

A Weber Family Outing at Cedar Point, Sandusky, OH: Beach Fashion in 1915

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The Weber family and friends at Cedar Point, Sandusky, OH in 1915 – Adults (L to R): unidentified man, Anna (Weber) Johnston, Jacob Weber, Elizabeth Weber, Katherine Weber, Susanna (Kress) Weber, Christian Weber, unidentified female. Children (L to R): unidentified boy, Norma Johnston, Edward Johnston

In the summertime, Anna Weber Johnston would return to her hometown of Plymouth, Ohio with her young children for a family visit. Cedar Point is some forty miles north of Plymouth, Ohio. The photo above and the history of Cedar Point below are all that is needed to tell this story. We can imagine that a trip to Cedar Point would be a highlight of the summer and a special day for all concerned.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the south shore of Lake Erie became a popular vacation destination for America's emerging middle class. In 1870, Louis Zistel, a German immigrant, opened a bathhouse and a beer garden with a small dance floor at Cedar Point, located on a peninsula jutting into Lake Erie at Sandusky, OH. He ferried people from Sandusky to Cedar Point on his boat, *Young Reindeer*, charging each person a fee of 25 cents. From this point on, Cedar Point became known as an amusement park and a popular summer picnic destination for locals. In 1882, Benjamin Dwelle and Captain Slackford leased land on the peninsula and built eight more bathhouses, a dance hall, and wooden walkways to the beach. The Grand Pavillion was built in 1888 and contained a two-story theater, a concert hall, a bowling alley and a photographer's studio. It is still standing and is the oldest building in the park. The first roller-

coaster, *Switchback Railway*, was installed in 1892. In 1897, representatives of the Lake Erie and Western Railroad purchased the peninsula and formed the Cedar Point Pleasure Resort Company. Under the management of George Boeckling, Cedar Point was transformed into a nationally-recognized resort and amusement park. The historic Hotel Breakers, with 600 guest rooms and a restaurant with a capacity of 400, opened in 1905. Boeckling expanded Cedar Point into a beach resort complete with lagoons, sightseeing passenger boats, hotels, shows, exhibits, motion pictures, three roller coasters and a variety of other rides. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, it is the second oldest operating amusement park in the United States and the only amusement park in the world with four roller coasters taller than 200 feet. In 2013, the park had more than three million visitors. (Source of history on the park: Wikipedia)

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