



York Town Square

Articles of Confederation
Our nation's first constitution. Adopted November 15, 1777, in the York County Courthouse, the Articles united the 13 colonies by establishing the

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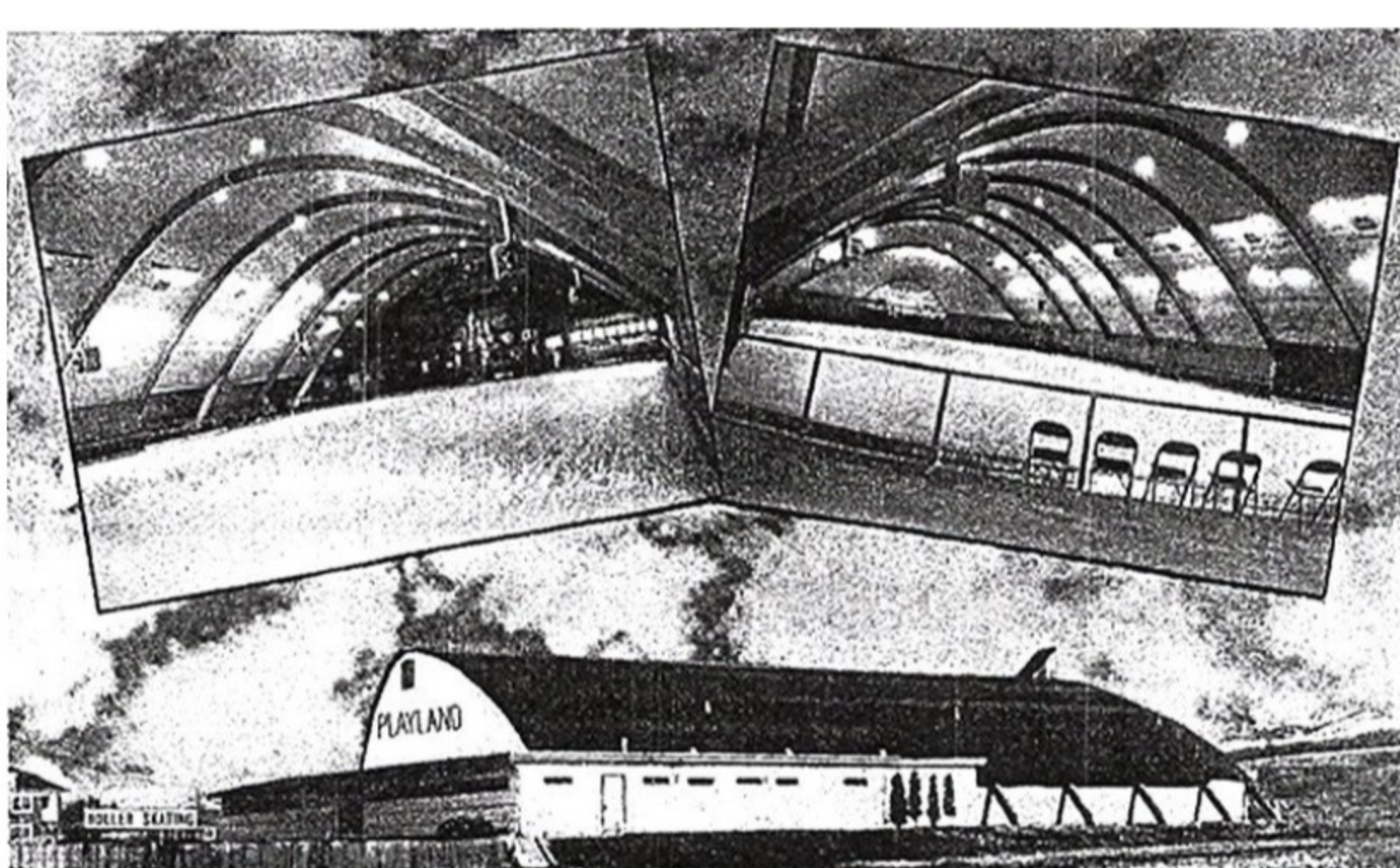
YORK'S BLACK HISTORY YORK'S WOMEN'S HISTORY MORE BLOGS

POSTED BY JIM MCCLURE | JANUARY 12, 2007 | ARCHIVES, ALL POSTS, EVENTS, EXPLANATIONS/CONTROVERSY, LOCAL JOURNALISM & WEB, LOCAL LANDMARKS, NOSTALGIA & MEMORIES, PEOPLE, SMALL-TOWN LIFE, WHEELS OF YORK |

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Playland plays nostalgic note for York countians



Playland opened shortly before the outbreak of World War II, and its doors remained open until 1985. After the 1985 blaze in which 100 children and teens safely escaped, Donald Sternbergh, son of longtime owner David Sternbergh, recalled that people came from all over to skate at Playland: 'They're like roller coaster nuts,' he said, 'who go around trying different places.' Also of interest: [York-area full of memory-spawning landmarks](#) and [About Avalong Dairy and Melvin's Drive-In: 'I am some what familiar with the history of the area'](#) and [Former York countian's Web site nearing 100 posts on old teen hangout Shady Dell](#)

If [Bury's](#) evokes the most memories about local eateries, Playland tops the list for generating nostalgia about past places to go for fun.

The East Market Street complex, neighbor to a Bury's hamburger restaurant, included a roller skating rink, a large swimming pool and later a motel. (Click [here](#) to see a photo of the rink and pool from the air.) The complex opened in the months before Pearl Harbor and lost spin completely after a 1985 fire destroyed the skating rink. Other parts were razed in 1991. Today, Cloister Car Wash and Wendy's sit on parts of Playland's former site.

Here are a few memories from the locals about the Springettsbury Township hangout and environs:

– The 1950s, from the York Daily Record:

Carol Harvey of York Township remembers saddle shoes, poodle skirts, rock 'n' roll, the jukebox, jitter bug, Elvis, cars with fins, crew cuts, the soda fountain with vanilla Cokes, cheerleading for the Susquehannock Warriors, going to the Candle Light Inn to order egg and olive sandwiches after basketball games, and roller skating at Playland. Harvey and her husband, Neil, were high school sweethearts and wore their high school letter jackets everywhere. "We still have ours," she wrote.

– From Jim Hublely, York Daily Record columnist, in 1997, about the skating rink:

The verdict was unanimous. The music, the organ and the organist were flawless, the acoustics sharp and clear. The advertised "floating floor" truly felt like it was floating. York's brand-new, trouble-plagued Playland Roller Skating rink was off and running, or rolling. That was the scene more than a half-century ago, actually 58 years ago Sunday, Nov. 14, 1941, as the roller skating venue launched its 44-year run, or roll. During that span Playland provided much recreation and joy for countless local residents and hordes of skating fans from beyond York County.

– From the York Daily Record after Sears was demolished and the York County Shopping Center rehabbed in the 1990s:

"I feel sad the shopping center is gone now," Joyce McSherry said. "So is the house where I grew up on Grant Street. That spot is now a parking lot. My old Garfield Elementary School is a housing development, and Playland, where I spent many enjoyable weekends roller skating, burned down. "The buildings can be torn down, but the memories will stand forever."

— York Daily Record description of that part of Market Street in 1954:

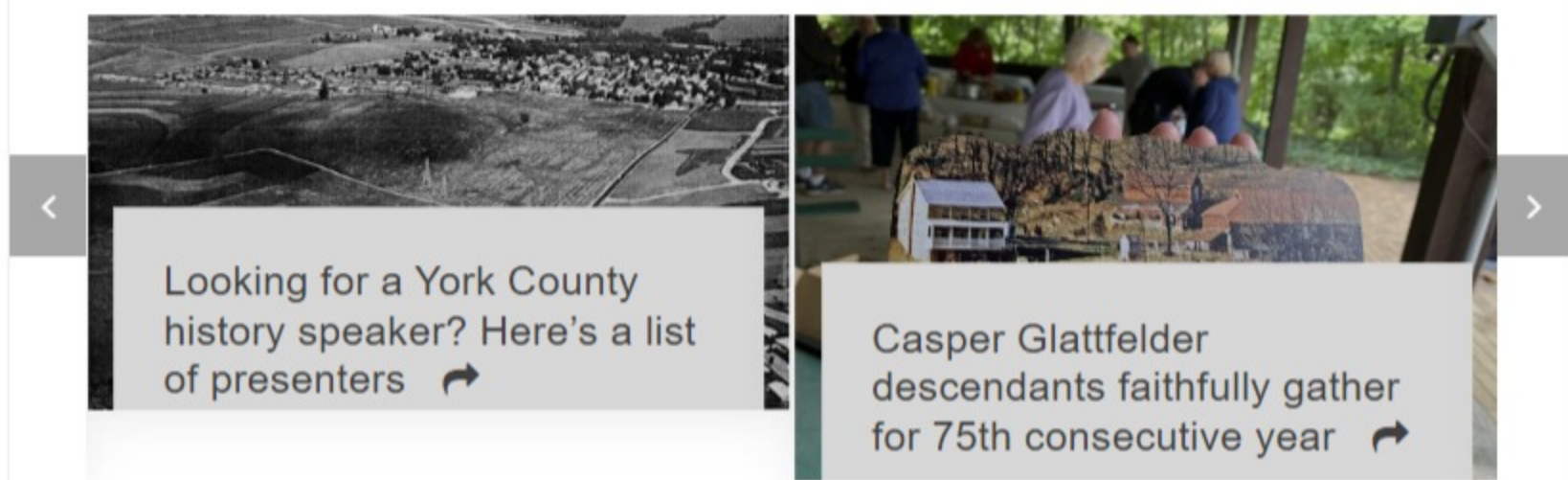
At the time, East Market was three lanes. Hap Miller's restaurant was where Hill's department store is today, and Joe Bury had a hamburger stand just east of the present-day Hardee's. Gino's, the first fast-food joint in the area, would open up later across the street, where The Boulevard restaurant is today. Behind Bury's and the Playland roller rink was an old race track converted into a trailer park. Best Co. is near there now. The old York-Whitehull Airport, next door to the center, had closed in 1953. Springettsbury Township Fire chief Glenn Kline remembers watching the mail plane swoop low over the field, dangling its hook to snatch mail bags. "We'd go out and watch mail planes come in and say 'miss it,'" Kline said.

Posts on Bury's Famous Hamburgers:

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Before retirement in April 2019, Jim McClure was editor of the York Daily Record/Sunday News and associated digital products since May 2004. He also served as state editor for Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland for Gannett's USA TODAY Network. He is the author or coauthor of seven books on York County history and holds a master's in American Studies from Penn State Harrisburg, where his research focus was on York County journalism history.

York Town Square explores both the rapidly changing world of journalism and the landscape of regional history. History and journalism are part of a continuum, and this site hopes to intrigue readers on both accounts. [See additional York Town Square posts here.](#)

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