



## LAKE WANAHOO

### REMEMBERING THE PAST - THE HISTORY OF WANAHOO PARK

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The Lake Wanahoo project draws its name from Wanahoo Park, a dance hall and recreation area that operated near Wahoo through the early and middle decades of the 20th century.

The park was a popular gathering place for area residents, especially in the 1920s and 1930s. The main attraction was an ornate dance hall on the man-made “Dance Island.” The moat surrounding the island was formed by diverting water from nearby Sand Creek with a water wheel. The park also featured a huge swimming pool.

Unfortunately, the park suffered a series of mishaps over the years, including repeated flooding and at least one fire that razed the dance hall. By the early 1960s, the park was suffering from declining attendance and deteriorating facilities. The final blow came in the form of a large flood in 1963. With the moat and swimming pool filled in by flood-borne silt, Wanahoo Park became a relic of the past.

In the years since the park’s closing, most landmarks have been removed or destroyed. Virtually the only signs of the old park that haven’t been erased by time are the crumbling remains of the swimming pool foundation, and a dark ring visible in aerial photos where the moat was located. However, despite being gone for more than 50 years, Wanahoo Park still evokes fond memories for many long-time residents of the area.