

Taking Flight



Article by Jim Hahn
Photos provided by Knoebels Amusement Resort

This page: The Phoenix thrills its passengers!

10 Columbia-Montour Visitors Guide 2008 • (800) 847-4810



The rebirth of a classic, rare and exhilarating ride has become the newest attraction at Knoebels Amusement Resort. Debuting this season, The Flying Turns is a ride largely of wooden construction first built in 1929 by legendary coaster builder John Miller and visionary Norman Bartlett. Seven of the world's first modern flying turns coasters were built by the developers of The Philadelphia Toboggan Company between 1929 and 1939 at various amusement parks on the east coast. Because of the enthusiasm surrounding aviation in the twenties and thirties, coaster builders strived to create a ride mimicking the thrill of flying.

The Flying Turns at Knoebels Amusement Resort is the only one of its kind in Pennsylvania and the first ride of its kind built in nearly four decades. The layout is similar to that of the original Flying Turns coaster which was unveiled at the 1933 Chicago Worlds Fair.

The unique appeal of this style ride is the free motion of the trains and the use of gravity along with curved troughs and rapid-fire directional changes. As most coasters ride on tracks or rails, trains on the Flying Turns are allowed to freewheel and bank inside a curved wooden trough. The fun comes from the action of the train winding its way up and around tight curves. The effect is similar to that of bobsledding. Trains are pulled up a fifty foot incline by a chain lift and then released into a swirling helix before a second lift takes riders back up to the top only to be released downward into nine sharp banking turns. The 1,500 foot cylindrical course of swift turns and figure eights reaches speeds of 35 feet per second and heights up to

fifty feet. Because of the speed and centrifugal force, riders will experience intense G-forces and feelings of weightlessness.

Knoebels Amusement Resort is a family owned and operated amusement park located just outside of Elysburg with free parking, free admission, free entertainment and free picnic facilities. Since its opening in 1926, it has long been a local family favorite with over 55 rides, including 2 world-class, Golden Ticket-winning wooden roller coasters. The park also offers numerous attractions, award-winning food and live entertainment all while nestled in the rolling hills of northeastern Pennsylvania.



Did you know . . .

- There are two natural rock formations on Route 42 between Catawissa and Bloomsburg? One is called "Profile Rock" and the other is "Indian Head Rock."
- About 12 miles outside of Bloomsburg, off Route 42, there is a road that appears to defy gravity? Known as "Gravity Hill," you can put your car in neutral and the vehicle will eerily roll up the hill.