



Cheyenne Mountain Zoological Society

4250 Cheyenne Mountain Zoo Road | Colorado Springs, CO | 80906
(719) 633-9925 | info@cmzoo.org

Spencer Penrose

Spencer Penrose, the founder of Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, was an adventurer, entrepreneur and philanthropist. A native of Philadelphia, he came to Colorado in 1892 to seek his fortune at the urging of his boyhood friend, Charles L. Tutt. The two young men became partners in various real estate and mining ventures, principally in Cripple Creek. However, much of Mr. Penrose's great wealth came from his investment in the mining business in Bingham Canyon, Utah, where he established the Utah Copper Company, which would later merge with Kennecott Copper. The merger provided Mr. Penrose with both the money and time to pursue his various interests and hobbies.

Mr. Penrose enjoyed traveling the world with his wife, Julie, and being involved in projects around Colorado Springs. He is most closely associated with many of Colorado's famous landmarks including The [Broadmoor Hotel](#), the [Will Rogers Shrine of the Sun](#) and the [Pikes Peak Highway](#). Mr. Penrose also established the El Pomar Foundation, which still oversees generous charitable contributions made throughout Colorado today.

Mr. Penrose had a lifelong interest in animals. History reveals that the gift of a bear in 1916 inspired him to begin collecting exotic animals. Not a year went by from 1916 until his death that he did not add to his collection of animals. The collection included an elephant, a 12-foot boa constrictor, fox, deer and elk. Mr. Penrose's animal collection was housed at his Turkey Creek Ranch as well as at The Broadmoor Hotel in pens and cages located in front on the Golf Club and along the golf course itself.

In 1925, Mr. Penrose completed the highway up the eastern face on Cheyenne Mountain that leads to the Lodge at the summit. To promote use of the road, Mr. Penrose relocated his elk, bears and deer to the side of Cheyenne Mountain and founded Cheyenne Mountain Zoo in 1926. In June 1927, at the urging of the Board of Directors at The Broadmoor Hotel, the remainder of Mr. Penrose's exotic animal collection was relocated from the Broadmoor to the growing mountain Zoo—just in time for the start of the prestigious Trans-Mississippi Golf Tournament.



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In 1938, Mr. Penrose incorporated the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo as a nonprofit public trust for the people of Colorado Springs "for the sole purpose of establishing and maintaining a zoological park to provide recreation, education, conservation and scientific facilities in the field of zoology and related subjects, and to preserve the zoo in perpetuity for the people of the Pikes Peak region."

Cheyenne Mountain Zoo remains one of only a handful of accredited Zoos in the nation that does not received tax support for operations. The Zoo relies on admissions, memberships, grants and donations for its operations.

Today, Colorado residents proudly recognize America's only mountain zoo for its unique setting, spectacular views and noted animal collection. Situated at an elevation of 6,800 feet overlooking the Pikes Peak region, the Zoo spans 146 acres on the east side of Cheyenne Mountain. Since Mr. Penrose moved his collection to the mountainside, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo's living collection has grown to 1,088 animal specimens, representing 244 species, of which 31 are involved in a species survival plan.