

TOURISM IN EVERGREEN: Where Have All the Tourists Gone?

By Vanita G. Cospers (1994 Honorable Mention in the History Writer's Award Contest)

There are many beautiful valleys throughout the Rockies, those places where the waters carve the rock of the mountains and create depths, cuts in the surface, places where one looks up and sees boundaries on the sky, natural frontiers that are always there but seem to fluctuate according to the time, or the season, or the temperament.

One of these, at least as pretty as any, just west of Denver, is the Bear Creek Valley. Like its cousins to the North and to the South and to the West this valley is born on the high peaks. Evergreen, Colorado is located in this valley about midway between where the plains end and the mountains begin.

Evergreen, a small mountain village sitting in the shadow of Mount Evans, is a popular bedroom community for Denver commuters. Each morning long lines of cars travel bumper to bumper along highway 74 to I-70 to make their daily trek into the city. The same cars head back up the long hill each afternoon past the Mother Cabrini Shrine, the herd of buffalo at Genesse Park, and around the bend at El Rancho to get back to their mountain home.

A century ago Evergreen was a small farming and logging community just awakening as an attractive summer hideaway. Before it became an affluent mountain suburb Evergreen was a stylish summer retreat for Denverites and a tourist attraction for visitors from across the country who came to the area to take advantage of exquisite scenery, to enjoy excellent fishing, hunting and camping, and to get away from the stresses of city life.

This study explores Evergreen tourism, with examples of images used to promote the community from the 1890's through the present, focusing on the changes in the town as it evolved from a sleepy mountain town with a large rush of summer visitors to a popular year-round residence with tourism taking a back seat.

Although there were many resorts and attractions in the Evergreen area through

the years, selected examples chosen for this study are the community of Evergreen, the Denver Mountain Parks and Evergreen Lake, Bear Creek Canyon, and Troutdale-in-the-Pines, as seen in promotional materials, newspapers, magazines, post cards and other ephemera.

Colorado business directories from 1900 on describe Evergreen as a summer resort in Jefferson County, but tourism came to this area more than a decade prior to the turn of the century.¹

The early settlers of Evergreen, who followed Thomas Bergen's settlement in the area in 1859, were interested in making a living, either by farming, ranching or logging. The idea of tourism as an industry evolved slowly. It was inevitable that an area so enchanting as the canyon of Upper Bear Creek would be irresistible once discovered. By the end of the century tourists flocked to the area to spend warm summer days and cool summer nights in the shadow of pine and spruce trees with snowcapped Mount Evans keeping a watchful eye over her valley.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century there were several lodging houses and hotels along Bear Creek catering to overnight travelers, i.e., the Stewart Hotel (now part of the historic Evergreen Conference District), the Evergreen Hotel (still sitting on Main Street housing a near-new shot), and further west up Bear Creek toward Mount Evans, the visitor found Bendemeer (established in the 1890's and burned to the ground in 1960), and Troutdale-in-the-Pines, homesteaded by Jasper D. Babcock, began housing guests in rustic cabins as early as 1884. In land patent documents supporting Babcock's claim dated July 11, 1887, testimony of witness John Smith states that Babcock had built "about 30 log cabins which he uses for summer boarders."²

Croft's *Grip-Sack Guide of Colorado*, 1885 describes Evergreen this way, "Evergreen—Jefferson County, is a post-office on Bear Creek, at the junction of Cub, away up in the mountains, 12 miles west from Morrison, and 26 from Denver.

Timber is abundant, as well as game and trout. It is quite a resort for campers in the summer. Population in vicinity, 100; several saw mills near."³ The beauty and climate of the area attracted refugees from the Denver heat during the latter part of the 19th Century and tourism continued to flourish as a summer playground until mid-twentieth century.

Early travelers to the state such as Sir George Gore, whose legendary 1855 hunting trip to the Rocky Mountains alerted the world to this sportsman's paradise, and Isabella Bird, who traveled in Colorado in 1873 and whose vivid descriptions were reported in her book, *A Lady's Life in the Rockies*, published in 1879, were instrumental to the birth of Colorado tourism. Government surveys such as those headed by Hayden, Fremont, and Gunnison produced detailed reports with accompanying drawings, photographs and descriptions of this rugged land which were also influential in drawing attention to the spectacular beauty and uniqueness of the west and thus to Colorado. Colorado tourism had begun.

The railroads were the prime movers of tourism in Colorado. The completion of the railroad across the country in 1869 and into Colorado in 1870 was the catalyst for the beginning of tourism in the state. The railroads wanted to attract visitors as well as settlers and they were masters at marketing the attributes of Colorado. Railroad publications in the early 1900's named Colorado "The Switzerland of America," describing her "silvery mountain streams, shimmering lakes, incomparable camping grounds, broad and verdant parks, incomparable climate . . . placing it at the very front among the

¹ Barbara and Gene Sternberg, *Evergreen: Our Mountain Community*, Boulder, Johnson Pub., 1987, pp. 86.

² Homestead documents for Jasper Babcock, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

³ George Croft, *Croft's Grip-Sack Guide of Colorado*, 1885, Boulder: Johnson Books, 1981, p. 92.

tourist lands of the country.”⁴ With funding by the railroads, resorts and luxury hotels sprang up along the rails lines in Denver and beyond, in places such as Colorado Springs, Manitou Springs and Glenwood Springs, and the tourists came.

The Denver Sunday Times, April 1899, in a column “Colorado the Mecca” tells of Colorado’s annual increase in tourism. “Colorado has the advantage of a central location . . . and a further advantage of the finest mountain scenery in the country, a summer climate that cannot be excelled in the world. . .” The article encourages the railroads to advertise offices in New York, London and Liverpool. Colorado’s health and scenery are two of her greatest attractions. They ought to be well advertised so they will bring the visitors.” The article closes with these words, “It is well that gold, silver and mineral and agricultural resources should be advertised, but the time will come when the people will admit that after all the real greatness of the state of gold and silver lies in her mountain scenery and mountain air.”⁵

Without the financial support of any railroad Evergreen nevertheless became a popular destination, no doubt because of its natural beauty. Although the railroad never came as far as Evergreen, a spur of the Colorado & Southern Railroad built to Morrison in 1874, made Bear Creek Canyon accessible to visitors. (A planned line connecting Morrison running along Bear Creek through Evergreen, up to Brookvale and on to Idaho Springs never materialized.) From Morrison a stage was available that took passengers up the canyon past Evergreen and Troutdale as far as Brookvale at the foot of Mt. Evans.

By the end of the century tourism in the state became a major economic factor and boosters promoted Colorado as a panacea for illness and as a vacation spot beyond all others, as seen in the 1900 publication of the Colorado & Southern Railway called *Picturesque Colorado*. This publication is the most pretentious example of boosterism of the state this writer found. With a heavy green cover embossed with gold leaf, each page has romantic pictures of attractive places enhanced by drawings of flowers and butterflies and fishing lines and pastoral scenes with clouds artistically underlying the print in subtle colors. The verbiage surpassed the design:

“Oh, the unspeakable charm of the mountains! The sense of freedom, the buoyancy of spirit, the relief from care, which are found in communion with this bounteous gift of Providence to man. As long as the world stands men will turn to the mountains for inspiration in all that is good and true. The man or woman who has not bathed in life-inspiring sunlight and atmosphere of the Rockies has missed one of the most enduring charms of existence.”⁵

How could one resist!

Around the turn of the century references to Bear Creek Canyon, Mt. Evans and Evergreen begin to appear in newspapers and other promotional materials. *The Colorado Road*, an April 1899 publication of the Colorado & Southern Railway lists Evergreen as one of the “Towns reached by stage from Colorado & Southern Railway stations . . . from Morrison, 11 miles to Evergreen.”⁶

A description of Bear Creek Canyon in the *Denver Sunday Times*, July, 1900, reads, “the beauty of the canyon lies in its view of the Rockies, for nowhere in the mountains is it possible to obtain such a panorama of the range . . . Mt. Evans, whose hoary head is perpetually crowned with snow, rockribbed and ancient in the sun.” The article continues, “An orator in praising the beauties of Colorado, with a wave of his hand toward Mount Evans and its associated peaks remarked that ‘it is hard to tell where Colorado leaves off and heaven begins. The sunsets are gorgeous . . . the flowers grown here in greatest profusion and variety—the columbine, the wild tiger lily, the lady slipper and all of the more common variety of flowers seem each to vie with the other as to which can grow to the greatest perfection of color.”⁷ The language of the era was flowery and romantic, but descriptions such as this must have been a stimulus that sparked the coming of the summer tourist to the area.

In July, 1901, the *Denver Republican* reported in its section, “Mountain Summer Resorts (Evergreen),” “the fourth was a beautiful day and Bear Creek was thronged with visitors from Denver, Idaho Springs and other localities. There was never before such a large display of fireworks which extended all along the creek for a distance of 5 or 6 miles. The arrivals at hotels and cottages have been quite numerous and with those already

here give us quite a large population.” In the same issue a separate article said, “Troutdale is fast becoming populated and the coming week will see nearly all the cabins occupied.” The article reported guests from Denver and from St. Louis, Oklahoma City, Kansas City, Chicago, Pittsburgh and Salt Lake City, evidence that the early tourists came from beyond the boundaries of the state as well as from Denver and other parts of Colorado.⁸ The Bear Creek area was not only mentioned in newspaper columns but also advertisements appeared in newspapers after the turn of the century touting the virtues of Troutdale (*The Denver Times*, August 24, 1903) calling it the “prettiest summer resort in Colorado.”

The greatest impetus to the development of Bear Creek Canyon and Evergreen as a center of tourism was the acquisition by the City of Denver of thousands of acres in the mountain west of Denver and the creation of the unique and spectacular system of mountain parks. In 1912 the City of Denver provided for a Mountain Park tax levy and Denver began purchasing and condemning land. By 1920 Denver had acquired more than 3.7 million acres in which they built a road system and constructee shelter houses, pump houses, outdoor picnic and camping facilities.⁹

Bear Creek Canyon and Evergreen were a major attraction of the park system. Bear Creek Canyon was part of the “Circle Trip” which took motorists from Denver over the “Lariat Trail” snaking around Lookout Mountain up to Genesee Park, Bergen Park and into Evergreen at Dedisse Park, through Bear Creek Canyon past Denver Mountain parks—Corwina, O’Fallon, Little, Starbuck (home of the Denver Automobile Club) and Red Rocks Park into Morrison and back into Denver. This was a very popular route for motorists and Evergreen thrived with the influx

⁴ “Promoting Colorado: The Playground of America” *Colorado Heritage*, vol. 3, 1987, p. 13.

⁵ T.E. Fisher, *Picturesque Colorado*, Colorado & Southern Railway, 1900, Jefferson County Historical Society.

⁶ Colorado & Southern Railway, “The Colorado Road”, map, 1899. (JCHS).

⁷ *Denver Sunday Times*, July 29, 1900.

⁸ *Denver Republican*, July 7, 1901, p. 17.

⁹ City of Denver, *Denver Municipal Facts*, April/May, 1920, p. 3-9.



In and Out of DENVER

"THE GATEWAY"
TO TWELVE
NATIONAL PARKS
and THIRTY-TWO
NATIONAL
MONUMENTS

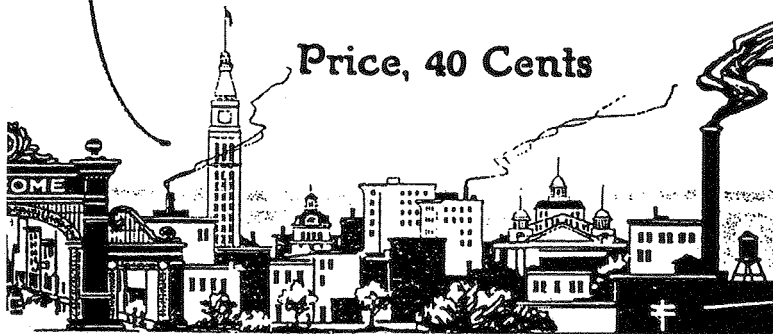


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Price, 40 Cents



Road Map from the Denver Tourist Bureau from 1920. Courtesy of the
Jefferson County Historical Society.

of visitors. During the teens and twenties, *Denver Municipal Facts* routinely had beautifully designed articles about the Denver Mountain Parks system always accompanied by handsome black and white photographs of the parks, roads, vistas, facilities and pictures of Denverites fishing, picnicking, viewing the sites and driving on what was then a very adequate roadway system. Bear Creek Canyon was always a star in these articles.

Denver Municipal Facts, April, 1918, features Bear Creek in its section on Denver Mountain Parks, "This is the favorite region of the camper and picnicker, because of the abundant water and shade, the grassy nooks and willow-fringed retreats suitable for tents, and the free fishing privilege. The city annually stocks this stream with 300,000 trout for the pleasure of its citizens and visitors. The lower reaches of the creek are shut in by wild and rocky canon walls. Along the sides for miles are log cabins, many of elaborate and costly design. Bear Creek holds one of the most picturesque mountain home colonies in America, and numbers summer residents from as far east as the Alleghenys."¹⁰

A black and white booklet, *Come Up to Colorado*, published by the Denver Tourist Bureau (circa 1920) featured the Denver Mountain parks and the section "How to Get There" pictured rugged Bear Creek Canyon and included mention of "Troutdale and Evergreen, offering hotel facilities" calling Bear Creek Canyon "picturesque." The trip from Denver through Golden, Mountain Parks and back through Evergreen and Morrison, "Round Trip, four hours; \$5.00 each in 7-passenger car; motor coach, \$4.00."¹¹

The growing popularity of the automobile in the twenties and accompanying improvement in roads provoked an interest in automobile day excursions into the mountains. To cater to the automobile tourist, the Denver Tourist Bureau produced maps annually which promoted trips into the mountains surrounding Denver: "In and Out of Denver—Road Maps of various delightful auto trips, useful and dependable information on Denver 'In and Out.' In one hour over concrete road the visitor is in Denver's beautiful Mountain Parks, traveling over good

roads, thru canons and over mountain tops."¹² Evergreen was a destination promoted and included in these maps.

The railroads acknowledged the importance of the automobile to the growth of tourism and promoted their rail lines to get tourists to Colorado and showed the possibilities, once arrived, to see much more of the state by automobile. A very handsome brochure, *Colorado Summer*, produced by the Santa Fe Railroad in the 1920s expounds on the beauties of Colorado calling it "the cool summer playground of the sky . . . When hot weather comes up from the south, the snowy peaks of the Colorado Rockies are a lure which it is well-nigh impossible to resist . . . The pictures herein tell their own story of outing joys—autoing, fishing, camping, golf, and the like." The brochure contains several pictures of autoing in Bear Creek Canyon and viewing Mt. Evans from the canyon.¹³

The Denver Mountain Parks attracted a huge number of visitors. *Denver Municipal Facts* reports that records kept during June, July and August of 1917 show that the total number of visitors passing through the Bear Creek gateway between the hours of sunrise and sunset in automobiles was 303,882 and an estimated 750,000 people visited the Mountain Parks in 1923.¹⁴ During that same year (1923) visitors to Mesa Verde counted a mere 4,251 and to Rocky Mountain National Park, 219,164.¹⁵

The building of the elegant new Troutdale-in-the-Pines resort hotel in 1920 propelled Evergreen into the national spotlight as a premier summer resort area. The resort was developed by Harry Sidles, wealthy Nebraskan, who six years earlier built his own summer home, Rippling Waters, on Upper Bear Creek. In 1916, he and other investors purchased several hundred acres on each side of the creek which were platted into hundreds of homesites for summer cottages. The purchase of the Troutdale resort property, which at that time was a collection of rustic log cabins surrounding a manmade lake, and the development of the new hotel building was the focal point of the planned resort community.

As the great structure rose out of the rocks in 1919-1920, residents and visitors sensed the uniqueness of the site.

The huge rock building originally had 100 rooms, but an addition in the late 20s increased the capacity to 300. Inside the hotel was a luxury lobby, the famous Rainbow Ballroom, a huge dining room, billiard room, barber shop, bakery and every other convenience guests desired, including an elevator. Supposedly designed by noted architect Addison Mizner, and made of native stone and wood, Troutdale was built "to disturb nature as little as possible."¹⁶

The earliest promotional brochure for Troutdale described it as "Colorado's newest and finest modern mountain resort." The twelve page brochure, hand colored in vivid, romantic hues described the elegance and comfort of the hotel and the breathtaking beauty of the surrounding countryside 7500 feet above sea level. Many promotional brochures followed this very early one, though none came close to its elegance and charm. From 1920 until after World War II, Evergreen was not mentioned without reference to Troutdale in the same breath. Troutdale and Evergreen, for a few brief years in the 20s, 30s and 40s had their moments of glory.

Apparently feeling quite smug about the success of Troutdale and with names such as Evans, Phipps, Mayo, Gates, Cranmer and Bancroft painted on mail boxes along Bear Creek, in the twenties the community of Evergreen prepared its own booklet praising the resort community with descriptions such as "Evergreen is the JEWEL in the crown of the Eastern slope of the Rockies and it is destined to be the 'Playground of the World.'" On the back cover of the publication, which was called *Evergreen: The Paradise of Bear Creek Canyon*, was a full page picture of Troutdale, which was unquestionably the jewel in Evergreen's crown. The picture

¹⁰ *Denver Municipal Facts*, April 1918, p. 5.

¹¹ Denver Tourist & Publicity Bureau, *Come Up to Colorado*, circa 1920, p. 3-4, (JCHS).

¹² Denver Tourist & Publicity Bureau, *In and Out of Denver*, p. 54 (JCHS).

¹³ Santa Fe Railroad, *Colorado Summer*, circa 1920, p. 3.

¹⁴ *Denver Municipal Facts*, April 1918, p. 5.

¹⁵ City of Denver, *Municipal Facts*, April/May, 1923, p. 27.

¹⁶ "Troutdale in the Pines" colored brochure, 12 pages, circa 1920, Denver Public Library.

EVERGREEN

THE PARADISE OF BEAR CREEK CANON



*In the Heart
of Denver's
Mountain
Parks*



*The Ideal Spot
for Your
Summer
Home*



COLORADO

The Summer Playground of the World

*Evergreen Brochure, 1920, by the Evergreen Chamber of Commerce.
Courtesy of the Jefferson County Historical Society.*

used in the advertisement was one distributed widely as a colored postcard. The couple in the foreground of the picture are reportedly Mr. and Mrs. Sidles walking from Troutdale across the road to their summer home.

Troutdale was not the only resort in the Evergreen area. Several other attractive and popular resorts were built in the first quarter of the century including the Marshdale Lodge, Brook Forest Inn, Bendemeer and Brookvale. Many exquisite private summer homes such as Grey-stone (built by Genevieve Phipps in 1916-1917); the summer home of George Cranmer, Denver's Manager of Parks (Singin' River Ranch); Rosedale Castle, designed by J.B. Benedict for Paul and Margery Reed Mayo in the early 1920's; the summer home of Charles Gates; and the Evans' Ranch were an indication of the lure of the area.

With the damming of Bear Creek in 1927 and the creation of Evergreen Lake, the community of Evergreen had a feature that was unique and one that made Evergreen even more appealing as a tourist destination. *Municipal Facts* reported in 1927 that "A Mountain Lake is Being Made to Order at Evergreen." In the planning stages for several years, the writer states, "Not only does the scenery at this spot call for some water mirror—but the place is ideally suited to the various sports which the presence of a body of water intensifies . . . During the summer months the lake at Evergreen will be used for boating, fishing and picnicking, while in the winter months ice skating, skiing and tobogganing will be popular sports, the Evergreen Lake makes another link in plans to bring many events as close to Denver as possible . . . Even more than ease of access the scenery about Evergreen makes it one of those delightful places that never palls through familiarity." Built on a natural lake site on land purchased from the pioneer Dedisse family, "the shores of this beautiful lake so created should be made one of the great show places of America."¹⁷

With Dedisse Park hugging its shore

and a fine golf course with rustic octagonal shaped clubhouse just to the west of the lake, one of the many structures designed by well-known Denver architect J.B. Benedict that dotted the Denver Mountain Parks, the area promised to have a little of everything for the visitor. Evergreen Lake never became the "showplace of America" but through the years the lake has been an enduring attraction and a symbol of the high esteem others had for the beauty of the area. The most recognizable feature of Evergreen, locals and visitors alike still flock to the lake in the winter for an afternoon of ice skating, and fishermen and walkers crowd the shores in summer. An exquisite log structure, a smaller version of the great log palaces built in the previous century in National Parks, was built in 1993 by the Evergreen Parks and Recreation District on the west edge of the lake. The building of the new Lake House and the dredging of the lake and upgrading the area around the lake, including the construction of a serpentine boardwalk across an environmentally delicate wetlands, has renewed local interest in the area.

Postcards were a very visible part of the promotion of tourism in the Evergreen area in the first half of this century. The collections of postcards at the Hiwan Homestead Museum in Evergreen and those at the Steven Hart Library at the Colorado Historical Society reveal that the most popular subjects promoted on postcards of the area were Troutdale-in-the-Pines, Bear Creek Canyon and the Evergreen Lake and Dam. There are scores of examples representing each of these subjects. Postcards of the 1920s were generally tinted, brightly colored (not natural colors) with very fetching captions on the backside, i.e., "Bear Creek is the most noted and popular canon trip to the west of Denver. It is filled with summer cottages and resorts, but still fine parks have been reserved for the public to camp and picnic along the stream." Another reading, "Within an hour's ride from the skyscrapers of Denver is picturesque Bear Creek Canon with its

whispering pines and singing torrents, walled in by mountain skyscrapers and dotted with flower carpeted picnic spots."

A 1925 postcard with a lovely picture of Troutdale reads, "Troutdale-in-the-Pines is Colorado's newest and finest modern Mountain resort—is located just thirty miles west of Denver in Bear Creek Canyon in the heart of Denver's Mountain Parks and possesses a distinctive charm which is apparent the moment you enter the grounds. The roads leading to and from Troutdale are the finest to be found anywhere." One postcard calls it "the most pretentious hotel in the Mountain Parks, and one of the finest resort hotels in the United States." Another reads, "Troutdale-in-the-Pines is in the Denver Mountain Park Region, 27 miles from Denver. In one of the most beautiful settings in the country, it attracts thousands of visitors yearly."

Describing Evergreen, "EVERGREEN, a charming mountain resort lying in Bear Creek Canon, besides being the hub of the Denver Mountain Parks System has also become one of the most attractive points with the construction of a splendid concrete dam which backs up the waters of Bear Creek to form a large and beautiful lake spreading out between the wooded hills."¹⁸ A check in the local drugstore recently found only two postcards with Evergreen subjects in a rack of nearly fifty different cards promoting sites in Colorado.

After World War II Evergreen began dwindling as a tourist center. The beauty of the area had not changed, so what were the reasons contributing to the reduced role of tourism in the area? What happened to tourism and what happened to Evergreen in the decades following the war?

During the war with gas rationing and more serious distractions, people did not have the luxury of long summer vacations. Troutdale did not open during the

¹⁷ City of Denver, *Denver Municipal Facts*, June/July, 1927.

¹⁸ Jefferson County Historical Society Post Card Collection.

summers of 1943 and 1944 and other local resorts followed suit or opened on a limited basis.

According to McIntosh and Goeldner in their monograph *Tourism Principles, Practices, Philosophies* "One of the most significant events in America's travel history is the amount of travel done by servicemen and women during World War II." The authors say that the extensive travel domestic and foreign, undertaken by U.S. Military personnel, brought a broader perspective of what our country and the rest of the world had to offer visitors. Following the war, a large increase in travel occurred with the lifting of gasoline rationing and the improvement of other modes of travel such as air, rail and bus.¹⁹

With the sophistication of the traveling public, overseas travel becoming more available, and new attractions luring the U.S. tourist, Evergreen and its quiet, simple offerings became less attractive as a summer destination. Also with the widespread introduction of air-conditioning, many places that had previously been unbearable in the summer, such as Arizona and Las Vegas, offered new and different attractions for vacationers. In Colorado the ski industry blossomed and winter vacations became trendy. With Evergreen off the beaten track, the ski enthusiast headed west from Denver never giving a nod to Evergreen. Promotional brochures during this post-war era, likely in an attempt to lure tourists to the area and knowing the visitor demanded more diversity, listed many attractions beyond Evergreen, but easy to visit for the day, such as Garden of the Gods, Central City, Estes Park, Seven Falls, etc..

Something else happened. As tourism declined, Evergreen became a year round residence for a growing number of people. The opening of Interstate 70 in 1965 provided easy access to and from Denver from Evergreen and other mountain communities. Many of the people who had visited the mountain parks, skated on the lake, or spent a week at Troutdale-in-the-Pines, chose to make Evergreen their home. Similar descriptions of the area

that were used 50 or 60 years ago to promote Evergreen as a desirable summer retreat are now being used to attract year-round citizens. A 1993 advertisement for a local real estate development seen in the *Canyon Courier* asks readers, "What brought you to the mountains? Close your eyes and try to recall that far away dream to get away from it all. To find that place with friends or alone where your spirit's at peace and you're finally at home." A handsome color booklet produced by the Evergreen Chamber of Commerce in 1993 is filled with romantic images of life in the area, one ad saying, "The best part of Denver is the view from Evergreen . . . No one should buy a home in Denver without first seeing Evergreen. You might miss what you came to Colorado for."²⁰

Evergreen was part of the phenomenal growth of the Front Range since World War II. According to author Gleaves Whitney ". . . another reason it (Front Range) is bursting with growth is that its climate is milder than either the snowy mountains to the west or the windswept plains to the east . . . the area characteristically has both warm days in winter and cool nights in summer, which is a delight in any land. Moreover, most of its cities bask in the sunshine at least 250 days a year . . ."²¹

The population of Evergreen mushroomed in the 1960s and 1970s and that trend has continued. "5,000 in the summer and 500 in the winter," was the saying about Evergreen for many years.²² The Evergreen Chamber of Commerce reports population of the Evergreen area for 1990 is more than 19,000.²³ The fact that there are limited jobs in the area suggests that residents live in Evergreen for the quality of lifestyle, a lifestyle that was conceived in the early years of tourism in the area.

People moved to the area for the same reasons that people for many years came to visit—the beauty and serenity of the surroundings. With increasing population, numerous housing developments sprung up, and today parts of the Evergreen area look more like a suburb than a

small mountain community. But there are also well-planned areas that blend beautifully with the surroundings. Evergreen even has a traffic problem. The main light at the center of town creates a backlog of cars morning and evening when commuters are coming and going. At times the past appears to be engaged in battle with the inevitability of the future.

What about those attractions that promised to make Evergreen the "Playground of the World?" Denver Mountain Parks are not the gems they used to be. Reduced budgets and personnel cuts have resulted in neglect, with historic shelter houses in poor repair and few visitors utilizing them compared to their glory days. During the warm months locals and Denverites use the parks, but myriad alternative mountain attractions lure them elsewhere.

Troutdale, long a crumbling ruin, shut its doors to guests for the final time in 1962 but continued to fascinate residents for many years. For three decades the local paper has kept residents informed on potential development plans, none of which ever materialized, and in early 1994 it fell victim of the wrecking ball. Perpetually a hangout for local youth around Halloween, the remnant of the once proud resort was the backdrop for the filming of a trailer for a horror movie a few months before its final inglorious demise.

There are still flatlanders who retreat to Evergreen for the week-end and stay in one of the small, unpretentious cabins along Bear Creek that offer room for the night or the week. The Davidson Lodge and Highland Haven are two small, quiet motels that recall another time. A few of the homes on Upper Bear Creek are

²⁰ *Evergreen, Colorado*, Evergreen Chamber of Commerce, 1993, p. 16.

²¹ Gleaves Whitney, *Colorado Front Range: A Landscape Divided*. Boulder, Johnson Books, p. 127.

²² James King, Ph.D., Former employee of Troutdale-in-the-Pines, resident of Evergreen, personal interview, October 1993.

²³ Evergreen Chamber of Commerce, Creative Publishing Co., Evergreen, CO.

closed during the winter and their owners from the midwest or Texas return May through September to spend summers in the cool beauty of the area, but this is the exception. Most older homes have been winterized for year-round occupancy.

Perhaps the most famous attraction in Evergreen these days is the Little Bear, the local honky tonk which attracts young and old from near and far with loud music, big burgers and cold beer.

As a mecca of tourism, these scenes are

a far cry from the glory days of the first four decades of this century. Tourism had its time, now it is part of history.

Where have all the tourists gone? They live here.



FOR YOUR INFORMATION

(continued from page 1)

in RH by losing and gaining moisture. As RH rises, they absorb water and begin to swell. When the RH decreases, they respond by losing moisture and contracting. It is more important to maintain stable climate conditions than to be overly concerned about maintaining a specific RH, barring extremes. It is the stress caused by constant fluctuation that endangers the material. In an unstable environment, library materials are constantly expanding and contracting, which weakens their structure. Evidence of this type of damage may be cockling paper, flaking or cracked photograph emulsions, and warped book covers. Vellum and parchment are very susceptible to this type of damage.

RH EXTREMES/HIGH

Collections stored where RH measures 65% are susceptible to mold outbreaks and insect infestations. High moisture content also contributes to the formation of acid in paper and hastens deterioration. Moisture is very quick to accumulate in an object and very slow to disperse. That's why water disasters can cause long term recovery problems.

EMERGENCIES

Wet books need immediate treatment. Freezing wet materials is the quickest way to stabilize them. Mold spores are always in the air, waiting for a warm, moist environment to grow in. Respond before this happens (approximately 48 hours). If the emergency is small, wet books can be stood up on end and air dried in an open, well-ventilated space. Controlled exposure to sunlight will stop small mold growths. Most important: get the environment under control, and segregate moldy books from the rest of the collection until you are sure they are clean and dry. Mold spreads fast.

RH EXTREMES/LOW

Collections stored where the RH measures below 25% are apt to be more vulnerable to damage when handled, but this is not necessarily a cause for alarm. In fact, recent research documents the advantages of 30% RH vs. 45% RH, the traditionally advised optimum. This is good news for Colorado and other arid climates. Advantages include: Slower absorption of pollutants, less photodegra-

dation (damage due to light exposure), less change in moisture content and greater stability.

LIGHT

Exposure to light accelerates the deterioration of all organic materials, including paper, photographs, leather, and textiles. Light exposure leads to weakening of fibers, in addition to fading or yellowing, and causes inks and dyes to change color or fade. Light damage is cumulative and irreversible. This means an object exposed to low light for a long period of time is damaged just as much as an object exposed to strong light for a shorter period. Ultraviolet (UV) is the most damaging light wave in the spectrum; sunlight and fluorescent light are high in UV. In Colorado, with its great weather and high altitude, extremely high UV levels are a fact of life and a constant danger to collections as well as to people. The less direct light, the better. If exposure to light cannot be minimized, UV filters are available for specific applications.

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