

Button

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This creamy-white round-coated Belmont Park pin badge features a red illustration of a smiling man in a bowler hat and black lettering.

Accession Number 2022.12.32

Date 1983

Materials metal, paper, plastic

Measurements 7,5 cm

Historical context

This button promotes Belmont Park, a Montreal amusement park in operation from 1923 to 1983, located in Cartierville on the banks of the Rivière des Prairies.

The opening of this park was part of a Montreal tradition of amusement parks that included Sohmer Park (1889-1919) and Dominion Park (1906-1937), inspired by American fairgrounds. These included mechanical rides, a Ferris wheel, a carousel and a roller coaster, as well as shows, film screenings and dance halls. Around 1950, some 800,000 visitors passed through the turnstiles each year.

Belmont Park is considered a mecca of popular culture. It was the setting for Donald Ginsberg's *Pierrot à Montréal* and Pierre Falardeau's *À Mort* (although the latter remained unfinished). It was even the subject of Diane Dufresne's song *Le Parc Belmont*, released in 1979 on the album *Strip Tease*.

The opening of *La Ronde* dealt a heavy blow to Belmont Park, which saw its ridership dwindle. Combined with the accidents that plagued the park, people had less and less confidence in the amusement park. The seizure of illegal games of skill in 1979 tarnished the image of the park, which officially closed in 1983 after sixty years of operation.