

Springlake Amusement Park (Images of America: Oklahoma)

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From 1924 through 1981, Springlake was Oklahoma City's premier place for fun for everyone around the state. Park enthusiast Carla Williams Noffsinger mirrors the comments of so many of the park's patrons when she says, "I grew up in Moore. We spent many a happy hour at Springlake. We always heard bad stories about the Big Dipper, but that was the first ride we would hit. I remember my cousin wetting her pants once on the Tilt-A-Whirl; we laugh about that to this day. As far as my family was concerned, it was just good, clean old-fashioned fun. My cousins would come up in the summer from southeast Oklahoma, and Springlake was at the top of the list of places to go." For all its goodness, Springlake was flawed, remaining segregated longer than many other businesses during the tumultuous civil rights era. Forced to integrate by the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Springlake adapted poorly--instead of opening its huge pool to all swimmers and sunbathers, the pool became an aquarium. Racial tensions culminated on Easter 1971 with a small but important racially based riot from which the park never fully recovered.



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