if it were purchased new.

Also to be readied for that summer's fair was the carnival's new Looper, which was purchased, renovated and installed at the fairgrounds that spring.

The only other expansion of the carnival contemplated at that time was a bingo stand, to be built if the game was legalized in Kansas.

In addition to being "everybody's carnival," when the two new rides were completed, he said, the carnival expected to have "something for everyone." "The new rides plus the Ferris wheel purchased the previous year provided thrills for all ages," he said, "and the kiddie cars and airplanes, along with the pony ring, were also available for children."

Mr. Lotker said the swing ride, still in use today, is 27 feet tall, 83 feet around and has 16 chairs.

"Mr. Matchett was a super welder," he recalled, "and he later built the new grandstand with six-inch pipe donated by Koch Pipeline and four-inch pipe given by the Kansas-Nebraska Gas Co., later K-N Energy."

Volunteers from Norcatour have been in charge of operating the adult swings since they were built, Mr. Lotker said.



THE ADULT SWINGS, which are enjoyed by all ages during the fair, were built by Bill Matchett, welder. Funds for the new seats were raised by individuals, clubs and organizations.

—Floyd Lotker photo

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