

## East Falls Past--In The Good Ole Summertime!

*The Fallser*, July 2008, by Ellen Sheehan

“Remembering ... the last day of school in June was marked by St. Bridget School students with a field day at Woodside Park. We would meet at the school with brown bag lunches and walk down Stanton Street, cross the Falls Bridge, go through the tunnel on the West side and follow the well-worn trail that let to Woodside Park.”

Mr. Robert Connolly, a former resident of East Falls, had the good fortune to be the son of the manager of Woodside Park and has shared with us his memories of the park.



St. Bridget Fourth-of-July Parade, 1916

### Woodside Park

- Near the "Love Boats" was a photo shop which did surprisingly good work. Four pictures for .25 and for 50 cents more they would color them.
- The "Hummer" was a low-riding roller coaster with one large hill – no thrills.
- Next was a penny arcade, with penny games and tricks.
- Down from the arcade was the "Tornado" - a body shaking roller coaster ride, over in less than four minutes.
- Then came the giant "Wildcat" - a mile high ride, it would roar down and throw bodies all over- the best ride in the park!
- Farther along were small rides for kids, along with ducks, swans and all kinds of water rides.
- The last "amusement" in the park was a fun house with flying carpets and spooky rooms.
- At the end of the park was a large lake for boat rides. This is the spot where they shot off the Friday night fireworks. (The fireworks were visible from the top of the hills in East Falls, as was the top of the giant Ferris Wheel.) There were many food stands, at a fair price.

### Watering Holes

- Across from Woodside Park was Crystal Pool. There was a large pool with diving boards, and a sand pile and a small pool for little ones, with a long sliding board.
- The best place to swim for Fallsers was at Gustine Lake (present site of the Arthur Ashe Tennis Center).

- The Bathey was built by the city in the 1930s, as a Public Works Project and still stands at Kelly Drive & N. Ferry Road. Behind the present structure was the pool, which was surrounded by a large brick wall. There were alternate days for boys and girls to attend.

### **Independence Day**

- At nine o'clock sharp, on the Fourth of July you would hear the giant drum and the bugles as members of the First Methodist Church paraded from the church on Indian Queen Lane to enjoy their picnic at Penn Charter's grounds. The Redeemer Lutheran Church celebrated on the grounds of their church. They had a giant wooden slide, which took several strong men to assemble the day before. St. Bridget's had a parade which encompassed every street in East Falls. They picnicked in McMichael Park.