

POSTCARDS AND OLD PHOTOS OF THE PARK ERA, 1885-1911

The majority of these photographs appear to have been taken during the latter period of the park, circa 1905 to 1911.

The Midway



A lovely afternoon at the park. Some of the arcades and concessions can be seen in the background



A nice view of the midway looking toward the rock point. This photo is thought to have been taken from atop the Peristyle building.



An interesting view of the park devoid of visitors. The Peristyle building is up the slope to the right.



Another view of the midway on a warm summer's day.

The Rides

Shoot-the-Chutes



The "Shoot-the-Chutes" ride was probably the most popular attraction at the park. Situated in the lower section (next to the Connoquenessing Creek), it was a sure way to cool off on a hot summer's day.



At approximately [300 feet in length](#), and with a drop of approximately 100 feet (for a down-angle of about 20 degrees), the Chutes, also known as the Toboggan ride, was sure to thrill. [\[how it looks now\]](#)



Many enjoyed simply sitting along the banks, watching the boats splash into the lagoon below.



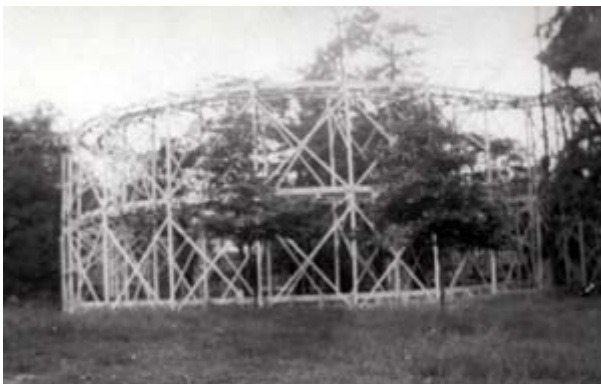
Afterward, boats were led into the small channel next to the lagoon, where passengers could unload. It is not know at this point if passengers also loaded here and were lifted to the top, or if they loaded the boats at the top of the ride.

[\[how it looks now\]](#)

Roller Coaster



Another main attraction to the park, the Roller Coaster was sure to thrill. It is thought that the ride was an oval of track of about 300 feet in length. I believe this postcard was a composite of two pictures, as many postcards of the day were. This particular scene probably did not really exist. But, it is still a good look at the structure of the ride.



According to the drawn diagrams of the park layout, the Roller Coaster encircled the Mechanical Swings and Miniature Train rides. For a number of reasons, that seems unlikely. We will continue to investigate.

Miniature Train Ride



This live-steam miniature train ride traversed the beautiful rocky areas of the park. It encircled the Mechanical Swings ride, then traveled through a small ravine. Once through the ravine, it made a loop and traveled through it again back to the swings area. This is the only picture I've ever seen of this ride. [\[how it looks now\]](#)

Mechanical Swings



The Mechanical Swings ride surely must have been a favorite with park guests. Powered by a small steam engine, this device would swing people in multi-passenger carts around a circle. The Miniature Train encircled the Swings. This the only photograph I have seen of this ride. [\[how it looks now\]](#)

Buildings & Structures



As the focal-point building of Rock Point Park, the Peristyle was said to be "magnificent". The top part of the Roller Coaster can be seen in the background. [\[how it looks now\]](#)



Another view of the Peristyle. I estimate that this structure is about 120 feet wide by 50 feet deep. The Mechanical Swings, Miniature Train, and Roller Coaster rides were immediately behind this building.



As a large building with plenty of open areas, the Peristyle brought welcome relief as a cool resting place for the park's patrons.



A view from the other side of the front of the building.



A rare view of the Peristyle from the front-right side.



Peristyle building in the background of a group photo of the Scheidemantle family (Ellwood City area) during their 1909 reunion. This photo was digitally restored by one of our contributors. See the original photo [here](#).



The "Womens Cottage" - a luxury refreshing station for women, it was the main Ladies restroom for the park. It was situated on the bluff, near the top of the Shoot-the-Chutes ride. [\[how it looks now\]](#)



The Women's Cottage from a different perspective, showing the wooden footbridge which crossed the road heading down to the lagoon. The Rock Point Inn was located just to the left of this picture.

[\[how it looks now\]](#)



The Rock Point Inn - this building housed the Park Offices and First Aid Station, as well as a number of hotel rooms, and a small dining hall.



This is one of several Dance Halls located at the park. This one is thought to have been located across the main walkway from the Peristyle. Be sure to view the Dance Card in the "Artifacts" section.



The Grandstand at the ballfield appears to have been a very large structure. During the period of the park's operation, many local matches, as well as exhibition games were played here.

Connoquenessing Creek



Adjacent to the Chutes lagoon (along the Connoquenessing Creek), the Wishing Well (one of several scattered throughout the park) and the Boat Rental area, gave visitors a nice change of pace.

[\[how it looks now\]](#)

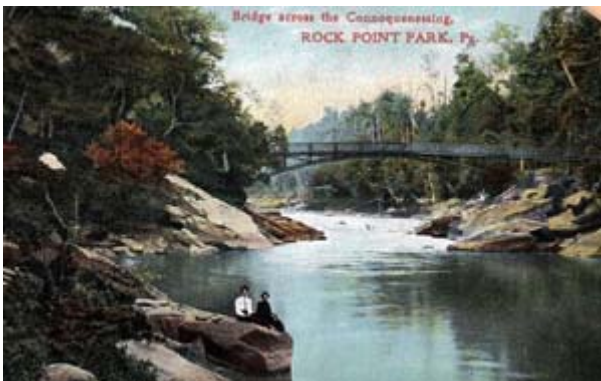


The Boat Rental shown from the water. Visitors could rent canoes and rowboats to enjoy some quiet time on the water.



Barely visible in the left center of this photo, the lower footbridge was 2/10ths of a mile upstream from the park. It is thought to have been moved to another location many years ago (in the 1950s?).

[\[how it looks now\]](#)



The upper footbridge across the Connoquenessing permitted visitors arriving at Park Gate to cross over to the park. It was also known as the Rainbow Bridge, Limestone Spring Bridge, and Sulfur Spring Bridge. Severely aged and fragile, it finally fell into ruin in the late 1990s.

[\[how it looks now\]](#)



Another nice view of the upper footbridge.



A nice view of the boating concession on the Connoquenessing.



A calm day on the water.



An unidentified stretch of the creek. Maybe someone can help me identify it?



Group of visitors enjoying the Connoquenessing Rapids

People & Nature



Waterfalls on Muddy Creek, north of the McConnell's Mills area (where it meets Slippery Rock Creek). Not really close to Ellwood City as the card suggests, but still an interesting photo.

[\[how it looks now\]](#)



A walk along the Connoquenessing Creek.



A large boulder along a trail. This is located about 2/10th's of a mile up the Connoquenessing trail on the Rock Point side.
[\[how it looks now\]](#)



A lovely couple posing on a large boulder.



A view of the steps leading up to the lower bridge over the Connoquenessing Creek. This photo is from the Rock Point side of the creek.
[\[how it looks now\]](#)



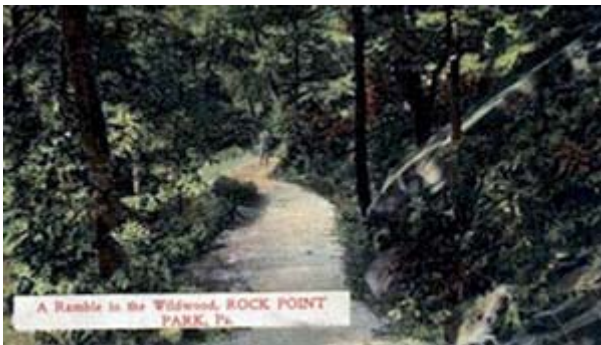
A picnic in the rocky meadows.



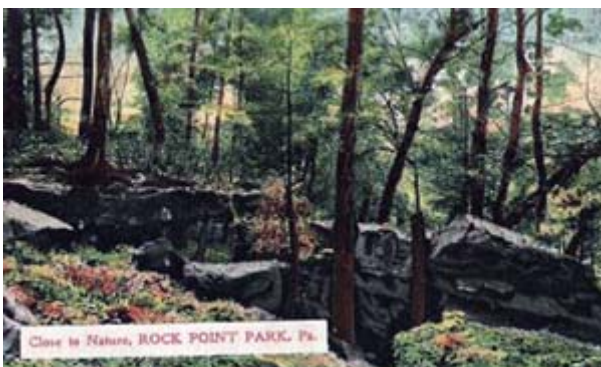
The trail to the Sulfur Springs. This is located about 4/10th's of a mile up the Connoquenessing trail on the Rock Point side, just up the hill from the upper iron footbridge landing. [\[how it looks now\]](#)



A large group of children posing for a picture among the boulders on the bluff.



A trail along a hillside.



A view of the grand natural scenery of the area.



Postcard photo of unidentified group of men on waterfall near Rock Point. The present-day location of this feature is not known, but we are trying to identify it.

Transportation



Most of the park's visitors arrived via the Pittsburgh, Youngstown & Ashtabula Railroad, disembarking along the Beaver River side of the park grounds. The hillside trail that led from the tracks to the park can still be walked today. Photo is taken looking north.

[\[how it looks now\]](#)



Similar scene as above, but looking south. The passenger train can be seen on the right, and the Matheny Inn (at this point it was being used as the train station) can be seen centered in the distance.

[\[how it looks now\]](#)



The PY&ARR bridge across the Connoquenessing Creek - the park can be seen in the background. This scene was taken looking north, with the Beaver River on the left, and the Connoquenessing Creek on the right. Note the walkway area of the bridge which would enable pedestrians to cross the creek to the park.

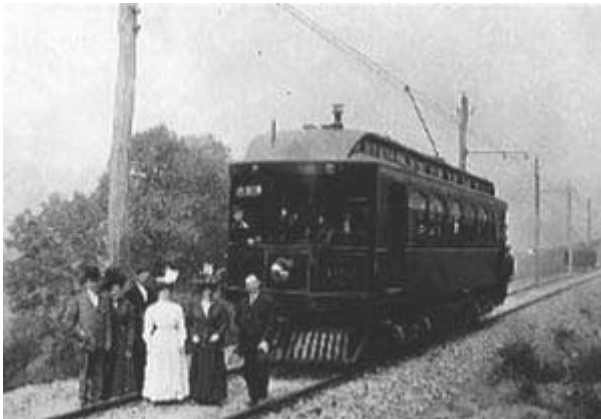


Beaver River from Rock Point Park

Another view of the bridge with a steam powered passenger train traveling across.



Passengers departing the train at the Park Gate station (across the Connoquenessing Creek from Rock Point). From here, they could walk the pathways down the slopes to one of the two footbridges to cross the creek to the park. The walking distance from this station to the lower end of the park (near the Chutes ride) is 1/2 mile.



Several trolley lines brought visitors to Ellwood City. The main carrier was the Ellwood Line, which connected to most of the cities in the area.



The "Lorry", an early version of the motorized bus, transported visitors to the park from the nearby town of Ellwood City.



Many horsedrawn "hacks" served the area, transporting visitors to and from the park.

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