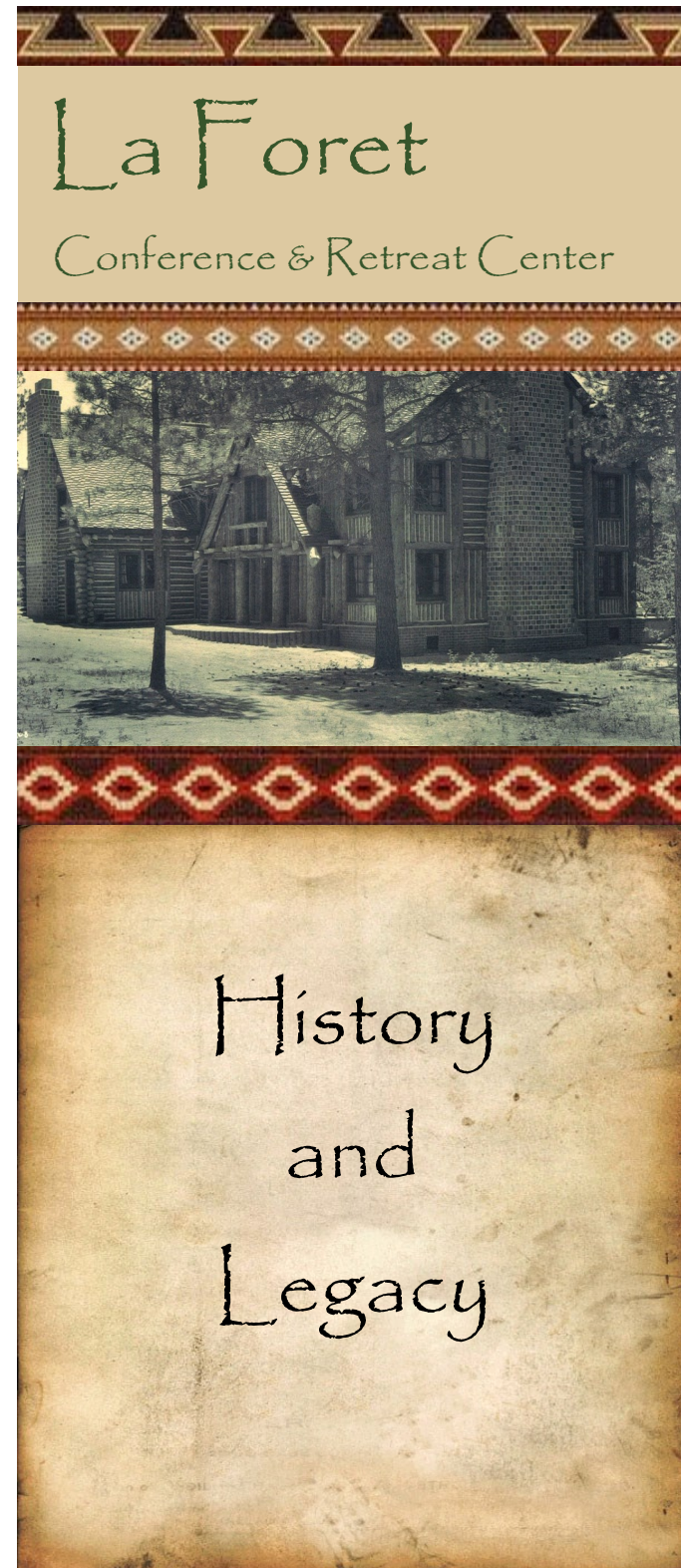


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The Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Church of Christ is grateful for Mrs. Taylor's gifts and legacy, and we celebrate more than fifty years of La Foret's special place in our outdoor ministries programs and experience.



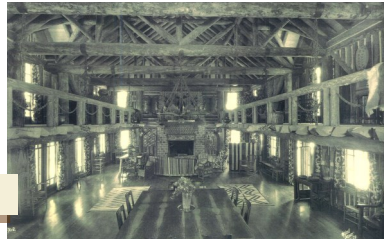
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# The Historic Buildings of La Foret

*Ponderosa Lodge*, the main residence on La Foret's property, was designed by Denver architect Jules Jacques Benois Benedict in 1928. It was constructed from native materials including lumber cut from the western slope of Pikes Peak. The six room building cost \$90,000 to build and was furnished with Mrs. Taylor's extensive collection of Southwestern artifacts and art.

**Ponderosa's Great Room**



**The Chapel**

*The Taylor Memorial Chapel*, built in memory of Frederick Morgan Pike Taylor in 1929, was designed by noted Santa Fe architect John Gaw Meem. Sited to take advantage of the majestic views of Pikes Peak, the mission style chapel also features a hand-carved beamed ceiling and hand painted altar and archways. Beautiful reredos created by Eugenie Shonnard rest behind the altar. The chapel bell was brought here from an old mission church in Santa Fe. The Chapel is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

*Juniper*, the cabin north of Ponderosa, which now houses the main office, housed Mrs. Taylor's butler and cook. Her chauffeur lived in the *Carriage House* and her nurse/maid in what is now *Aspir Inn*. Down the hill from her swimming pool was a cottage built for her guests and as her "home away from home". The cabin, also built by John Gaw Meem, was called "King's X", a term used for time out in children's games. Today it is known as *Blue Spruce Lodge*.

## La Foret Today

La Foret is now spread over approximately 430 acres; a parcel of land along Milam Road was sold in 1997 for a missionary retreat. The Dining Hall kitchen was completely remodeled in 1982, with an updated facelift including new walls in 2008. All of the cabins have new furniture, carpeted bedrooms, and beautifully refinished wood floors. Tannenbaum has been modified for wheelchair accessibility and a system of accessible walks to all of the major buildings installed. Today, two cabins, Indian Paintbrush and Kinnikinnick, boast full kitchens, and the bathrooms in the remaining cabins have all been updated. The lower dining hall now houses our Gift Shop, which features La Foret gear and other essentials. The Carriage House was completely gutted and refinished with a large, carpeted community meeting room and two accessible bathrooms. Our newest building, Inglis Hall was completed in 2001. This multi-purpose facility has a 210 person capacity and boasts a huge central fireplace, raised stage, sound system, and catering kitchen. Ponderosa Lodge is currently receiving funding to restore the building back to the original quality of 1928. La Foret is committed to retaining the ambience of the original Bemis Taylor summer residence throughout the camp, while modernizing our facilities for the convenience of all our guests.

## The Bemis Taylor Story

The La Foret Conference and Retreat Center is built around the facility which was originally the summer home of Mrs. Alice Bemis Taylor of Colorado Springs. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor began construction of their summer residence in 1927 on what was then more than 500 acres of property in the Black Forest northeast of Colorado Springs, although Mr. Taylor died before it was completed the following year.

**Ponderosa's Staircase**



Alice Bemis was born in Massachusetts in 1877 and came to Colorado Springs in 1881. She married Frederick Morgan Pike Taylor in 1903, and they adopted a daughter, Doree.

The Bemis Taylor family had a great history of community philanthropy. She constructed new buildings for the Colorado Springs Day Nursery and a library and theatre at Colorado College. She was also one of the benefactresses of the town's Fine Arts Center.

Mrs. Taylor died in 1942. Mrs. Taylor is buried along side her husband in the Evergreen Cemetery. The Bemis Taylor Foundation, formed after her death, donated La Foret to the RMC/UCC. The first cabin, Kinnikinnick, was built in 1948, and by the late 1950s, the camp looked much like it does today, with its 18 buildings nestled in the forest around a grand open meadow.