Then and now: Baldwin estate was all-inclusive



A 1908 hand-colored postcard of the Tallac House. Photo/Private Collection



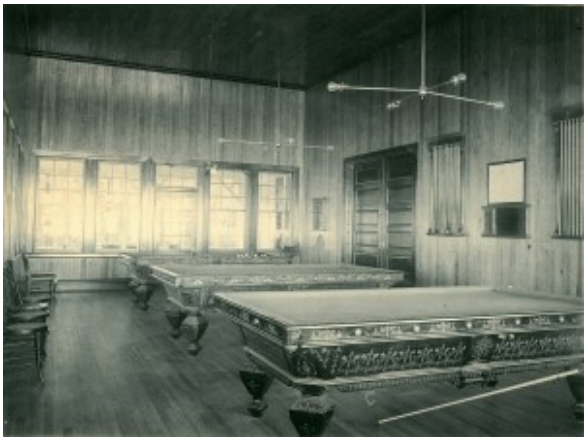
The same card postmarked at 5pm Aug. 4, 1908. Photo/Private Collection

Elias “Lucky” Baldwin opened his opulent Tallac House and Casino near Mount Tallac on the South Shore in 1899. It stood 3½ stories.

Boasting steam heat and electricity, this year-round favorite of the wealthy included a ballroom, a pool room, bowling alley, boathouse, and spectacular view.



Ballroom
Photo/Lake Tahoe Historical Society



Billiards room
Photo/Lake Tahoe Historical Society

Baldwin was adamant about protecting this forest land and he prohibited any logging. The tallest trees on the South



Bowling alley
Photo/Lake Tahoe Historical Society

Shore are on that land. Besides his Tahoe property, Baldwin’s imprint remains today on his Southern California properties which include Baldwin Park, Baldwin Hills, Santa Anita, Montebello, Sierra Madre, Arcadia, and Monrovia. He also built the Baldwin Theatre and Hotel in San Francisco.



Boat house
Photo/Lake Tahoe Historical Society

Baldwin died in 1909 at age 80 at his Arcadia ranch.



View from the Baldwin estate.

Photo/Lake Tahoe Historical Society

By 1927, the Tallac House was deteriorating and Lucky's daughter Anita ordered its destruction and then restoration of the site. The land was deeded to the U. S. Forest Service and is open to the public with seasonal historical tours, activities and exhibits.

– Bill Kingman