

CHESTER TIMES – April 6, 1907

NEW PARK IN DELAWARE COUNTY – Handsome Amusement Grounds Almost Completed Will Be Known as “Beechwood Park” – Contracts All Awarded

Philadelphia is to have another park this year. It is known as “Beechwood Park” and is located on the main line of the Philadelphia & Western Railroad, three miles west of the Union passenger station, Sixty-Ninth Street and West Chester Pike in Delaware County. All contracts have been awarded for the completion of the park which will be along the lines of the amusement parks in New York, Chicago, and other large cities.

The park is divided into two sections one of which will be enclosed and developed wholly to amusements of the highest order. The outer portion will be used for picnic parties and ample table and seating facilities will be provided for public and Sunday school parties that are already engaging dates for outings during the summer. The amusement park, which is enclosed, consists of about ten acres property laid out and devoted exclusively to the best attractions and high class music while an additional ten acres of prettily shaded woodland comprise the picnic grove.

A force of about 150 men is at work erecting the numerous buildings of the amusement park. H.L. Messmore who built Electric Park Detroit has the contract for the administration building, the restaurant and ballroom, and for the “fire-fighting” display which is his own invention. This will be one of the important features. A Philadelphia concern has the contract for the carouse and the Ingersoll Construction Company is erecting the Figure 8, while the Franklin Amusement company has the contract for installing the Canals of Venice and the Circle Swing. A beautiful Japanese village is being laid out by F.U. Shitchl and Kango Moriya.

The park attractions will be formed in a hollow square. A boardwalk, 40 feet wide, will afford easy access to all amusements without the discomfort of great clouds of dust or muddy pathways. The capacity of the park is estimated at 15,000 to 20,000. The policy announced by the management prohibits the sale of liquors and special care will be given to women and children unaccompanied.

Like the parks after which Beechwood is patterned, its lighting will be a feature. Located opposite the immense power house of the Philadelphia & Western Railroad, sufficient power for thousands of electric lights has been secured. More than fifteen hundred brilliant electric lights adorn the administration building which forms the front of the park and which is the first scene to greet visitors as they alight from the electric trains. Within the grounds, thousands of lights cover the various buildings while many are lights illumine the promenades.

Every effort is being made to have Beechwood ready for opening on Decoration Day. The Philadelphia & Western railroad will receive this week the first consignment of its passenger cars and the remainder of the equipment will arrive a few days later. The railroad’s management is cooperating with the park management in planning to handle the big park crowds and many sidings are being installed at the park by which to load and unload the crowds.

“Twenty-five minutes from Broad Street” will be the slogan of the railroad and park managements and the Market Street elevated road will operate sufficient additional cars to handle the increased crowds of the season. The run from Broad and Fifteenth Street to Union Station and Sixty-Ninth and West Chester Pike will be made in nineteen minutes, while an additional six minutes will take one into the park.

This new amusement place is being built and will be operated by the Beechwood Park Amusement Company, of which E.E. Downs is president and manager; Frank H. Libbey, treasurer, Don W. Libbey, secretary, and Horace S. Meese, assistant manager, President Downs has been engaged in managing electric railroading and railway parks for fifteen years. Mr. Meese comes from Wonderland, Boston, and is well known to the amusement people.

Two features of the park will be its music and its firefighting apparatus. Bands of wide reputation are being secured for weekly engagements; the list of which will be announced shortly. The firefighting display will consist of two fire engines, ladder trucks, hose carts and ninety men. This force will also constitute the parks' regular fire department for the season.

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