

Joyland Park: Galveston's Ticket to Pleasure

Galveston's Historic Pleasure Pier is drawing thousands of visitors. Almost a century ago, on a much smaller scale, Joyland Park attracted multitudes of local beachgoers.

The Rosenberg Library featured an exhibit entitled *Joyland Park: Galveston's Ticket to Pleasure*. The exhibit told the story of the amusement park through words, photographs, and maps. Joyland Park operated in the 2100 block of Seawall Boulevard from 1919 to 1929. Its founders, J.E. Stratford and R.S. Lindamood, were managers of the Crystal Palace Roof Garden. In August 1919, Daniel W. Kempner sold the park's property to the two men for \$35,000. Stratford and Lindamood established the Galveston Playhouse Corporation to operate Joyland Park.

The exhibit depicted the amusement park's development in two phases. The first phase featured the Orpheum (a theater), a Ferris wheel, a merry-go-round, and concessions. The second phase (1920 – 22) saw the Orpheum's conversion to a dance hall, as well as the installation of the Great American Racing Derby and an airplane swing.



Joyland Park occupied prime real estate along the Seawall, putting it squarely in the face of progress. During the late 1920s, Galveston experienced increased demand for first-class hotel rooms. The San Luis Hotel Corporation was organized to develop plans for a major hotel to be built on land occupied by Joyland Park. The amusement park's attractions were mostly demolished or moved in preparation for a hotel that never materialized. The last remnant of Joyland Park, the Garden of Tokyo dance pavilion, was demolished in 1946.

The Rosenberg Library's Harris Gallery is open Mondays - Saturdays, 9 am – 6 pm.

For further information, or to donate photographs or printed material relating to Joyland Park, please contact Lauren Martino, Special Collection Manager, at lmartino@rosenberg-library.org.