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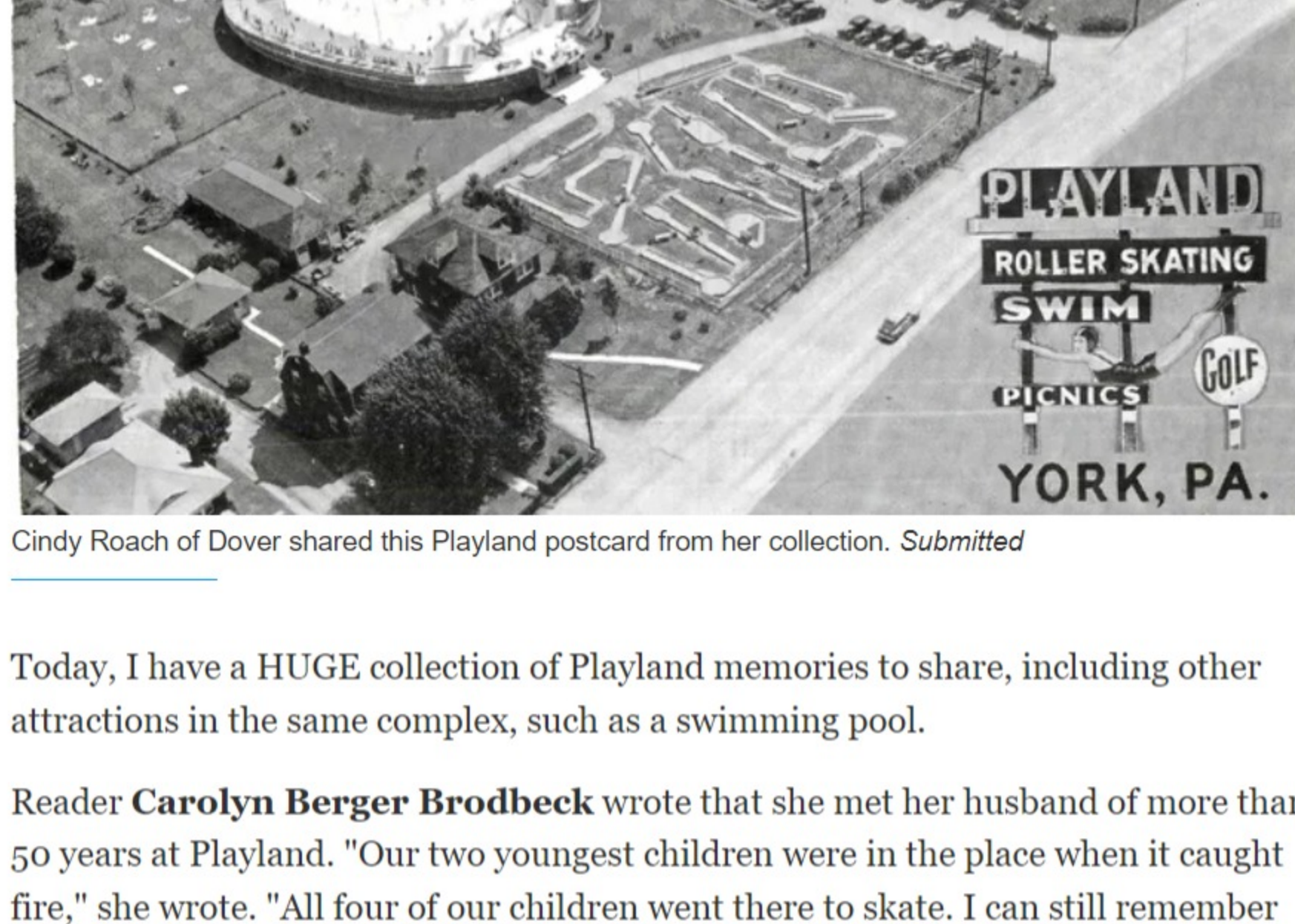
ONLY IN YORK COUNTY

Readers share more Playland memories

Joan Concilio For the York Daily Record
Published 2:15 p.m. ET Nov. 12, 2016 | Updated 6:26 p.m. ET Nov. 16, 2016

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We've talked about the former Playland roller-skating rink in [a few past columns](#), but haven't focused exclusively on that for a few years.



Cindy Roach of Dover shared this Playland postcard from her collection. *Submitted*

Today, I have a HUGE collection of Playland memories to share, including other attractions in the same complex, such as a swimming pool.

Reader **Carolyn Berger Brodbeck** wrote that she met her husband of more than 50 years at Playland. "Our two youngest children were in the place when it caught fire," she wrote. "All four of our children went there to skate. I can still remember driving in to get my children when it was on fire. I could see the black smoke coming from there and I was frantic even through I knew my children were OK. My husband and I had some good times there. We worked for McCrory's Distribution Center and they would hold their Christmas parties there for the kids. It was a good place for the kids to hang out and have some fun. I will always remember all the good times we had there."

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Another reader, **Diane Lauer**, also noted that she met her husband (of more than 55 years), Philip, at Playland! "We are wondering how many couples met there and married," she says. Well, we have two right here, but I am sure there are many, many more, Diane!

Deb Taylor of York Township remembered something connected with Playland; she writes, "No one mentioned that in the late '50s and early '60s that building housed a bingo parlor. My brothers and I would ride with my mother and grandmother on Saturday nights to Playland; they would play bingo and we would go next door to roller skate. I remember the Buries were always so kind to us, I especially remember Sis because she would serve us those delicious burgers in sauce while we waited for our ride home. Many good memories of the times we spent there."

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And **Winfred E. "Winnie" (Mundis) Fickes** writes, "I assume you are completely saturated with memories of Playland by now." (Yes, but in a VERY good way, Winnie!)

She continued, "I, too, enjoyed many, many hours in the pool and skating at the rink. But, I have a different perspective of Playland. As a teenager I was employed there by Mr. Sternbergh. Most of the employees were older than me in 1950 and are now deceased. I was the 'kid!' I loved my 'fun' job! At the pool I was locker girl, helped Emma Schuster at the refreshment stand and also tended the miniature golf stand in the evening. Mrs. Sternbergh made and delivered a large bowl of delicious egg and olive for sandwiches at the pool almost every day. Betty Roberts was an assistant to the Sternberghs, and John Conway did maintenance for the whole complex. Some of your readers might recognize the names of these folks."

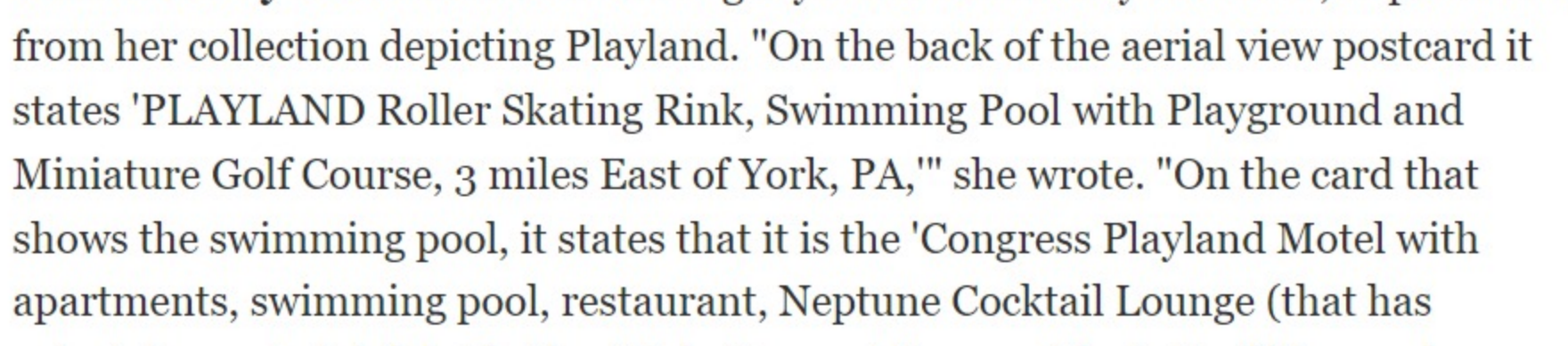
She continued, "I worked at the snack bar in the rink with 'Mom' Shettle. I was able to enjoy the live organ music each night and was serving the food. I learned to know the organist and his wife. He knew that I was taking lessons on the Hammond organ. One night he asked me to play, so he could walk out into the rink to hear how the organ sounded. I was honored and scared at the same time!" And, she added, "I don't want to forget to mention the name of Johnny Shine. He was a floor man at the rink and was well known and liked by all."

Finally, Winnie concluded, "Dave Sternbergh was a great boss! He was strict, but also very kind. I can still envision him walking the grounds and puffing on his pipe. One day he took me for a ride in his airplane which he kept just across the highway from Playland, at the York Valley Airport. That was a great experience for me!

Every teenager should be so lucky to have such a 'one-of-a-kind' job. It created life-long memories for me."

David L. Sharp of Dover recalled, "I spent many a day skating at Playland and also was a member at the swimming pool."

And **Donald Anderson** noted, "I regularly skated at Playland... Skating was a Saturday night must for us. I could do some of the dance steps and enjoyed the all-ski like the others. I enlisted in the Army, had my skates with me and skated in Okinawa, Germany and other places in the U.S. Being young was a godsend but skating is not a big idea for older folks."



Cindy Roach of Dover shared this Playland postcard from her collection. *Submitted*

Reader **Cindy Roach** shared the images you see with today's column, of postcards from her collection depicting Playland. "On the back of the aerial view postcard it states 'PLAYLAND Roller Skating Rink, Swimming Pool with Playground and Miniature Golf Course, 3 miles East of York, PA,'" she wrote. "On the card that shows the swimming pool, it states that it is the 'Congress Inn Motel with apartments, swimming pool, restaurant, Neptune Cocktail Lounge (that has entertainment nightly), Skating Rink, Banquet Rooms, Picnic Facilities, and a Playground.' Seems like back in the day, this was the place to go."

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Cindy then followed up on something we talked about earlier, saying, "Both my grandparents (Herb and Ruth Miller, both deceased) and aunts (James and Dolores Diehl) met at the Playland Roller Skating Rink. In January of 2014 my parents celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary. I am sure that a lot of married couples today met at Playland." Well, our Only in York County commenter total is now up to four, with I'm sure more to come!

Longtime reader **Arthur Levine** had an interesting story to tell; he writes, "It was because of Playland that I actually wound up in York. The first time I saw York was in February 1970 when I came here from Japan just getting out of the Army. My wife, father-in-law and my brother-in-law were living here. My father-in-law was actually an assistant manager for the Congress Inn Motel, which was connected to the skating rink. Actually I remember saying to my wife, 'I don't want this rinky-dinky York, so let's go back to New York.' We were there the next 21 years, until we moved back in 1991. Smartest move I ever made, missing only certain foods from New York."

And speaking of the organ music mentioned earlier, reader **George W. Glick Jr.** wrote and said, "My father, George W. Glick, was the organist at Playland for a number of years. He initially played at the Olympia Rink in Lancaster. After it burned down Dave Sternbergh hired him to play at Playland, which he did until the early '50s, after which he played at the rink at Rocky Springs Park in Lancaster until failing health forced his retirement. Time and age really stretches one's memory, but I recall many fond memories of skating at Playland."

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A last memory for today comes from reader **Jeff Gohn** of East Berlin, who was a competitive skater at Playland. "Our coaches were Jim and Nancy Walls. Skated dance with Helen Van Pelt. They were our coaches for around three years till they left in the '60s... went to Nationals I believe one time in Arkansas. Some other names that I can remember are Jim Guise, Ron Attig, Betty Conway. Dave Sternbergh did own the rink and the manager was John Conway. Dave also owned the pool east of the rink. I can remember a guy by the name of 'Charley' that used to flea hop and continuously kick the wall."

And one last note - I received an email from a gentleman named **Robert** who is very interested in the history of roller rinks around the country. "I invite you and anyone with an interest in the history of roller skating to stop by www.rollerskatinghistory.org to take a look... if anyone has any photos of any rinks, their location and dates of operation, we would certainly like to add them," he noted.

Thank you, Robert, and thanks to all who have helped preserve these Playland memories!

Have questions or memories to share? Email me at joan@joanconcilio.com or write to Ask Joan, York Daily Record News, 1891 Loucan Road, York PA 17408. We cannot accept any phone calls with questions or information.

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