

Taylor Lodge

**Interview with Bob Allen
with notes from his cousin James “Buck” Hunzeker,
July 20, 2012 and July 21, 2012,
*Taylor Lodge, Prairie Divide Road,
Red Feather Lakes, Colorado***

Interview and transcription by Linda Bell

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July 20, 2012

My grandmother and my father, Jack, bought this cabin. My grandmother's name was Edith Allen. They bought the cabin 50/50 when I was ... it was about 1942.

I don't know personally why they came up here (to Red Feather Lakes) except she had rental properties down in Denver and she saw this as a place – they loved to fish. Dad was a major trapper and he loved to trap and he'd get many things. And grandma loved to fish. She taught me how to fish right over here on Ramona. I guess they went in together to buy the cabin.

The first time I came up I must have been about 4 or 5, something like that. They were living in Denver at the time. This was a summer cabin for them. He had his job down in Denver, but he went hunting every year. Whether it was up in this area or down in southern Colorado, he was a big hunter. We ate elk all year long. He always brought back elk. In fact, the story is there were only three years he didn't bring back elk in his whole life. Mostly he went down south, at the head of the Rio Grande River is where he did most of his hunting.

I can remember when we first came up here there was no water, no well. We brought the water in from the artesian well next door (at “Halfacre”). Bud owns that. I can remember bringing buckets of water back as a little kid. Then they got a pump in the kitchen. The extension was done before they bought (the cabin).

The original room was here, the kitchen was here, the porch was here and the three bedrooms were here. Each bedroom had its own fireplace or stove for cooking because they rented out the rooms.

This was a stop on the stagecoach line. That's what I was told. I heard, I don't remember where, that the stagecoach stopped here because there were roofs here. They had three beds here and two beds in the other cabin. So they had places to stay.

I had the roof redone when I inherited it, and I had all the old roofs taken off. The holes for the pipes were still in the roof. I had those logs, or the wood, replaced. There were (stove) pipes in all three bedrooms.

My grandmother put first one well in, which came up into the kitchen through a hand pump. Then later on, she put a well house on with an electrical pump. They had to get electricity first. When we first started coming up here all we had were oil lamps. It was a long time ago. We had two oil lamps there, the table set there, we played canasta every night there. Grandma taught me canasta. I loved it. I must have driven her nuts, because I wanted to play canasta all the time.

Then we got electricity and she complained because we had to have the one pole put in, one extra pole – a hundred dollars. They had to share the hundred dollars and they were going berserk at how much that cost to have that pole put in. I remember that conversation. That would have been in the early 1950s.

We got electricity first, my grandmother put that in, then they put the well house in and we had running water to the kitchen, and then dad put in the septic tank and the modern bathroom. In fact, I told my dad, I'm not coming up here anymore unless he puts in a bathroom, which was added. I was in the Navy then. The outhouse was a real bug. So he did that, he put that in. It's a vaulted system.

When I inherited (the cabin) there was a big oil stove right in the middle of the living room. You had to fill it with oil and it would smell so I took that out and put the gas fireplace in. That was my contribution. And I've done a lot of work around the foundation. It's a lot better than it was. That corner of the porch was falling down. It was actually tipping and we had to have it jacked up.

It's comfortable. It's a neat place. A lot of the old furniture is still here. The ice chest; I remember they guy coming in and putting ice in it. Probably the younger Barker (*Gene Barker*). He brought ice and milk up here. The ice was delivered.

In the other cabin, the little cabin, the ice chest is built into the outside wall and he could put it in from the outside. He didn't even have to come in the cabin. Ultramodern, state of the art stuff.

We don't use the other cabin right now, only for storage. One of the stoves that was in here is over there, a wood burning stove.

The stove in the kitchen is coal burning but also uses gas (propane). We still cook on this. Works fine. There are warmer ovens. I think this stove (had been) down in my grandmother's house when she bought the cabin. They brought it up. I was too young to care how they did it.

I come for about a month every summer, from Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.

I think my grandmother rented out the rooms, but my dad did not. We used it, the family used it, but there were often a lot of people here when I was young. I used to sleep on this, a sort of hide-a-bed. I have a brother Don and a brother Tony, and a sister out in California. I'm the oldest in my father's family. My father had another brother and a sister, and they have kids. They were up here all the time. We used to play up here. My cousin comes up. My other cousin, Buck is his name, is coming up tomorrow, so they'll be here tomorrow.

He's excellent at history. He comes up from Erie, Colorado. He's a lot younger than I am.

It's a very used and comfortable cabin. We still use my grandmother's dishes and we use the same old clothespins which have been here, and there are quilts that have been here for so long.

The sign on the front, "Taylor Lodge" has been there the whole time I've been coming up. It was never taken down, but we don't know who the Taylors were. My grandmother wanted to keep it the same as it was, my dad did the same thing, and I've done the same as well. Under the linoleum is a good wood floor. It is tight all the way around, phenomenal work.

We've had six generations up here in all – my grandmother, my dad, me, my son, and that's where it stops there, but on Buck's side, he's got kids who have kids that have kids. He has grandkids.

My grandmother would spend the whole summer here. My cousin Patty, she's up there in the POA building as one of the Red Feather Lakes princesses. That's Patty Hunzeker. She's Buck's sister. She came up here. She loved to fish and she'd stay here all summer with grandma. My grandmother was a matriarch. She taught us kids; she'd have *Life Magazine* and *National Geographic* and she'd read to us out of them. She was a very modern woman. She wore pants back then. When my grandmother died there was a real battle over the ownership. That's over now, but my dad owned half of it. When I got it, I called some of my cousins to come up and my son and his family come up.

We have millions of pictures (from Red Feather Lakes) back home, and old family movies too.

July 21, 2012

James (Buck) Hunzeker is visiting his cousin Bob Allen. The following is taken from notes:

The smaller cabin used to be rented out to casual tourists. There was a kitchen and a stove, a refrigerator, utensils and two beds. We buried the garbage at the top of the hill. There's still a shovel next to the stove to do that.

The elder Allens had their 50th wedding anniversary at the cabin, but Grandpa Allen died in 1951. Grandma remarried Valentine ("Valli") Webster.

Buck said he got his driver's license in the late 60s early 70s and used to drive his '57 Chevy up to Red Feather.

Buck's son Billy used to work for Gene Barker in contracting, construction.

Carl and Bee McCarthy had the next door cabin on what is now "Bee Be" Drive.

Annotation by Linda Bell

There is some evidence that "Taylor Lodge" and its smaller companion cabin are some of the oldest buildings in Red Feather Lakes, having been built for or used by the workers who dug Mitchell Ditch in the late 1880s. That Bob Allen had heard the stage crew used to stay in the cabins is in keeping with their presumed age.

The Red Feather Historical Society owns all the old tax records and building permits for Red Feather Lakes from before they were computerized. These documents were found together using the subdivision name (McCarthy) and the legal description (Lot 6). The ones found for “Taylor Lodge” are shown below. Note in the left hand column below, the “date of construction” is listed as 1920 with its age already listed as 37 years. This would make the original cabin possibly as old as 1883.

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Bob Allen Addendum, “Taylor Lodge”



Edith Allen Webster is pictured here in front of the “Taylor Lodge” cabin in 1961.
The sign reads “Allen and Webster”.



This is the original “Taylor Lodge” sign on the cabin when purchased by Edith Allen and her son Jack Allen. It remains today as then, above the door under the covered porch.



Bob Allen, right, and his cousin James “Buck” Hunzeker, left, on the porch of “Taylor Lodge”, July 2012.

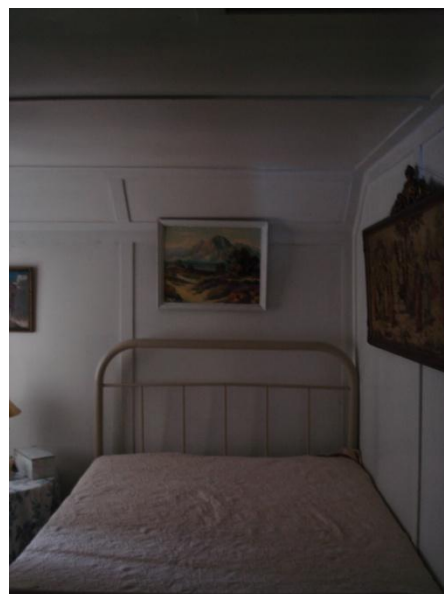
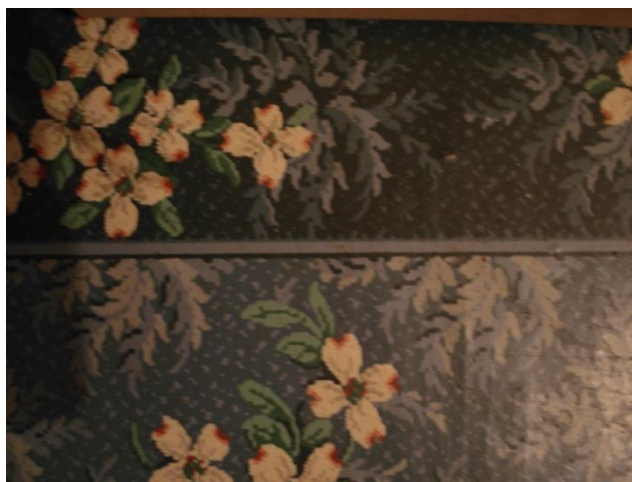


“Taylor Lodge” and its companion cabin, both of which had rooms that were rented out over the course of their long history.



The all-important outhouse, long in disuse.

Examples of some of the linoleum patterns made to look like carpet which are still in use at “Taylor Lodge”; these probably date from the 1930s. Two of the three bedrooms below.



1963 Red Feather Lakes Princess Patty Hunzeker.

