

201,498 campers and 759,348 picknickers. In our forests, there were 1,840,378 sightseers, 256,510 campers and 857,146 picnickers.

A primary purpose of our forests, our parks and our recreation areas of course is to provide our Maryland citizens with the facilities they need for health-giving recreation and enjoyment. There is another reason for stimulating interest in recreation, a reason which is important both socially and economically. Maryland during the past few years has developed an acute awareness of the importance of tourism in its economy. Each year more and more tourists visit our State, spending their money with us and helping to increase the income of our people.

An example of the popularity of our State with out-of-state motorists is to be found in the record that was kept last year for the recreation area in Cedarville State Forest, situated on U.S. Route 301 in Southern Maryland. This area has become a favorite stopping point for tourists throughout the country, and throughout the world, who visit our nation's capital. Last year, Cedarville had campers from 43 states and the District of Columbia, along with tourists from four foreign countries—Canada, Germany, Sweden and England.

The increase in tourism and the heightened awareness on the part of our own citizens in the State's recreational facilities are most encouraging. During the 12 years which have passed since the first Governor's Conference on Recreation and Parks was held, Maryland has done its utmost to provide adequate parks and outdoor areas to fill the needs of its citizens and its visitors. We have tried—and I think we have been successful—to improve existing facilities and to acquire new ones. We have given whatever practical assistance we could to all phases of our park and recreational program.

Government at the country and local level has joined with your State government in an effort to improve these recreational services. A recreation specialist in the Department of Forests and Parks spends his full time in assisting the political subdivisions to establish recreational areas. Dorchester County, which has been trying with great success to improve its economy at attracting new industrial plants.

As most of you know, I have reappointed a committee which is studying and preparing a master plan for the acquisition and development of parks and recreational areas. It is on the basis of its recommendations that state parks and recreational areas are being expanded and improved. The budget which I submitted, and which the General Assembly approved at its recent session, provided substantial allot-