

= Briarcliff Lodge =

The Briarcliff Lodge was a luxury resort in the village of Briarcliff Manor , New York . It was a notable example of Tudor Revival architecture , and was one of the largest wooden structures in the United States . It was also the first hotel in Westchester County . Walter William Law had it built on his estate , and the Law family owned it until 1937 . When the lodge opened in 1902 , it was one of the largest resort hotels in the world . The lodge hosted presidents , royalty , and celebrities , and was the scene of numerous memorable occasions for visitors and local residents who attended weddings , receptions , and dances in the ballroom and dining room . For a long time , the lodge was situated among other businesses of Walter Law , including the Briarcliff Farms and Briarcliff Table Water Company .

In 1933 , the lodge ended year @-@ round service and housed a " health @-@ diet sanitarium " until the Edgewood Park School for Girls began operation there from 1937 to 1954 . From 1936 to 1939 , the lodge was run again as a hotel in the summer months while the school was closed . From 1955 to 1994 , The King 's College used the lodge building and built dormitories and academic buildings . Abandoned and unmaintained after 1994 , the Briarcliff Lodge was destroyed between 2003 and 2004 .

= = History = =

= = = Hotel = = =

Walter Law hired Pennsylvania architect Guy King to construct the Briarcliff Lodge on the highest point of Law 's estate . At its June 26 , 1902 opening , the Tudor Revival @-@ style building was a premier resort hotel with 93 rooms . The Olmsted Brothers , sons of the eminent landscape designer Frederick Law Olmsted , designed the lodge 's surrounding grounds , including a large hillside landscape garden with shady walks , winding drives , green lawns , and flowers . In 1903 , the lodge additionally began being used by Mary Elizabeth Dow as Mrs. Dow 's School . Walter Law gave Dow a 35 @-@ acre ( 14 ha ) property on Elm Road ( later the site of Briarcliff College and then a Pace University campus ) .

In 1907 , John Clark Udall oversaw construction of a north wing , increasing the number of rooms to 150 . In 1909 , Udall oversaw a 72 @-@ room seven @-@ story west wing , further increasing the rooms to 221 . In Germany , it was advertised in January 1909 that the management of the Briarcliff Lodge and its architect Guy King planned to construct the platform to launch and dock airships , to cost \$ 100 @,@ 000 . The platform would extend over the whole roof , and the tracks for the airship launch would be on an incline 105 meters long . The plans also included the purchase of a searchlight to guide the airships . A mooring mast for docking airships was constructed on top of the west wing , however no record exists of it having been used . The mooring mast nonetheless was the first built for docking airships .

There were two sets of greenhouses near the property ; one set behind Law 's home produced decorations for Law 's Briarcliff Farms , his house , the lodge , and workers ' houses . The other set , the Pierson Greenhouses , were used for growing the American Beauty rose and rare carnations , producing between 5 @,@ 000 and 8 @,@ 000 per week . Foreman George Romaine first propagated the Briarcliff rose there . The lodge also ran an annual American Beauty carnival , with events including a golf tournament , water sports , moonlight bathing and night diving , a dinner dance , cinema program , and a concert . During the lodge 's service , carriage transportation was provided for guests from the Scarborough and Briarcliff Manor train stations to the lodge .

The lodge had a large Roman @-@ style pool ; when it was built in 1912 , it was the largest outdoor pool in the world and was used for the 1924 Olympic trials . The Briarcliff Lodge was noted for its cuisine ( including Briarcliff dairy and table water ) , a golf course , fifteen tennis courts , a music room , theater , indoor swimming pool ( measuring 30 by 70 feet , with a depth of 4 to 10 feet ) , casino , library , stable , repair shops and a fleet of Fiat automobiles . The water tower at the

property was constructed by the Chicago Bridge & Iron Company . The grounds were decorated with Japanese lanterns that Law had obtained from missionaries . The lodge had elevator service and electric lighting . The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace held its National Conference on International Problems and Relations at the Briarcliff Lodge from May 10 ? 14 , 1926 .

In 1923 , a year before Walter Law 's death , the Law family leased the lodge to Chauncey Depew Steele for 20 years . Under Steele 's management , the lodge reached its prominence . The lodge also was opened to a wider variety of clientele , but continued to be known as a resort for the wealthy and famous . A 6 @, @ 500 @-@ yard ( 5 @, @ 900 m ) 18 @-@ hole golf course was completed in 1923 , designed by Devereux Emmet . In May 1925 , The New York Times reported that the Briarcliff Lodge installed the first artificial spa ; using radioactive mineral torbernite to affect the water , believed to counter ailments associated with old age . United States Senators Chauncey Depew , James Wolcott Wadsworth , Jr . , and Royal S. Copeland were to each place a bag containing the minerals into the lodge 's swimming pool . In June of that year , the newspaper mentioned in its report of an upcoming Briarcliff Lodge performance that the swimming pool was popular in the summer heat and that " the cool spring radioactive water gave considerable relief to several hundred guests " .

= = = Decline and lease = = =

The hotel declined during the 1930s . Walter Law 's son Henry ( also village mayor from 1918 to 1938 ) attributed the decline to the 1920 @-@ 1933 prohibition of alcohol . Another factor was the increasing usage of automobiles , as guests would be less inclined to stay throughout the summer . Steele ended up surrendering his lease in 1933 ; at the time the building was valued at \$ 750 @, @ 000 ( \$ 13 @. @ 7 million in 2015 ) . The lodge remained in use , housing a " health @-@ diet sanitarium " until the Edgewood Park School for Girls , a nonsectarian Christian college- and occupational @-@ preparatory school , leased the property in 1936 , and purchased it a year later ; at the time the lodge was valued at \$ 1 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 ( \$ 16 @. @ 5 million in 2015 ) . The lodge was run as a hotel in the summer months while the school was closed until 1939 . The Edgewood Park School operated there until 1954 .

In September 1955 , The New York Times reported that the lodge was being reopened as a 225 @-@ room resort ; after being purchased by a partnership led by Emanuel Shapiro , counsel for then @-@ New York Governor Thomas E. Dewey . It was assessed at \$ 400 @, @ 000 ( \$ 3 @. @ 53 million in 2015 ) at the time .

= = = College use , demolition , and current plans = = =

From 1955 to 1994 , The King 's College , a strictly Fundamentalist coeducational liberal arts college , relocated to the Briarcliff Lodge property . The school used the lodge building and built dormitories and academic buildings . During that time , in 1985 , the Lodge and the Briarcliff library were among 60 sites given historical markers by Westchester County Tricentennial Commission . The New York State Board of Regents closed the school in 1994 due to financial difficulties and a deficiency of qualified faculty . The original 1902 Briarcliff Lodge building burned to the ground on September 20 , 2003 shortly before its scheduled demolition , and contemporary portions of the lodge and other campus buildings were later demolished .

The site will be developed as the Club at Briarcliff Manor , what The New York Times has described as " a super @-@ luxury retirement community " , with up to \$ 2 million entrance fees . The Club was scheduled to open in 2013 and include tennis courts , a health spa , a Tudor @-@ style clubhouse , gardens , a surround @-@ sound theater , hiking trails , an indoor pool , a business center , a cocktail lounge , and multiple restaurants . As of 2010 , 65 people have put down deposits , although the Club is planned to include 325 residences , including thirteen houses , 24 townhouses , and 288 apartments . Briarcliff Manor 's village government took about five years to grant zoning changes , and several more years to approve the site plan .

The King 's College football and soccer field was replaced ( with a cost of \$ 1 @, @ 200 @, @ 0000

) and transferred to the village government around 2013 . The water tower will be replaced with a hydro @-@ pneumatic pump station ( with a cost of \$ 850 @,@ 000 ) .

= = Architecture = =

= = = Main building = = =

The Briarcliff Lodge was located on a 184 @-@ acre ( 74 ha ) site on the highest point of Law 's estate . The original wing was designed by Pennsylvania architect Guy King , on the highest point of Walter Law 's estate , which was about 600 feet above sea level and 29 miles ( 47 km ) north of New York City . The building 's first floor exterior walls were constructed of stones from nearby forests , and Indiana limestone was used for trimmings. the second floor exterior walls were decorated with richly colored half timber and pebbledash . The roof had red shingles and tall red brick chimneys . The main facade of the building was two stories high , while the third and fourth floor had many gables and dormer windows present on the roof . The overall design of the building was in the Tudor Revival @-@ style , and was described to be in " the fashion of the old English inns " . The building was 307 feet ( 94 m ) long and had 93 rooms . Each room had Colonial mahogany furniture , a long @-@ distance telephone , concealed fire escape , electric lights , and suction ventilators . As well , each room had an exterior wall with a window .

In 1902 , the hotel 's first floor held its reception rooms , parlors , dining rooms , library , and a lounge area called the Dutch kitchen , which had decorations and furnishings from Holland . Furniture was purchased from Law 's former employer W. & J. Sloane . Art and decorations throughout the building were largely were sourced from markets in Europe and Asia , and included expensive paintings , bronzes , marble sculptures , rare books , and carved antique furniture . The hotel also had a Chinese tea room and a dark room for amateur photographers . The kitchen was kept clean ( such that it was proposed to serve lunches in the kitchen ) . It was reported to be of elegant design , utilizing white tile and marble . The kitchen equipment was of white porcelain and aluminum , and included numerous glass @-@ lined refrigerators . It sourced its milk , butter , eggs , and vegetables from Briarcliff Farms . The kitchen 's trash was frozen to prevent odors before its eventual removal ; the lodge also had an ice @-@ producing plant that used sterilized well water .

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= = = Garage = = =

In its first operating year , a stable was built for the lodge , at the lodge 's south driveway about 100 yards from Scarborough Road . In 1909 an addition was built ( of 62 by 126 feet ) and the entire structure became used for an automobile garage . The interior of the old stable was replaced . The east end held a commercial kitchen , dining room , and a billiard and smoking room . The west end held a repair shop . The front of the building held supply rooms , closets , and an office . The upstairs held bedrooms and bathrooms for the chauffeurs .

= = = Other buildings = = =

Nearby the lodge was the amusement building , with a dance hall , swimming pool , bowling alley , squash court , and billiard room .

= = Notable guests = =

Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt were guests at the Briarcliff Lodge . In the early 1930s , Eleanor spoke there several times on behalf of the Women 's Democratic Club of Mount Pleasant ; her

daughter Anna Roosevelt Halsted was chairwoman of the club at the time . In 1930 , Franklin spoke there as New York Governor to the Westchester County Bankers Association .

John W. Davis , US Representative and nominee for President against Calvin Coolidge , visited the lodge in 1924 . US Senator Chauncey Depew visited in 1924 and 1927 . Composer and pianist Percy Grainger gave a recital at the ballroom of the lodge in 1925 .

The final German emperor Wilhelm II 's son Crown Prince Wilhelm was a guest at the Lodge for the 1909 Hudson @-@ Fulton Celebration . He led a Prussian regiment in a parade of fifty floats held in honor of the celebration in New York .

Other notable guests have included Thomas Edison , Tallulah Bankhead , Sarah Bernhardt , Boris Bakhmeteff , Johnny Weissmuller , Jimmy Walker , Babe Ruth , Edward S. Curtis , George B. Cortelyou , Mary Pickford , F. W. Woolworth , J. P. Morgan , Warner Baxter , Vincent Richards , and Ernestine Schumann @-@ Heink . Elihu Root , Al Smith , and a king of Siam were guests at the lodge in the 1920s , and John Campbell frequently hosted parties there .

= = Influences = =

In 1906 , Walter Law replaced the Briarcliff Manor railroad station and moved the original building to serve as Millwood 's station . The new Briarcliff station , now part of the village library , was modeled in the style of his Briarcliff Lodge , and had Mission style furniture , rugs , and flowers decorating the interior . Central Briarcliff West is a neighborhood which has a number of mansions built by 20th @-@ century millionaires who stayed at the Briarcliff Lodge and later built estates in the area . The Seven Sisters , a 1915 production , was filmed at the Briarcliff Lodge .