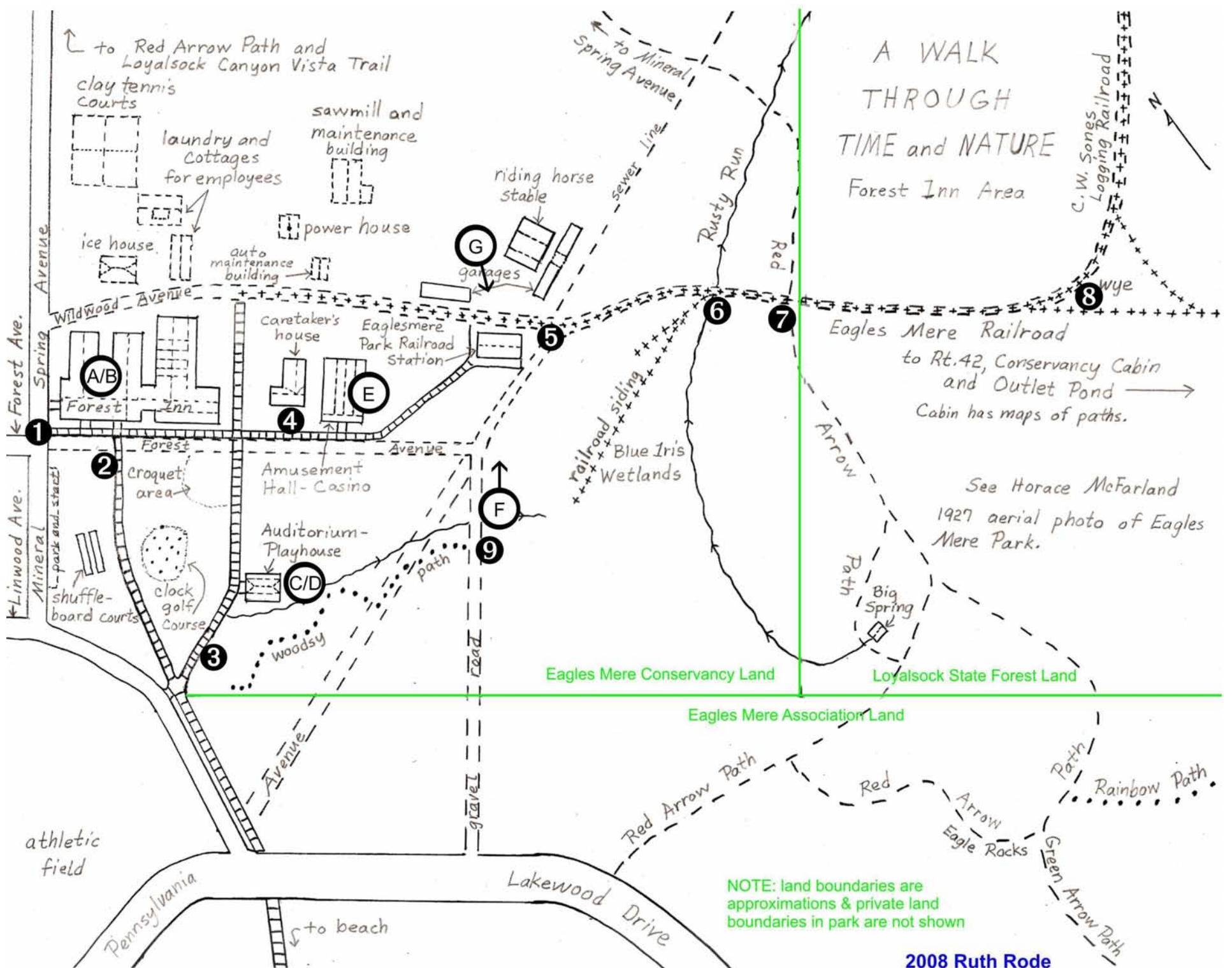




1927 Aerial View of Eagles Mere Park - Horace McFarland



2008 Ruth Rode

Time has allowed structures to come, change, and go over time. All are gone now, but their history will continue. Use the pictures, map, and description to visualize this area as you walk through time and nature.

Park beside Mineral Spring Avenue. Start the walk near the intersection of Mineral Spring Avenue and Forest Avenue ❶. Walk the old sidewalk along where Forest Avenue use to be. The Forest Inn, on your left, began as the Chautauqua Inn (photo A), built in 1899, and used for cultural-religious events. After this discontinued in 1902, the name changed to "The Forest Inn" for the 1903 season (photo B). By 1930, 54 cottages surrounded the inn and are now privately owned. The Forest Inn closed in 1967 and was demolished in November of 1978. *{The Forest Inn site has been turned into the Conservancy meadow. Follow the meadow path for a close-up view of the diverse grasses & wildflowers. The meadow is abundant with life, providing food & shelter for birds and other animals – please don't pick the flowers as many have been planted as a source*



The Forest Inn

B

of nectar for important pollinators.}

❷ Turn right and follow the sidewalk heading toward the beach. You will pass the shuffleboard courts on the right, which are still visible. Players used long-handled cues to shove disks into scoring areas marked on each end of their smooth surface. On the left side of the sidewalk was the clock-golf course putting green. Players had a starting point and putted to hole number one. Then they would put their ball beside number one and putt to hole number two. This process continued for the other numbered holes. Then hole numbers were changed to challenge the putting skills.

❸ Where the sidewalk meets Mineral Spring Avenue, turn left to pass by the site of the Playhouse, which started as the Chautauqua "Auditorium" (photo C). Silent movies were shown here in 1901. Then it provided formal theater

productions beginning in about 1929 and was remodeled and enlarged in 1940 (photo D). Alvina Krause's theater productions, which included some actors that became famous, were accommodated here from 1945 to 1964. The Playhouse closed after the summer season of 1969.

Continue on to meet the sidewalk which passes by the site of The Forest Inn. The croquet playing area was on the left. Players in this game used mallets to drive wooden balls through a series of wickets set



Eagles Mere Playhouse

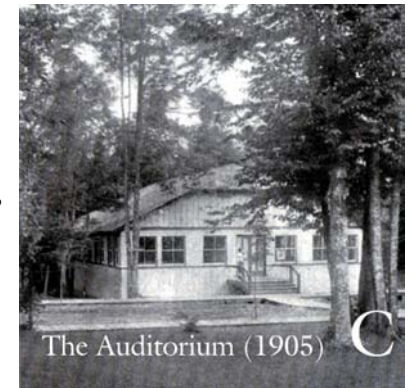
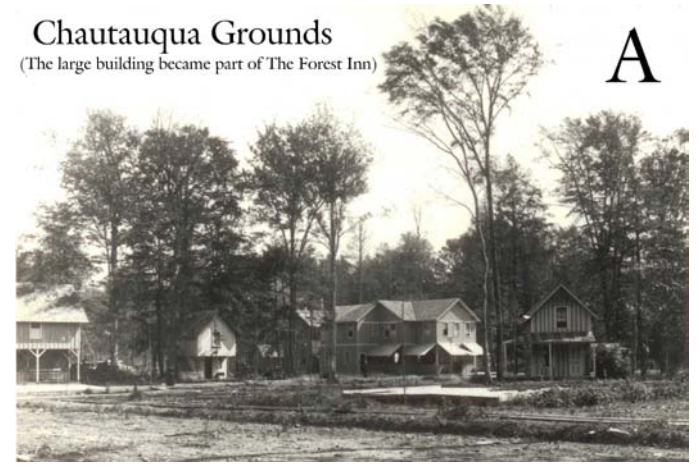
D

out on the lawn.

Chautauqua Grounds

(The large building became part of The Forest Inn)

A



The Auditorium (1905)

C



The Forest Inn Amusement Hall

E



Eagles Mere Park Station (1906)

④ Turn right to follow the old sidewalk past the site of the caretaker's house and the Recreation - Amusement Hall - Casino (photo E). This two story building was built in 1905. The first floor had four bowling alleys, shuffleboard courts, pool and billiard tables. Dances, plays, the Carnival Ball, and Hamburg Show used the large area on the second floor. This building was demolished in the spring of 1987.

Continue to the site of the Eagles Mere Park Railroad Station, located to the right where the sidewalk ends (photo F). This building served The Forest Inn and cottage guests from 1902 to 1924. Then it became known as "The Palace" and

housed male workers.

Behind the station is the bed of the Eagles Mere Railroad (+++). The narrow gauge Eagles Mere Railroad was built from Sonestown to Eagles Mere in 1892 and extended to the Forest Inn in 1902. This railroad ended passenger service in 1924 and closed in 1926. Later, the railroad grade became a bridle trail, and horses were kept in the barn near the garages. Photo G shows the train with the Forest Park station behind it.

⑤ Now you have several options for completing your walk. You may return to the start, follow part of an option and return to the start, or combine several options as follows: (1) Turn left and follow the railroad bed and Wildwood Avenue to Mineral Spring Avenue; (2) Turn right and follow the railroad bed to the path on the railroad siding where you can walk

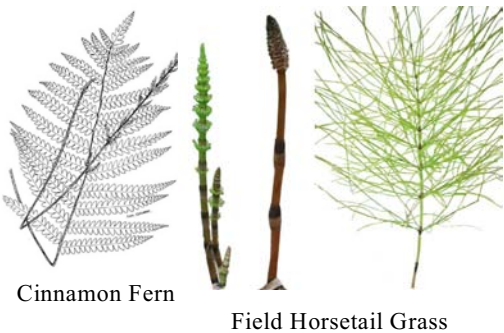
into the Blue Iris Wetlands. ⑥ This dead end path provides several views of the wetlands. The wild blue iris bloom around Father's Day. Cinnamon Fern, Shinleaf, and other bog plants can be seen along this path. Field Horsetail also grows abundantly in this area. This ancient & unique plant (see figure to left) has two distinctive types of stems: the fertile stem grows early in spring and looks somewhat like asparagus (leftmost two); the infertile stem appears in summer and looks like a feathery tail (rightmost); (3) Turn right and follow the railroad bed past the junction with the old Red Arrow Path ⑦. This and other arrow paths, developed for the hotel and cottage guests, have been maintained and mapped by the Eagles Mere Conservancy.

Maps are available at the cabin. Continue walking the grade to the wye ⑧. The portion of the wye

going off to your left is where Charles W. Sones connected his narrow gauge logging railroad to the Eagles Mere Railroad and extended his rails to Hillsgrove and Masten. The wye was used for turning trains around with a series of forward and backward movements. You may continue walking the railroad grade for about two miles to the Outlet Pond along Route 42 and the Eagles Mere Conservancy Cabin or walk the Red Arrow Path to Big Spring and on to Lakewood Drive; or (4) Turn right and follow the gravel road toward the lake. Look on the right for the site of Forest Avenue and then ⑨ the entrance to a woody path through a forest of Hemlock and White Pine Trees. Both conifer trees produce cones and are evergreens. Hemlocks, the Pennsylvania State Tree, have single flat needles. Their bark was peeled and used in the early tanneries to tan hides. White Pines and other pines have clusters of needles. White Pines have five needles per cluster. Their tall straight trunks were used as masts and spars on sailing ships. This path follows an old section of Pennsylvania Avenue and meanders through this evergreen forest to The Forest Inn lawn. You may avoid the woody path and continue on the gravel road to Lakewood Drive.



Eastern Hemlock



Cinnamon Fern

Field Horsetail Grass



EMRR Train (Park Station behind)



Wild Blue Iris



Shinleaf



White Pine