

Pleasureland Past, Present,...

As the Borough of Oakland considers the future of the Pleasureland property, The Journal offers a multimedia presentation covering Pleasureland's past and present ...including photos, music, and videos...for those interested in reading about the infamous event, [you can click here](#). ....Otherwise, enjoy the better memories....

“Our annual family ‘picnic’ was held at Pleasureland, or Suntan Lake! Our parents would take us to all these cool places, like Wild West City, or Fairy Tale Forest, or The Land of Make Believe! (I’m tearing up, here!) We had no cable television, so Saturday morning TV consisted of Wonderama! (If you got up REAL early, you had to suffer thru Davey and Goliath!)” -[Jenny](#)

Pleasureland, the property across from the Oakland Shoprite, was once part of the summer memories for many residents of New Jersey and the New York boroughs. Before water amusement parks, it was playland of pools nestled in the woods along the Ramapo River, and it attracted families, friends, church and business picnics, as a prime gathering spot for fun.

As the accompanying black & white photos show, it offered an affordable retreat that attracted visitors to the pleasures of the Ramapo Valley . This group photo is from the 1st Annual Picnic of Lackawanna Railway Express Agency employees and families held in 1954. The postcard entitled “Ramapo Pleasureland, Oakland, NJ” show folks swimming, boating, and enjoying the pleasures down by the river side.

Below are some memories collected from the internet, with additional videos from Youtube, and a Flickr slideshow of Pleasureland now.

“It wouldn’t be right not to mention a few words about growing up in Oakland. “Pleasureland” (a misnomer in the opinion of some adults) was a geographic area in south Oakland situated on a dog leg of the Ramapo River. There was then a roughly 50/50 mix of year round and summer cottages. I have summer friends and year round friends. By today’s standards it probably would be described as an economically depressed area; however, for a kid, it couldn’t have been a better place.

The focal point was definitely the river. I could swim in it, boat on it, or ice skate on it, and occasionally in the spring get flooded out by it. Having read a little of the adventures of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, I can say without a doubt that I followed in their foot steps, although I didn’t know it at the time. I think a lot about this time in my life, and if I were a better writer I’d put some of it down on paper.”

[John Muller](#), Ramapo HS 1959

“I know of Pleasureland because I dated a girl there as a teen. The trip to Oakland seemed like an excursion to the country to a NYC boy—and in a way it was. I never swam at Pleasureland, but a number of times I met my girlfriend there to avoid her parents. In doing research about the place, I came upon an interesting fact for you old-fart rockers. Where did the Vanilla Fudge play the day before their first album was released in 1967.

That’s right! Pleasureland. Apparently it was a music venue from the 1940s until the 1960s. I was unable to determine if there was a pool during these years.” - [Allan](#)

Other popular groups known to have played at Pleasureland include The Turtles and The Swinging Medallions.

Today, Pleasureland is a tourist attraction for those seeking the lost, the abandoned the remnants of another era.

Photos of the relics left behind can be found on numerous websites. And for the most part, these explorers are younger as exemplified in this YouTube video entitled Abandon Hope...still photos are available in the slide show at the bottom

**Ed Seifert says:**

[May 23, 2010 at 2:47 pm](#)

To be entirely accurate, the property across from today’s Shop Rite was known as Muller’s Park. The Pleasureland complex was opposite the site of Oakland Animal Hospital and although the two complexes adjoined each other, they were two separate properties. Muller’s Park was accessed from an entrance adjacent to the Hansen House, while Pleasureland’s entrance was on Doty Road. Each had their own pools and facilities.

Concerts in Pleasureland were held in the park’s “Pavillion” and yes, some very well known rock bands made appearances there.