

ENJOYING THE RIDE AT RYE PLAYLAND

By Andrew Frey



A beautifully manicured garden welcomes me at the gates of Playland in Rye, New York. The scent of popcorn, the roar of the rides and the colorful landscape transport me back to my childhood.

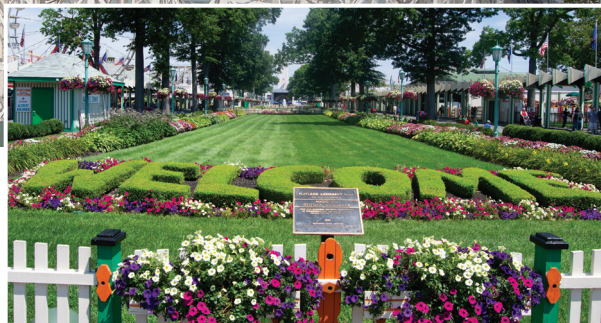
To the left of the entrance is Kiddyland, where children laugh with delight from miniature versions of the rides elsewhere in the park. They fly on the Red Baron plane ride, chug along on the Playland Express train and run excitedly from ride to ride.

To the right, I see go-karts, arcade games and a Carvel ice cream stand. Cone in hand, I make my way toward a dock from which boat rides on Playland Lake depart. Near the shoreline, a child blows out candles to the familiar chorus of “Happy Birthday”.

Thrill Rides. After devouring my ice cream, I’m ready for the rides. My first choice is Dragon Coaster. Thrilling people for over 80 years, this landmark, wooden coaster has over 3,400 feet of track, including a 128-foot drop into the mouth of a fire-breathing Dragon!

Other rides at the park include the Crazy Mouse coaster, the Sky Flyer (a giant spinning pendulum), and a vertical 85-foot ride called Double Shot. There’s also Derby, one of only two remaining carousels of its kind in the U.S. The horses imitate the motion of real steeple chase steeds!

Beat the Heat. After splashing down the Playland Plunge and Log Flume, I take a leisurely stroll along the Playland Boardwalk, a quarter-mile long, seaside promenade with



vast views of Long Island Sound. Along this wide, wooden walkway are comfortable benches, a skating rink and the Westchester County Children’s Museum.

With energy left for one more ride, I head to the Gondola Wheel. Each time I rise to the top of the towering structure, I see the entire park and Long Island Sound.

With its variety of rides, park and waterfront dining, a beach, pool, concerts and Friday fireworks, Playland is unlike any other amusement park. ○

To read more about Andrew Frey’s visit to Rye Playland, including the history of the park, and for a list of amusement parks throughout New York State, go to NewYorkByRail.com/Enjoying-the-Ride-at-Rye-Playland.

DO IT BY TRAIN! Take Metro-North to Rye Station (RYE) or Amtrak to New Rochelle Station (NRO). Don’t forget to use Amtrak’s **SEE NEW YORK AND SAVE!** 15% discount!

From RYE: Take Bus 75 or 13 for a 15-minute ride to Playland Park Center Lane.

From NRO: Enterprise picks you up at the station and takes you to your rental car. Call Enterprise in New Rochelle (914-632-6622), to reserve a car. **Discount code: NYTRAIN.** Uber and Lyft are available from both stations.

TOP: WALKING GEEK, “WELCOME” PHOTO ANDREW FREY