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Photos Available Upon Request

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### **Beehive Archive**

Welcome to the Beehive Archive—your weekly bite-sized look at some of the most pivotal—and peculiar—events in Utah history. With all of the history and none of the dust, the Beehive Archive is a fun way to catch up on Utah’s past. Beehive Archive is a production of the Utah Humanities Council, provided to local papers as a weekly feature article focusing on Utah history topics drawn from our award-winning radio series, which can be heard each week on [KCPW](#) and [Utah Public Radio](#).

### **Modern Tourism: The Comforts of Home in Nature**

***Utah’s booming tourism industry grew by attracting travelers with creature comforts that rivaled the scenery.***

In the early twentieth century, Utah’s exceptional landscape drew Americans seeking to connect with nature and untamed wilderness. Initially they came by stagecoach and train, but by the mid-1900s better roads and personal automobiles allowed people to travel independently to scenic destinations like national parks and monuments. The influx of tourists created the need for accommodation, so new motels began appearing throughout southern Utah.

At first, the motels served as simple rest stops for tourists coming to see the natural beauty of Utah’s parks. A 1957 travel guide lists several motels in “gateway towns” such as Cedar City, Moab, and St. George at an average price of \$6.50 per night! The guide touts Utah as the “center of scenic America” and urges visitors to come for an “unforgettable vacation.” But as competition grew, motels began advertising themselves as stand-alone destinations, with all the comforts and conveniences of home. In turn, tourists began to expect those conveniences. For example, one of the major complaints from tourists about a new information center in Zion National Park was the annoying lack of hamburgers and soft drinks.

So motels began to use those conveniences to lure travelers. In 1963, the Canyonlands Motel opened in remote Mexican Hat, Utah. Its brochure encouraged tourists to visit ancient ruins and the adjacent Navajo Reservation, and pointed them to nearby state and national parks. But its advertising focused just as heavily on the motel’s “complete travel facilities and accommodations,” including wall-to-wall carpeting, air-conditioning and heat, a shower and tub combination, and sliding doors to an outdoor swimming pool.

The need to accommodate tourists has only increased in subsequent years. Utah hosts millions of visitors who spend billions of dollars each year. They still vacation here to enjoy the natural beauty, but expect to return at night to an air-conditioned motel room. For the modern traveler, comfort and convenience might be just as important as the scenery.

*Beehive Archive is a production of the Utah Humanities Council. Sources consulted in the creation of the Beehive Archive and past episodes may be found at [www.utahhumanities.org/BeehiveArchive.htm](http://www.utahhumanities.org/BeehiveArchive.htm). Heidi Orchard © Utah Humanities Council 2014.*

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