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## **Louise "Lulie" Hitchcock: Matriarch of Aiken, South Carolina's Horsey Set**

During Reconstruction, increasing numbers of northern invalids and tourists began traveling into the south Atlantic states, especially during the winter months. Initially, residents in certain southern towns adapted their communities to welcome seasonal visitors. By the 1890s, however, entrepreneurs had created independent and self-contained resorts designed solely for the purpose of catering to upper-class men and women who placed increasing value on the quality and meaning of their time away from work and home. By the turn of the twentieth century, visitors cultivated homogeneous communities or, more accurately, "lifestyle enclaves," that they believed would help immunize themselves against the unhealthy aspects – both mental and physical – of modern urban life. Departing from the conventional view of an evolutionary and monolithic "leisure class," I argue that the winter resorters placed great importance on subtle distinctions among themselves and, by joining specific enclaves scattered throughout Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas, formulated individual and group identities based on particular social activities, everyday practices, and a collective "sense of place." For these reasons, the winter resorts marked temporal and geographic shifts in the manner and style in which certain North Americans incorporated sport and outdoor recreation into their lives.

Using primary sources from the local library and archives in Aiken, South Carolina and a variety of sources from the contemporary public discourse, this paper focuses on a single case study. I am interested in the manner in which Lulie Hitchcock helped form her particular winter colony by cultivating a distinctive lifestyle. As a child, Hitchcock associated her seasonal visits to Aiken with her physical and mental salvation; as a young woman she would selectively proselytize her faith in the town's attributes as an idyllic haven in the midst of industrial America. And as a mature woman, this devout Catholic served as the

unlikely nucleus for one of the premiere winter resorts in the south Atlantic states. Lulie's and her husband Thomas's wealth, cosmopolitan backgrounds, and devotion to sport placed them in the uncommon position of bringing together like-minded individuals from diverse sets of the western world's upper classes. The Hitchcocks not only cultivated friendships with men and women from the North and the South, but also with people from Great Britain, the Continent, and South America. As this international collection of resorters gathered each winter in Aiken, the Hitchcocks' home, Mon Repos, became the heart of this exclusive winter colony. Sport, especially horsemanship, served as the common denominator that united the Hitchcock's network of friends, what local residents fondly referred to as the "horsey set."

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Picnic after the Muffin Game