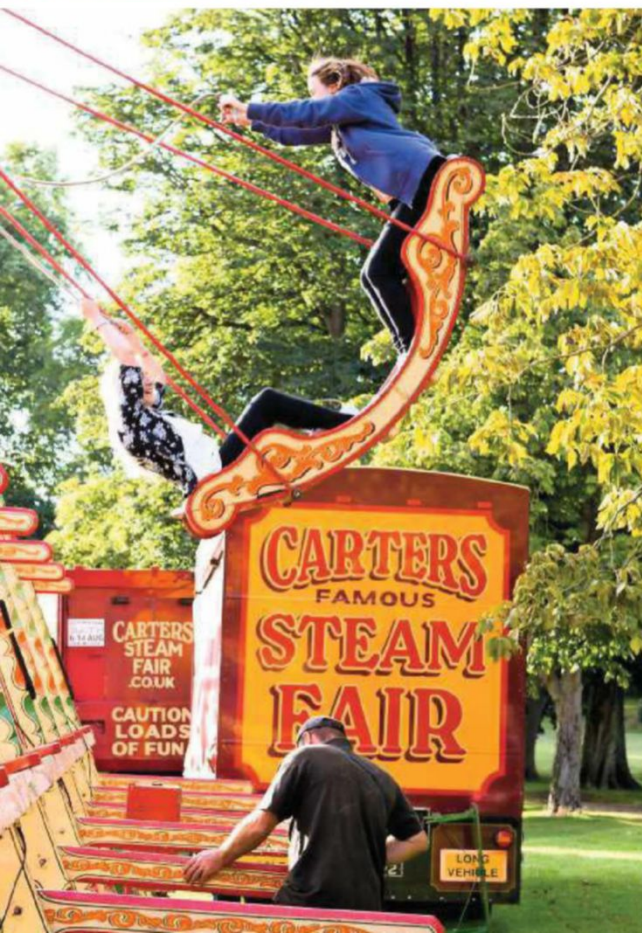




The fairground rides of today's amusement parks are all extensions of these earlier rides run by Carters. From the top: the Dive Bomber, the Chair-o-Plane and the more gentle Swingboats.



wife Georgina. “To be a showman, you’ve got to do a bit of everything,” he says. “I project-manage restorations, find the sites, and do some of the painting.” Anna is officially retired, but has rediscovered her love of scenic painting, creating some of the backdrops for the rides. Seth and Rosie manage their own rides.

### Vintage attractions

The fair tours the region now with approximately 10 big rides, 10 small rides and 10 stalls.

The oldest ride the Carters own are the Overboats, a scaled-down version of a big wheel, dating back to 1875. However, because the ride requires hand-cranking, which is hard and labour intensive, it is not touring at present. The Swingboats are another gentle ride whose popularity harks back to the 19th century. They are operated by the riders themselves pulling on a central rope. This gave rise to the phrase “the fair is in full swing”.

Perhaps the most heart-thumping ride is the Dive Bomber, which originates from circa 1946. Two mechanical arms with pods at each end somersault and spin simultaneously. A notice warns thrill-seekers to hold on to their spare change.

The Toytown and Cars & Bikes roundabouts for younger children feature old pedal cars that were restored by John. When he originally acquired the 1930s rides, they had had modern versions added. After advertising for originals to replace these, he ended up with enough for two rides.

Although the fair is currently of a manageable size, the Carters would consider adding a big wheel or helter-skelter if one came their

**NOSTALGIC APPEAL** The Carters have benefited from the recent surge in popularity for all things vintage and retro. “Nostalgia is in,” says Anna. “I suppose because the world is such an uncertain place, people like looking back. A lot of people say they love coming because it’s safe.”

They aim for a friendly, family environment. “We’ve been going for 40 years, so people with kids are coming along now who came when they were kids,” says Joby. “There is a certain magic in it, especially when you see little kids’ faces as they’re driving a car round and round. In fact, our profit margin is probably based on spoilt children who won’t get off the rides.”

Joby says he is driven by passion. “The commercial aspect made it possible, but that wasn’t the initial thought behind it.”

