

**Worshipful Master**

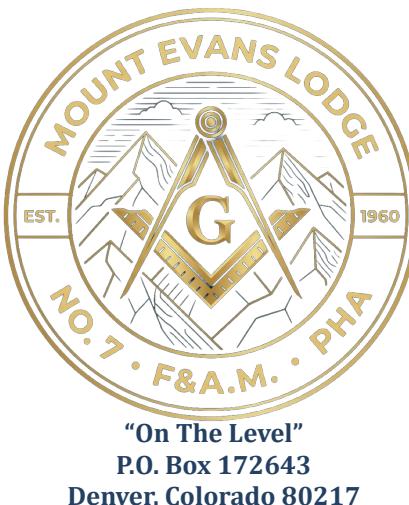
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**Stated Meetings: Second and Fourth Thursdays**

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John Evans

Mount Evans, located in the Front Range of Colorado, was named after John Evans, the second territorial governor of Colorado. He served from 1862 to 1865 and played a controversial role in the state's early history.

Evans is particularly noted for his involvement in the Sand Creek Massacre of 1864, where a group of Colorado militia attacked a peaceful camp of Cheyenne and Arapaho Native Americans, resulting in the deaths of many, including women and children. This event is considered one of the darkest chapters in American history and significantly tarnished Evans' reputation.

Despite this, Mount Evans, which reaches an elevation of 14,271 feet (4,350 meters), was named in his honor in 1895. The peak is one of Colorado's 14ers and is one of the most accessible mountains at that elevation, thanks to a paved road that leads to the summit.

Yes, John Evans' actions and beliefs suggest that he held racist views, particularly toward Native Americans. His legacy is deeply tied to his role in the Sand Creek Massacre of 1864, an event that has been widely condemned for its brutal and discriminatory treatment of Native American people.

As the territorial governor of Colorado, Evans played a key role in the political climate that led to the massacre. The massacre occurred when a group of Colorado militia, under the command of Colonel John Chivington, attacked a peaceful Cheyenne and Arapaho camp near Sand Creek in southeastern Colorado. While Evans was not directly involved in the massacre, he had encouraged violent actions against Native Americans, and the massacre was carried out under his watch. His failure to intervene or prevent the atrocity further implicates him in its tragic outcome.

Evans, along with many other settlers and officials of that era, viewed Native Americans as obstacles to westward expansion and believed that their removal or destruction was necessary for progress. In fact, Evans was a proponent of policies that pushed Native Americans off their ancestral lands, advocating for a strategy of assimilation or removal, often leading to violence and suffering.

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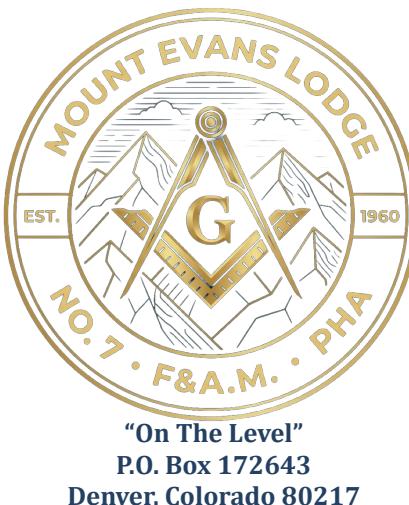
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In the aftermath of the massacre, Evans faced criticism and was ultimately forced to resign as governor, though he never fully faced accountability for his role in the events. While the massacre is a key part of his legacy, it's also important to note that Evans supported various scientific and educational initiatives in Colorado, including founding the University of Denver. However, the brutality of his treatment of Native Americans overshadows these other contributions.

His actions and the policies he supported are considered to be a product of the broader, systemic racism that was prevalent during that time, particularly in the context of American settler colonialism and the expansion into Native American territories.

The decision to name Mount Evans Lodge #7 after John Evans, the controversial territorial governor of Colorado, likely reflects the historical context of the time when the lodge was established, rather than an endorsement of his actions or legacy. The naming of Masonic lodges often draws on geographical locations, historical figures, or symbolic ideas, and in this case, Mount Evans—a prominent peak in the Colorado Rockies—was chosen as the name for the lodge, as it is an iconic landmark in the area.

The use of Mount Evans as a name does not necessarily imply admiration for John Evans personally. Instead, it could have been based on the mountain's significance in Colorado, serving as a central feature of the region's geography. Masonic lodges are often named after notable locations, and many are named after places or individuals that hold a symbolic or geographical importance, rather than endorsing the character or actions of the individuals associated with those names.

However, it's true that John Evans himself, as I noted earlier, was a deeply controversial figure, particularly because of his involvement in the Sand Creek Massacre, and it raises important questions about the historical legacies we choose to honor. Given that the lodge is likely named for the mountain, it's possible that the people involved in naming it were either unaware of or chose not to fully consider Evans' more problematic aspects.

In modern times, this kind of historical complexity may provoke reflection or even reconsideration about the names of institutions, landmarks, or organizations. If there were members of the lodge who felt conflicted about this historical association, it's also possible that the lodge's name could be the subject of ongoing conversation or change.

It's worth noting that Masonic lodges do sometimes reevaluate their histories and names, and this could be something that the members of Mount Evans Lodge #7 have discussed or will discuss in the future. Would you like to explore any further on this topic, or perhaps discuss how lodges and their names often evolve over time?

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