

# Grand Lake Lodge

With Fall River Road nearing completion, Frank I. Huntington with assistance from Al House, accepted an offer to survey and build a resort lodge close to the entrance of the National Park. This resort, the Grand Lake Lodge, was the brain child of tourism pioneer Roe Emery.



Roe Emery envisioned an easy, affordable and breath-taking Circle Tour of the central Colorado Rockies. He eventually secured financing from a wealthy friend, A. D. Lewis and with Park Service permission construction on the Grand Lake Lodge finally began in April 1919.

Using native lodgepole pine, the main lodge and a majority of the property's 100 buildings were completed a year later. The Lodge opened with a Grand Ball on July 3, 1920, just two months prior to the long awaited (34 years) completion of Fall River Road in September 1920.

The lodge building included a lobby, circular fireplace, dining room, and kitchen. It was filled with chairs, rockers, and tables made by the Old Hickory Furniture Co. which supplied furnishings for the most famous lodges in the national parks. The most unique feature of Grand Lake Lodge was a veranda that offered the best views in all of Grand Lake. Nestled behind the main lodge building were one and two bedroom guest cottages. The property had its own lighting equipment and water supply. Eventually over 100 structures were located on the site, including a dormitory which included a recreation hall. Emery hired college students to work at his lodge and prominently mentioned these "specially trained" employees in his promotional materials.

Roe Emery took control of the Lodge from Lewis in 1923, operating it successfully for the next three decades. In 1953 Roe Emery sold his empire to T. J. Manning of Denver. He was unable to secure adequate financing and later offered the company to two brothers from Nebraska, Isaac B. and Ted L. James who formed the Colorado Transportation Company. In 1963 the James brothers negotiated a land exchange with the National Park Service as part of the Mission 66 Program. By an Act of Congress, the Park boundary was moved several acres to the north, and the Grand Lake Lodge officially became private property.

On July 19, 1973, a kitchen fire forced the Lodge to close for seven long years. After massive repairs and expensive upgrades, the property officially reopened in 1981. In 1993 the Grand Lake Lodge became a registered National Historic Landmark

The Grand Lake Lodge closed in 2006 and was put up for sale. Three years later it reopened after being sold by the James family. In 2013 the Lodge is again for sale.