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The  
*Greenbrier*<sup>®</sup>  
AMERICA'S RESORT

## HISTORY OF THE GREENBRIER

### Facts

Total Number of Rooms: 710

Designer of The Greenbrier: Dorothy Draper

Number of Presidents Visited: 28

Prior Resort Names: White Sulphur Springs

Ownership: The Justice Family

Number of acres: 11,000

Number of Team Members: Nearly 2,000

Oldest cottages/estate homes on property: Colonnade



### Verbiage

Welcome to The Greenbrier – America's Resort since 1778. More than two centuries ago in a valley nestled within the eternal majesty of the Allegheny Mountains in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, we pampered our first guests! And from that moment, until today, when you enter our grounds you become part of a haven rooted in hospitality and luxury.

### Eras of The Greenbrier

#### PRE-CIVIL WAR

The Greenbrier's history begins in 1778 when the first guests came to White Sulphur Springs to "take the waters" to restore their health. By the 1830s, The Greenbrier flourished with guests ranging from politicians, judges, editors, lawyers, diplomats, ministers, planters and merchants to five sitting presidents. The resort was accessed by stagecoach and consisted of cottages only. These included Paradise Row, Alabama Row, Baltimore Row and the Colonnade Estate House, which are still in use today. During this period, the resort's reputation as the great southern summer social gathering place was established.

#### POST CIVIL WAR

Construction of the C&O Railway made the resort accessible to a larger portion of the American population. The addition of The Old White Hotel greatly increased capacity and visitors from the Northeast and Midwest expanded the traditional Southern clientele. By the last quarter of the 19th century, "The White" (as longtime visitors called it) was a major American resort accommodating upwards of 1,600 to 1,800 guests in the summertime.

#### THE GREENBRIER HOTEL

The C&O Railway purchased the resort in 1910 and built The Greenbrier Hotel, which officially opened on October 1, 1913, and then commissioned famed golf architect Charles Blair Macdonald to design The Old White golf course in 1914. The railroad brought in thousands of guests from New York and Philadelphia, as well as Chicago and Detroit. Business boomed in the 1920s, leading to a major expansion of the hotel in 1930, including the signature North Entrance and the Mount Vernon-inspired Virginia Wing (home to today's Windsor Club). The Greenbrier's reputation as a golf destination was incalculably enhanced when Sam Snead joined the staff in 1936.

## **1940S**

Over the course of this decade, The Greenbrier went through several transformations beginning in 1941, when the U.S. State Department leased the hotel for seven months to house German, Japanese and Italian diplomats, who represented the countries with which the United States was at war. Once the diplomats departed, the U.S. Army purchased the entire resort and converted the hotel into a 2,000-bed hospital, which they renamed Ashford General Hospital. In the four years, 24,148 soldiers were admitted and treated. After the war, the C&O Railway regained ownership of the resort and Dorothy Draper, famed interior decorator, re-designed the entire resort. Even today, you see the vibrant colors, custom-designed patterns and wallpapers, black and white marble floors and magnificent furnishings created by Dorothy Draper and her successor, Carleton Varney.

## **1950S-1970S**

The U.S. government again approached The Greenbrier for assistance, this time in the construction of an Emergency Relocation Center, a bunker or fallout shelter, to be occupied by the U.S. Congress in case of war. The Bunker was constructed "in plain sight" with the addition of the West Virginia Wing. This project was kept a secret for 30 years, code-named Project Greek Island. The Greenbrier expanded its services during this time period, opening The Greenbrier Clinic in 1948, offering comprehensive diagnostic examinations. The Greenbrier Course, originally opened in 1924, was redesigned by Jack Nicklaus to bring it up to championship standards for the 1979 Ryder Cup Matches.

## **1980S - 1990S**

At the conclusion of the Cold War, an article in the Washington Post exposed the Bunker and ever since tours of the facility have become a memorable part of The Greenbrier experience. The Solheim Cup was played on the Greenbrier Course in 1994 and in 1999, the Meadows Course was redesigned by Bob Cupp.

## **2000S**

The Greenbrier Sporting Club began offering private residences in 2000 and the new infinity edge outdoor pool, offering expansive views of the Allegheny Mountains, opened in 2004. The Old White Course underwent a significant upgrade from 2002 through 2006. The Lobby Bar was created inside the hotel and Howard's Creek Lodge built along the fairway of #16 Old White, with a stunning view of Kate's Mountain.

## **THE JUSTICE FAMILY**

In the depths of the Great Recession of 2009 Jim Justice, originally from Beckley, W.Va., purchased The Greenbrier from the CSX Corporation and in short order began construction of The Casino Club and brought in a PGA TOUR event, The Greenbrier Classic. In a 12-month period, he also added the Sports Performance Center, the beautiful Center Court at Creekside and the inspirational Wedding Chapel, completed in September 2015. Once again, The Greenbrier was thriving.