

Manitou Incline Timeline*

1903: The Pikes Peak Hydro-Electric Company constructs a tram up the east shoulder of Rocky Mountain to haul pipes, supplies and workers up the mountain to construct a pipeline from Ruxton Creek to the Manitou Hydroelectric Plant in Manitou Springs. This project was completed in late 1904 and the plant began operating in February 15, 1905.

1907: The Manitou Incline Railway Company was incorporated on November 14, by Dr. Newton N. Brumback and Charles Luther McKesson. Work begins on a new tourist funicular that same year and is finished and open for business on June 28, 1908.

1908: Fred Barr builds trails from the top of the Incline to nearby lookout points, and opens his burro livery at the upper station.

1912: Osa Fishback opens a photo concession at the upper pavilion, taking pictures of the arriving car load of tourists and printing postcards for sale by the time passengers are ready to ride back down.

1913: The upper station was nearly doubled in size, to accommodate a kitchen and restaurant. The governors of 22 States were entertained at the upper pavilion as guests of Dr. Brumback. The festivities included the governors competing in a burro race.

1914: The lower station and pavilion were destroyed by fire in December. They were rebuilt in time for the 1915 tourist season.

1915: Spencer Penrose buys the Incline and adds it to his entertainment enterprises.

1921: Fred Barr offers burro rides to the summit of Pikes Peak from the Incline's upper pavilion. These trips included an overnight stay at the newly completed Barr Camp and arrival at the summit in time for sunrise.

1924: Spencer Penrose consolidates his business holdings, including the Incline, into the El Pomar Investment Company.

1937: Julie and Spencer Penrose create the El Pomar Foundation with 15,000 shares in the El Pomar Investment Company.

1957: The second lower station and pavilion was torn down and replaced by a modern building.

1976: The passenger cars and the mechanism that hauled them up and down the track were replaced with completely new equipment. There was a flaw in the system that caused the train to stop if there was a surge in the electric power. This was corrected the next year with the installation of a backup diesel engine.

1988: The El Pomar Foundation sells controlling interest in the Incline to the Oklahoma Publishing Company. The cog railway and the Incline were merged into one company around this time.

1990: In January the owners announce the Incline would not open for that years tourist season. In the spring a rockslide destroyed about 500 feet of track.

1992: The upper pavilion, powerhouse and residential cabins were demolished and the rails removed. The ties were left in place.

1999: No trespassing signs are posted on the right of way. Never the less it becomes a popular route for physical training enthusiasts.

2011: The draft “Manitou Incline Site Development and Management Plan” released, 6 January.

2012: Colorado Springs City Council approves the legal opening of the Incline.

2013: Manitou Springs City Council approves the legal opening of the Incline. February 1, the Incline is opened to the public.

*On February 3, 2013 the Gazette published “TIMELINE: INCLINE HISTORY WINDS THROUGH A CENTURY”. Unfortunately there were several mistakes in that timeline. The timeline above is based on the research of many sources and is believed to be more accurate.