



WEBFOOTER EXTRA

December 2022

REMEMBERING SEATTLE'S LUNA PARK



Lithographed postcard view of the entrance to Luna Park, in Seattle Washington. Published by Portland Post Card Co., circa 1909. Postally unused.

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REMEMBERING SEATTLE'S LUNA PARK



Lithographed postcard view of Luna Park Seattle at low tide where it was built on the tide flats along Duwamish Head, not far from where Seattle's first settlers landed in 1851 at Alki Point. Published by Allied Printing Co., Chicago. Postmarked Sept. 3, 1909 in Seattle.

Amusement parks came into being in about 1895 when Sea Lion Park opened at Coney Island in New York. Bringing pleasure to the masses, amusement parks represented a taste of the future. This new phenomenon came to every major city when many Americans still used horses and buggies to travel from the farm to the city.

People could live out the thrills of their fantasies by experiencing the laws of gravity and mechanical simulations. Nearly every big town had at least one amusement park. Electric companies built the streetcar systems that transported the masses to the Trolley Parks that were built at the end of the line. Electricity was fairly scarce in rural America and it opened the door for a lot of new inventions.

Developers in Seattle decided to build Luna Park in West Seattle, west of Alki Point, and it operated from 1907 to 1913. Pilings were driven deep into the tide flats to allow the park to be built out over the water like many amusement parks, which were very popular early in the twentieth century.



Lithographed postcard view overlooking Luna Park and Elliott Bay in Seattle showing the Shoot-the-Chutes, the Canals of Venice, the Giant Whirl and the Band Stand as well as a hot air balloon. Published by Portland Post Card Co. Postmarked July 3, 1910 in Seattle, Wash.

Construction of Luna Park Seattle began in 1906 under the direction of Charles I.D. Loeff, who was famous for his intricate carvings of wooden horses and other animals used on carousels he created at Coney Island, San Francisco, and in Europe.

The Loeff Carousel was originally built for San Francisco, but because of the earthquake and fire, it was sent to Seattle instead. In 1914, the Loeff Company moved it to San Francisco where it operated at Playland at the Beach. When Playland was demolished in 1972, the carousel was sold and moved to Roswell, New Mexico, where it sat in storage for several years.

The carousel was restored in the late 1970s and leased to operators in Long Beach, California where it remained until several years ago. It was sold to the city of San Francisco where it operates today at Yerba Buena Gardens.

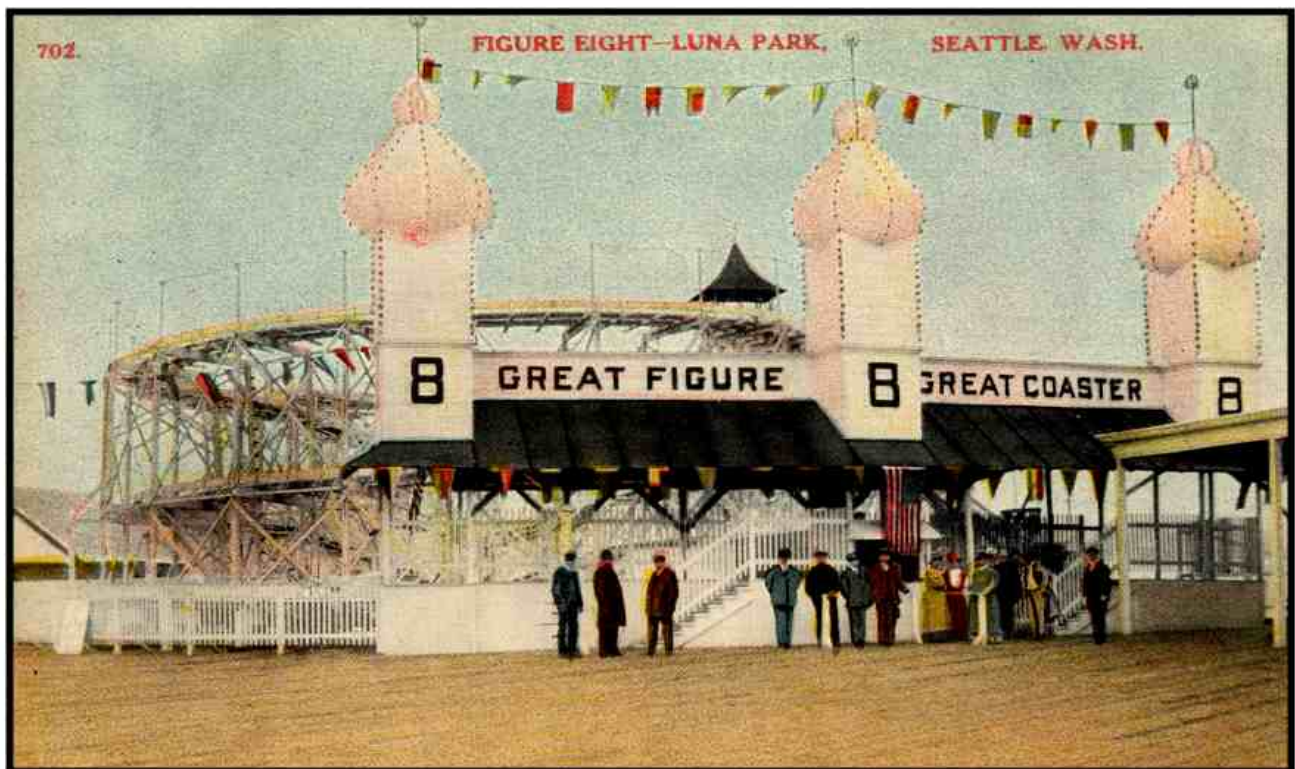
Rides and amusements spread out over the pier at Luna Park. There was the Figure 8 Roller Coaster, a Merry-Go-Round, the Shoot-the-Chutes, the Water Slide, a Giant Whirl, the Cave of Mystery and other rides common to amusement parks of the day. There was also a Canals of Venice, the Joy Wheel, an Infant Electrobator (birthing clinic with incubation chambers for newborn babies) and the Original Human Ostrich.



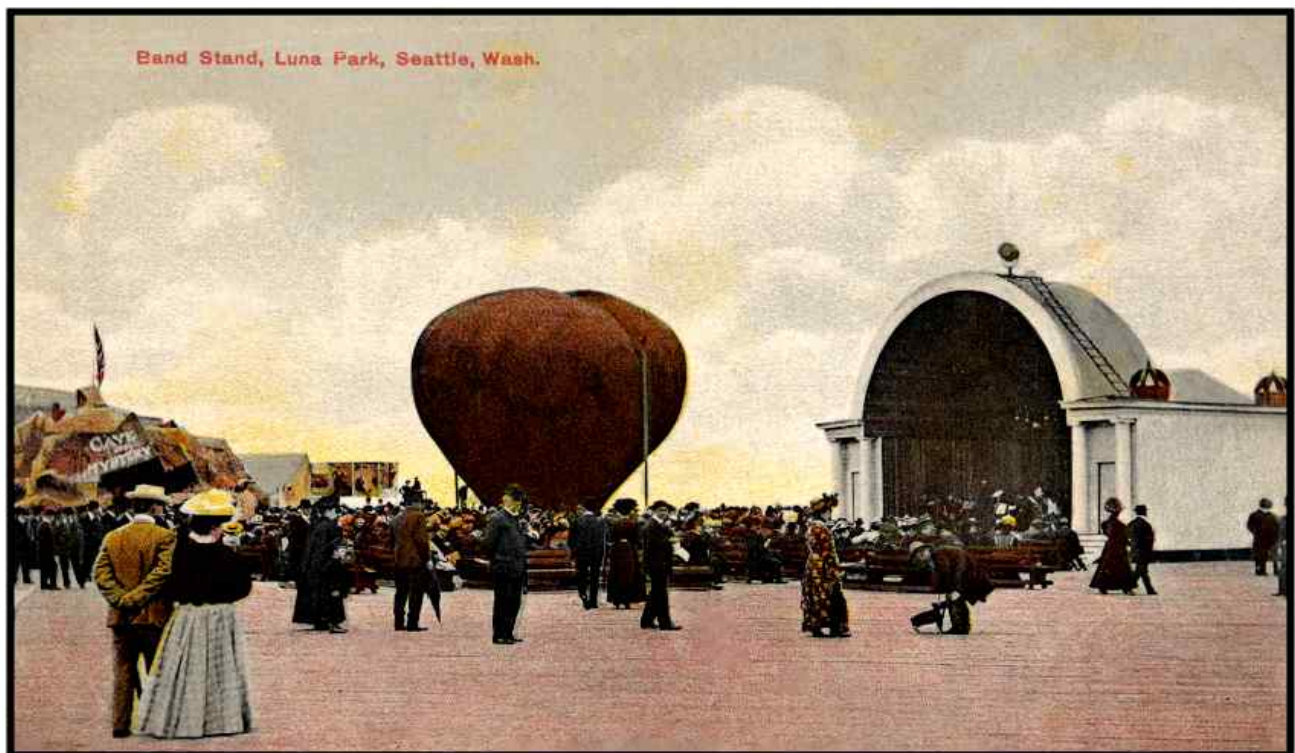
Lithographed postcard view of the Midway and Looff Carousel (center) at Luna Park, in Seattle Washington. Postmarked Sept. 11, 1910.



Lithographed night view postcard of Luna Park from West Seattle, Washington. Postmarked Sept. 27, 1916 at the Seattle, Washington Terminal Station.



Lithographed postcard view of the Great Figure 8 Coaster at Luna Park, in Seattle Washington, circa 1909. Postally unused.



Lithographed postcard view of Luna Park in Seattle, showing the Cave of Mystery, the hot air balloon ride, and the Band Stand, circa 1909. Published by Portland Post Card Co. Postally unused.



Lithographed postcard view of the Luna Park Café and Natatorium in Seattle, Wash. Postmarked Sept. 7, 1908 in Seattle.

During hot summer days, swimmers would fill the Natatorium, which boasted both salt water and fresh water pools. At night, there was Christinsen's Dancing Pavilion, which proved to be a popular place for the young affluent throngs that were attracted to the growing metropolis of Seattle and its suburbs. Shining as a glittering jewel, Luna Park lit up the night along the northern tip of West Seattle where it was visible from Downtown Seattle across Elliott Bay. A short ferry ride was all it took to reach the magic kingdom known as the Coney Island of Seattle.

Controversy frequently surrounds amusement parks and certainly Luna Park in Seattle had its share. Luna Park was home to the largest and best stocked bar on Elliott Bay. Shortly after the park opened, the more open-minded town of West Seattle was annexed into Seattle and Luna Park found itself at the center of controversy and the politics of morality. Scandal and politics eventually forced the early demise of Luna Park in 1913. All the rides were sold or torn down.

All that remained was the Natatorium, which survived nearly two more decades. An arsonist's match finally erased all that remained of Luna Park Seattle when the Natatorium burned on April 14, 1931. About all that remains of Luna Park are a few faded memories.

Postcards from the Mark Moore Collection.



Lithographed postcard view of the Summer Garden Restaurant (famous for 10-cent roast beef sandwiches) and Natatorium at Luna Park in Seattle, Wash., circa 1909. Postally unused.



Privately done real photo postcard postmarked June 25, 1909 in Seattle.



Real photo studio postcard from Luna Park Seattle dated 1908. Postally unused.



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