

Pontiac Lodge

Owner:

1939 - Clarence Ted Lee – Homesteaded Lot 6, Section 1, Township 4, north of Range 76W of the Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado (known as the Kawuneeche Valley)

(As best that can be determined from research of records, he purchased approximately 263 additional acres over a period of the next ten years)

Location:



Site of present Coyote Valley Trailhead in RMNP, two miles below the Neversummer Ranch. Nothing remains of the lodge area now used as a picnic spot and trail access.

General Ranch Information:

Clarence Theodore "Ted" Lee homesteaded 26 acres. He entered the acreage in 1927, received an extension in 1932, and obtained a land patent in 1939. In that time he built six cabins on the homestead which he rented to tourists in the summer. He worked in Denver part time and also worked on his Kawuneeche Valley property with his first wife and two "foundling" boys.



(Reference "An Environmental History of the Kawuneeche Valley and the Headwaters of the Colorado River" by Historian Thomas G. Andrews, Associate Professor of History, University of Colorado at Boulder, October 3, 2011)





Ted Lee (left) and buddies during homesteading



Pontiac Lodge under construction



Ted Lee married Winifred Yankey in 1942 and they had five children - Fred, Cathy, Dorothy, Linda and Ted, Jr. Ted Lee still worked in Denver during the week and would travel to Pontiac Lodge on weekends. The family moved to Pontiac in 1953 after he retired and the children attended grade school in Grand Lake. The family lived year-round at Pontiac Lodge from 1953 to 1960. Their mother, Winifred, played the organ at the Presbyterian Church in Grand Lake.



Pictures shown in this display are from the family albums. The family lived in the main two story lodge and rented the cabins to tourists.



**Ted and Winifred Lee
Cathy, Fred, Dorothy, Ted, Jr. and Linda**





Oldest Bridge over the Colorado



**Bridge under construction –
1910
Bridge over the Colorado River**



Lodge facing the Colorado River



During Ted Lee's ownership, in addition to the lodge and cabins, he put in an irrigated hay meadow and built a barn. He pastured cattle on the property one year. The tourists fished the beaver ponds and the Colorado River. Fred, an accomplished fly fisherman, was the fishing guide for the tourists who would stop by for a day of fishing or to rent one of the cabins for a prolonged stay.



Hay Harvest 1955



Ted Lee died in September of 1958 with the property encumbered and no longer in the hands of the family. Winifred married LaVaughn Hopkins in October of 1959 and the family moved in 1960.

Of the original structures, the Lee family barn was moved and now stands in Tabernash.

Subsequent ownerships:

1960 Ted Bach to Hugh Hooks

1961 Hooks sold part interest (1/5) to John Hilson

1963 Hilson sold interest back to Hooks (or Hooks repossessed the interest)

1963 Hooks sold to Charlie Houseman

1975 Housman sold to Rocky Mountain National Park

(Quoted at one time by Johnny Holzwarth "Charlie Housman paid a million dollars for that property")



