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# Desert

OCTOBER 1968 50c

WESTERN TRAVEL / ADVENTURE / LIVING



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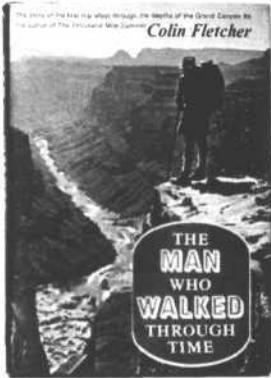
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**GEM, MINERAL AND 4-WHEEL-DRIVE MAPS** compiled by Dale Hileman. Maps showing gem and mineral collecting areas, roads for passenger cars and 4WD roads only. Map No. 1 is on Last Chance Canyon, Mesquite Canyon and Iron Canyon in Kern County. Map No. 2 covers the Opal Mountain and Black Canyon areas in San Bernardino County. Both are black and red colors on 16x17-inch parchment paper. \$1.00 per map.

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# DESERT

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### OCTOBER COLOR PHOTOS

The cover photograph of Bodie, California, by Robert F. Campbell, Concord, California, illustrates Pat Holmes' article on the famous gold-rush community in this issue. The inside photograph of the Colorado River below Hoover (Boulder) Dam in Nevada is by C. M. Montgomery, Las Vegas, New Mexico. The back cover is Dawn on the Desert from our photo files.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## MAMMALS OF DEEP CANYON

By R. Mark Ryan

Near the northwestern corner of the Colorado Desert, Deep Canyon extends from the Santa Rosa Mountains to Palm Desert, California, home of DESERT Magazine.

In Deep Canyon and its immediate vicinity, extending from sea level to 10,000 feet, are more than 40 species of wild mammals, plus a cross-section of flora. The Colorado Desert, and particularly Deep Canyon, is considered representative of "true" desert climate and is the only one on the North American continent similar to other deserts around the world.

Ecological studies performed in this area, therefore can be compared to similar studies in the major deserts of South America, Australia, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. It is for this reason the University of California in 1960 established the Deep Canyon Research Area and a 10,000-acre preserve.

Results of studies conducted at the Research Center during the past eight years are contained in the interesting book, *Mammals of Deep Canyon*. The first part of the book describes the physical and climatic features of the Colorado Desert, while the latter part deals with the birds and animals of the area, including description, habits and the effect they have on the arid land. Paperback, illustrated, 137 pages, \$2.95.

## THE MAN WHO WALKED THROUGH TIME

By Colin Fletcher

Carrying a 60-pound pack on his back, Colin Fletcher spent two months hiking alone through the Grand Canyon, a physical feat which few men today could accomplish.

But his was more than a physical endurance test, and his book is more than his experiences of meeting wild horses and burros, big horn sheep, discovering an ancient Indian encampment and fighting the elements of heat, rain and snow.

*The Man Who Walked Through Time* is a spiritual odyssey of a man who lived simply and in solitude for two months, immersed in the beauty, vastness and silence of one of Nature's greatest creations. As William Hogan, in his review in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, stated, ". . . a Thoreau-like prose, laced with that of both John Muir and Hemingway . . . one of the most remarkable outdoor journals I have ever read."

Here is one of the author's observations:

"And presently, when the fear (of the adventure) had begun to subside, I saw that my decision to walk through the Canyon could mean more than I knew. I saw that by going down into that huge fissure in the face of the earth, deep into the space and the silence and the solitude, I might come as close as we can get at present to moving back and down through the smooth and apparently impenetrable face of time.

"If I could contribute enough, the journey might teach me in the end, with a certainty no book can give, how the centuries have built the world we know . . . I did not understand there under the juniper tree, how this vision would fit into my own small life. But it did not matter, I understood enough."

Born in Wales and educated in England, Fletcher now lives in California. An expert hiker, he is the author of one pre-

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vious book, *The Thousand Mile Summer*, a description of his solitary walk through the desert and Sierra country of California. Hardcover, illustrated, 239 pages, \$5.95.

## PIONEERS OF THE WESTERN FRONTIER

By Harriett Farnsworth

The Old West isn't really so old. Still living today are prospectors and adventurers who took part in the wild and roaring days of mining in California.

Realizing it may "be too late tomorrow," the author traveled thousands of miles to find the old-timers and interview them. Through their eyes, she brings to life in a series of reminiscences, the world as it was way back when.

Included among the old-timers are 103-year-old Viola May Rush, Lady Miner of the Bradshaws; Hard Rock Anna of Oatman, Arizona; Charlie Williams, 93, who tells of fabulous gold strikes, and many others. Author of a previous book, *Remnants of the Old West*, Mrs. Farnsworth has been an active collector of Western Americana for more than 30 years. Hardcover, eight pages of photographs, \$2.95.

## GEM, MINERAL AND 4-WHEEL-DRIVE MAPS

Compiled by Dale Hileman

Two new maps for back country explorers have been compiled by the Hileman Map Company. Both are in black and red colors on 16x17-inch parchment paper and are \$1.00 per map.

The maps show gem and mineral collecting areas, paved and gravel roads for passenger cars only, and other roads passable only by 4-wheel-drive vehicles.

Map Number 1 is on the Last Chance Canyon, Mesquite Canyon and Iron Canyon in Kern County's El Paso Mountain area. Map Number 2 covers the Opal Mountain and Black Canyon areas near Barstow in San Bernardino County. (See DESERT, May '67) Please order by either Map No. 1, or Map No. 2.



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**Shepherd's Christmas**—Merry Christmas and a New Year chuck full of Happiness—Hopkinson



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**"I will lift up mine eyes..."**—May the Peace and Joy of Christmas, etc.—Atkeson



T879

**Friendship at Christmas**—A friendly wish for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year—Lee



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**Peaceful Morning**—May you have the Spirit of Christmas which is Peace, etc.—Thomas



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**Thinking of you this Christmas Night**—and wishing you Happiness, etc.—Hopkinson

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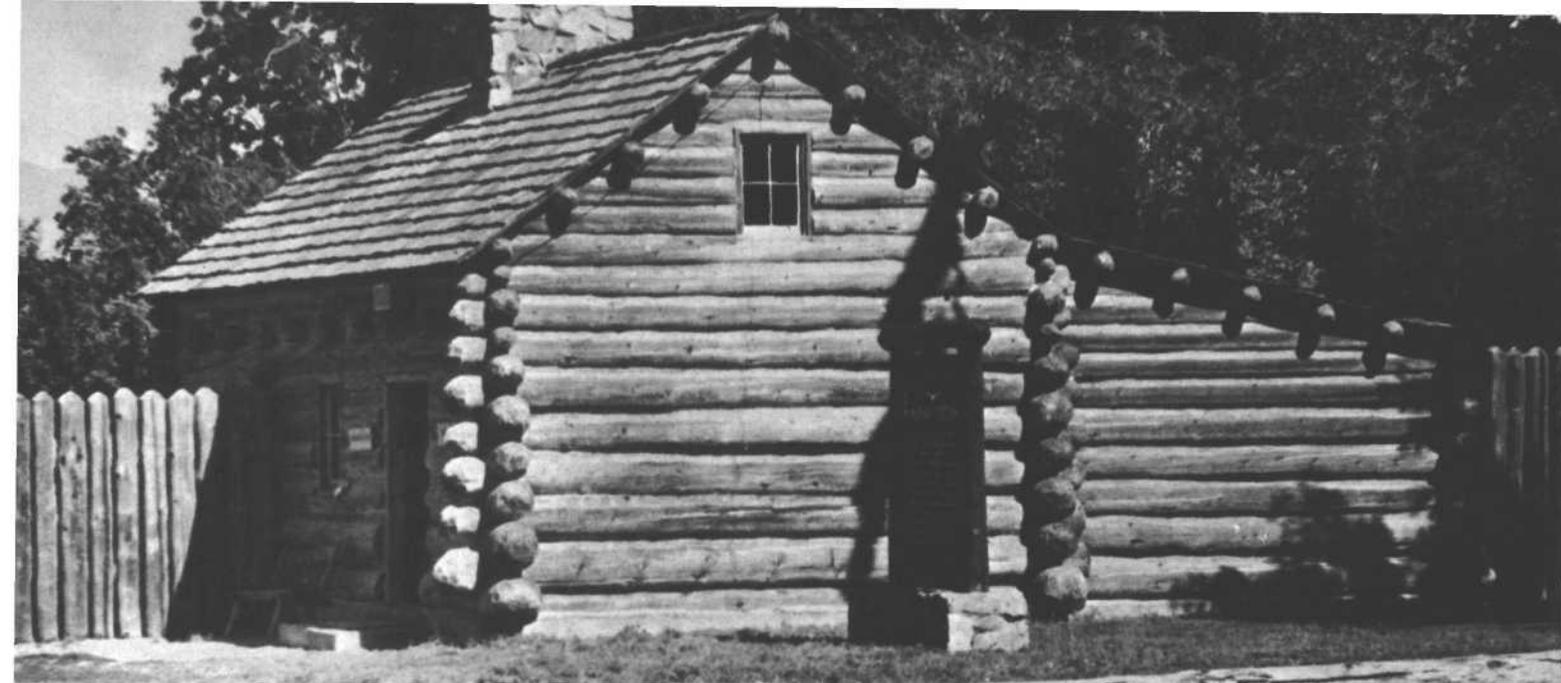
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# GENOA

*Authentic reproduction of the  
old log building and stockade*

by John L. Robie



OMBINING THE charm of the past, the opportunities of the present and the expectations of the future, Genoa is Nevada's oldest community.

With its historical exhibits, Nevada State Park and friendly citizens, it is located only a short distance from Reno.

Genoa is situated one and one-half miles west of Highway 395, between the towns of Carson City and Minden, Nevada. The turn-off is two miles north of Minden. The Sierra Nevada Mountains rise 3,000 feet above the valley floor reaching an elevation 10,000 feet above sea level. Jobs Peak to the south of town pushes 10,500 feet up into the blue sky. Carson Valley spreads out to the distant Pine Nut Mountains in the east. This community, its friendly citizens, and its State Park is one of the most delightful places to visit in all of Nevada.

Genoa was first named Mormon Station. It was started in the spring of 1850, when a group of men under the direction of Ezra Taft Benson stopped by a flowing spring just west of the Carson River. They built a roofless, 20x60-foot, two-room house out of logs, and opened a supply station. The party was

under the leadership of Captain DeMont, with Hampton S. Beaties serving as clerk. When the walls of the house were completed, and a corral for livestock was constructed, Mormon Station opened for business selling needed provisions to passing travelers at exorbitant prices. Flour and sugar sold for \$2 per pound, and fresh beef brought \$1 a pound.

In 1851, John Reese and his brother Enoch purchased Mormon Station and moved in with 10 to 12 wagons loaded with goods and supplies. A combination two-story, store, hotel, and stockade were made from the original start at a cost of over \$2,000. They plowed the ground, raising grain, hay, and vegetables. Their nephew and partner, Stephen Kinsey, said: "On the Fourth of July, we raised the American flag on this side of the Sierras, and took possession of the lands and grounds."

As Mormon Station was the main supply center in the territory, it became an important station for both the Pony Express and the Overland State routes between Salt Lake City and Sacramento. In 1854, 213 wagons, 360 horses, 750 head of cattle, and 7100 sheep passed over the road.

On November 12, 1851, the first attempt at setting up a local government

was made, and a series of meetings followed. The citizens petitioned the Surveyor General to find out whether their lands lay in California or Utah. On December 15, 1852 he reported, (in the California Senate Journal of 1853) "I was reluctantly forced to the conclusion that the valley was from 10 to 15 miles outside of the State of California." Since they did not belong to California, and Salt Lake City was a long, long way off, the citizens government continued to function.

In 1855, Judge Orson Hyde renamed Mormon Station, calling it Genoa, after the birthplace of Christopher Columbus. In 1857 the Mormon settlers were called to return to Salt Lake. They sold their belongings and left. Even though they had been the founders, their going did not disrupt the economy of Genoa. The year 1858 brought further development to the growing community. The Territorial Enterprise started, and the telegraph came in from Placerville on the other side of the Sierras.

In 1850, \$400 was furnished by the Methodist Church Mission to start a work in Genoa. In the latter part of 1860, Reverend L. S. Bateman was appointed to this charge. A lot and an unfinished,

roofless building in the center of town was purchased with the money. In referring to this transaction the local newspaper commented: "The Church at once proceeded to raise the roof," . . . and then it added this little gem . . . "Nothing Genoa needs more than a church."

Genoa did not develop into the large and prosperous town that was envisioned by some of its founders. Like most Nevada towns, it has had its joys and its tragedies. Fire nearly destroyed the place in 1910, but enough of it was saved so that today it has the charm and the atmosphere of the early days.

The Nevada State Park Commission reconstructed the original building and stockade. Inside the log wall they have built a picnic area, and just to the north a small, but well-equipped campground. The building houses a well-displayed collection of early-day tools and household goods, telling the story of those who first settled this part of the West.

Genoa is not a dead ghost town, but very much alive, and is moving ahead with the times. However, through careful planning they are wisely retaining the best of the Old West. □



*Inside the old trading post are tools and furniture used by the early day settlers.*



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# A Trip to TROPICO

by Jack Pepper



Do you want to go back in history 100 years? Would you like to escape from the hectic life of television, freeway traffic, smog and nerve racking noise? Would you like to relive the days when men gambled their lives against overwhelming odds in their endless search for gold and silver?

You do not have to have a time machine to transport you back to this historic era. All you need is a horseless carriage, which, in two hours time, will take you

from Los Angeles to the Tehachapi Mountains in the Mojave Desert.

Your final stage stop is Burton's Tropic Mine and Gold Camp, between Lancaster and Mojave in Kern County. Devoid of noise and commercialism and the carnival-like atmosphere which cheapens many of California's attractions, the Tropic Gold Camp is, as the old timers would say, "completely gen-u-wine."

It is the only hard-rock gold mine in the West where informative guides take you from the surface down through shored-up tunnels and explain how more

than \$8,000,000 in gold was taken out of the ground until the mine was finally closed in 1956. It was the victim of World War II and inflationary costs of operation. Even today it is estimated the tailings from the mine, which can be seen from the mill, contain an estimated quarter-million dollars of gold, but it would cost \$300,000 for its recovery.

For two years the buildings stood empty and silent. Water seeped through most of the tunnels in the mine, and the walls of the giant stamp mill began to fall. Pack rats and jack rabbits were the only inhabitants.

Finally, Glen and Dorene Settle decided to restore the operation and reopen it as a tourist attraction. Dorene's father, H. Clifford Burton, and his brother, Cecil, operated the mine during its most productive years. Glen was born in the living quarters of the 1876 Southern Pacific depot—since moved to Gold Camp.

Today the complex consists of the huge mine with 10 miles of underground tunneling—the largest gold recovery mill in Southern California, and Gold Camp. The Settles insist upon authenticity. Everything in Gold Camp is exactly as it was in the days of the Old West.

Since reopening the operation, the Settles have spent 20 years collecting buildings and artifacts throughout the West until today Gold Camp is a complete town of the past.

Browsing through Gold Camp you find the one-room school house built in 1828 during President Arthur's term, still standing as it once did in Palmdale. Along the main street is the old post office with its ornate grillwork. Off to the side is the barber shop with a Saturday night bathtub in the rear and a dentist's chair with its foot-pedal drill.

The assayer office building contains all the equipment for gold analysis just as it did when Tropic was in its heyday. Along the way, main street is lined with



*Glen and Doreen Settle, operators of Tropic Gold Camp and Mine, show Patricia Sager, center, how to operate an old tobacco cutter. Behind them is the general store, one of the dozens of old authentic buildings in Gold Camp.*



*Panning for gold is a favorite pastime for eager "prospectors" of all ages.*

*A fortune in gold, silver and jewelry can be seen in this old bank vault. It is one of the many exhibits set in natural surroundings in the Tropic Museum.*

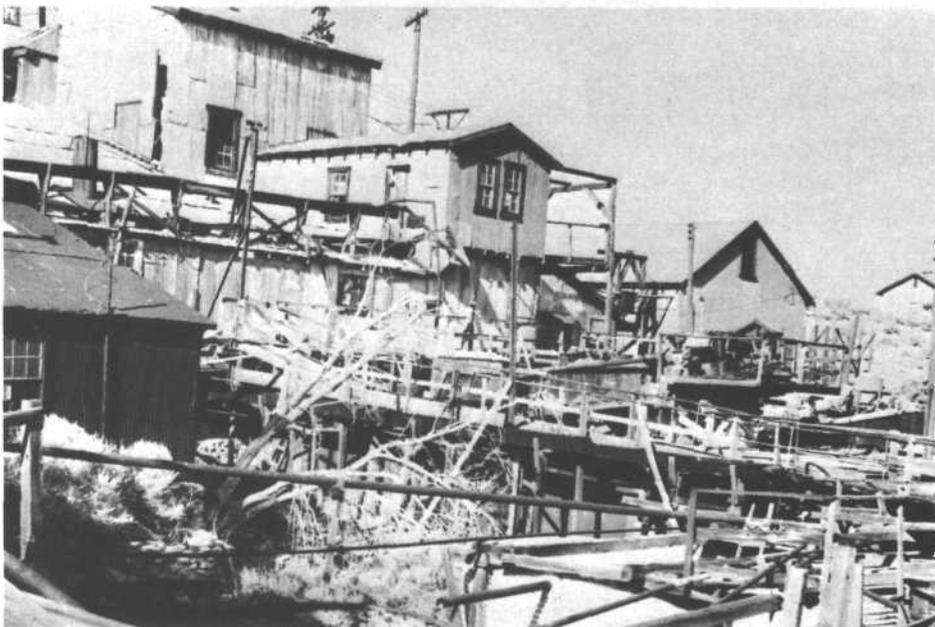


*During a tour of the Mine and Mill, a guide tells visitors how gold, blasted from the mountain, was separated from the ore, poured into iron containers, and shipped as ingots to San Francisco by Wells-Fargo. This is the Assay office.*

#### TROPICO TIME SCHEDULE

Guided tours through the Tropico Mine and Mill are being conducted during the summer, but the Gold Camp and Tropico Museum will not open until October 5, and then only on weekends and legal holidays. During the winter season the Mine and Mill **ONLY** are open all week, except Tuesdays and Wed-

nesdays. Hours for all are 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets for tours of the Mine and Mill or the Gold Camp and Museum are each \$1.00 for adults and 75 cents for children under 11. For all tours it is \$1.75 for adults and \$1.00 for children. Tropico is off State Highway 14 near Rosamond, Calif.



*Today visitors see the giant Custom Mill as a maze of steel and wooden planks. The largest of its kind in Southern California, it ceased operation in 1956, after processing more than \$8,000,000 in gold bullion. The Mine is above the Mill.*

old ore wagons, gold furnaces and relics of the past. Inside the miners' general store is merchandise ranging from mouse traps to ladies dresses. Alongside the general store is the miners' hall with its old piano, Victrola and slot machines.

Other historic interests in Gold Camp include the livery stable, blacksmith shop, narrow gauge railroad cars, Indian Hut and old bottle collections. The Indian Hut contains artifacts, plus an excellent collection of pictographs and petroglyphs recreated by artist Charles La Monk.

In the Gold Camp Museum, the Settles have amassed one of the finest collections of Americana in the West. The historic collection is displayed throughout the museum in such a way as to make visitors feel they have returned to the days of yesterday. The main attraction in the old pioneer building is a safe containing a fortune in gold, silver and jewelry.

Tours through the Tropico mine and custom mill are conducted by guides who explain how gold ore was blasted out of the solid rock by the use of dynamite. Emerging from one of the mine shafts you see the huge glory hole and a view of the valley below.

In the custom mill, guides explain how the gold ore was processed and the "color" extracted from the ore. Giant ball mills stand motionless below the ore chutes and the assayer's sample room. You see the gold room where gold was removed from the solution, and the furnace room where the precipitated gold was collected in sacks and thrown into crucibles and, finally, the empty containers into which molten gold was once poured to form ingots which were shipped to San Francisco by Wells-Fargo stage.

Gold Camp really comes alive each March when the Annual World Championship Gold Panning Contest is staged with children and adults competing for the prizes. The event commemorates the discovery of gold in Southern California in March, 1842. In addition to the panning contest there are other events such as burro races.

As you drive through the gates of Gold Camp, leaving the world of yesterday and returning to the present, you will take with you a greater understanding of the days of the Old West—and of the men who spent their lives in the never ending search for gold. □

# A ROYAL TREASURE VAULT?

by Richard Taylor



MYSTERIOUS cave containing the skeletons of seven tall men and a possible treasure trove may still be intact in southern Arizona. In

an 1892 edition of the *Phoenix Herald*, a man by the name of Andrew Pauly related the following story:

"I was with a party of seven wagons. We were on our way to California and I was writing an account of the trip for the *Tribune*. When we got to Maricopa Wells we laid over to let the stock rest and pick up on the good grass that was to be found there that year.

"About the third day two of our best mares were stolen by the Indians, and it became my duty to go after them. Taking a rifle and some dried meat, I struck out on the trail. This ran north in the direction of where I had been told there were a few white settlers living. I followed along all day and came to a river. There the Indians had stopped and made a small fire. I crossed the river and followed a trail to the north. I saw a large smoke off to the left and concluded that there was where the settlement was. Well, I followed that trail till I got so footsore and thirsty that I couldn't go any further and then I turned back, hoping to reach the settlement.

"I didn't keep on the same trail back, but turned off onto one that seemed to make for a pass in the hills directly towards where I had seen smoke. It proved that that trail wasn't any trail and I soon got lost in the cactus and red rocks that seemed to close in around me. After a while I got to some red cliffs where there was a large needle rock sticking up. The shade of the cliffs was refreshing and I stopped and rested.

"While I was there, I noticed a most peculiar appearance on the face of the

rock in one of the remote recesses or clefts of the cliff up which I had gone looking for water, which gave me the impression that it was the work of some human hand. It looked like a small door cut in the rock and again skillfully closed by some dusty material. I was too thirsty to have any curiosity then so I pulled on for the top of the range. When I got to the top I saw smoke again, off to the westward. This revived me so that I was able to travel quite a distance, but finally I had to give up. I couldn't drag along any farther and I was just about done up."

Fortunately, Pauly was saved by a local rancher who found him in time. The rancher and his men were also able to apprehend the band of Indians and retrieve Pauly's horses. When he returned to the camp at Maricopa Wells, he didn't tell anyone about the small door he'd seen carved in the cliff face. A short time later he returned to the cave and found the material covering its mouth was very old cement. It was very hard and it took him five days to make an opening through which he could pass.

Inside he found a chamber cut in solid rock. The man-made cavern was about 20 feet wide, 40 feet long and 10 feet high. On the floor were seven large skeletons of men who must have been about seven feet tall. With them were copper shields,

copper spear heads and battle axes, indicating that they must have been warriors. Also, Pauly found a small gold amulet of very curious workmanship.

Upon investigating the far end of the chamber, he discovered a bronze door about two feet by three feet in size. It fit perfectly into the opening and could not readily be removed. When struck, it sounded as if it were either very thick or set against something very solid.

Pauly thought he'd located the treasure vault of an ancient royalty and stated that he planned to return to remove the bronze door to the vault. There's no record of him having done this, so it's quite likely that he never finished the job. This mysterious vault may still be intact, guarded by the bronze door, somewhere near Maricopa Wells in Arizona.

According to archaeologists, the Salt River Valley, of which Phoenix is the center, was once the site of an ancient civilization. Ancient smelters and mines have been found in the valley but the precious metals they produced have never been discovered; therefore, it stands to reason that there must be quantities of prehistoric treasures still buried or hidden in remote areas of this valley. A little research could turn up lots of worthwhile prospects for treasure hunters and amateur archaeologists interested in this area. □

WHEREVER YOU GO

# treasures



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# FINDERS KEEPERS

Take 100 youngsters full of inexhaustible energy and 300 eager adults armed with metal detectors on a three-day weekend in the Mojave Desert and you produce the first Treasure Hunters Convention.

Sponsored by the Prospectors' Club of Southern California near California City, the meeting was attended by treasure hunters and their families from throughout the West. Although comparatively new, metal detecting is rapidly becoming as popular as rock hounding and bottle collecting. For the definition of "treasure" see **You, Too, Can Become A Treasure Hunter!** in this issue.

In the case of the Prospectors' Club Convention the treasures were metal washers of various sizes buried secretly throughout a half acre of desert by California City's Boy Scout Troop 413. Just to make things more difficult, they scraped the area to obliterate signs of the buried washers.





For four hours on two afternoons the contestants searched the area, stopping now and then as the buzz or whine of their detectors indicated they had found a washer. The washers were later exchanged for prizes. Each evening, around the community campfire, they discussed the performance of the many types of metal detectors. All agreed practice in metal detecting is as important as the type of instrument.

The mornings were for the kids. Early each day officials scattered several hundred nickels throughout a fenced-off area near camp. When the whistle blew and the gate opened, the youngsters swarmed over the area picking up the loot. Afterward, the ice cream and soda pop booth did a land-office business. Success of the first annual Treasure Hunters Convention is indicative of the increasing popularity of metal detecting. Thousands of families today are searching the beaches, mountains and deserts for lost coins.

Left to right, top row: Owena Kettredge wears Spanish sun hat . . . Norm Oliver (left) and author Art Lassagne help California City Boy Scouts bury "treasures" . . . Herb Polson checks his White Electronic's 563. Lineup waits for starting signal; Bottom row: Gene Jenkins gets sounding with his Detector. Lee Grimard and Harlan Williams hit pay dirt with their Goldak Commander 120 Detectors. Jo Mistretta and Nonnie Christensen use Fisher T20s. But for the kids the best time was when they waited with cigarette-eating burro Tequila for their nickel jamboree.

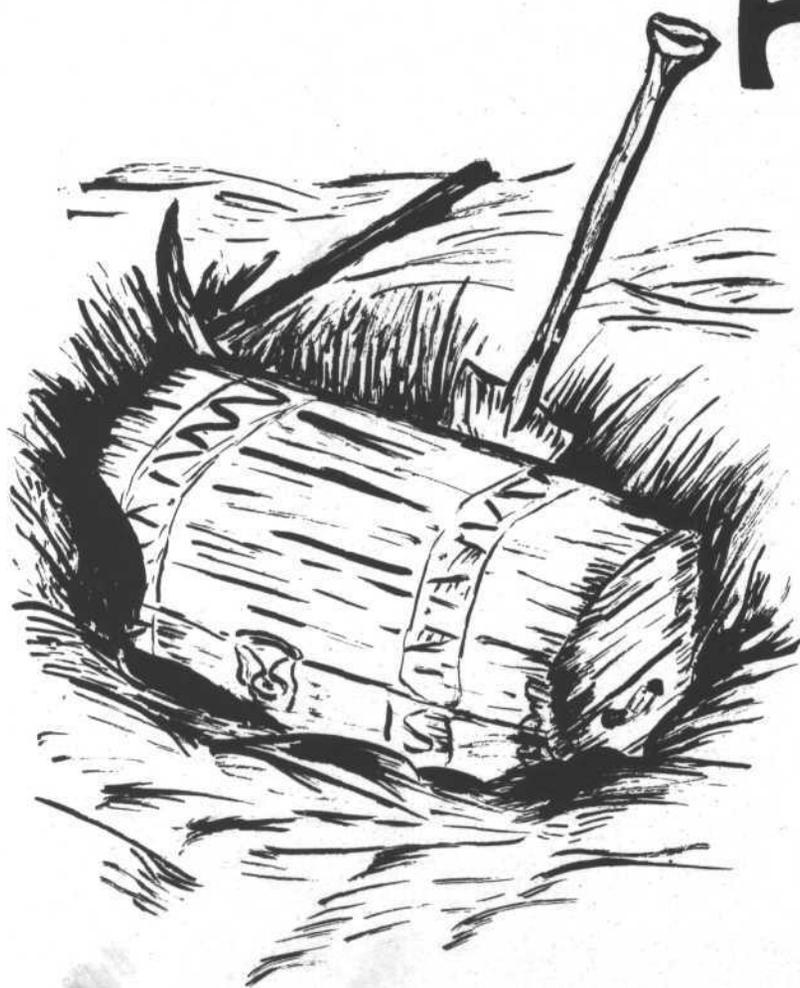


# You Too...

# Can Be A

# TREASURE

# HUNTER!



by Johnny Pounds

Editor, Treasure Hunter Magazine



HE crisp desert morning air was filled with the buzz, whirr, and clack of metal detectors as the group of treasure hunters prepared to start their search across the desert floor. Each worked in his own way. Some worked swiftly, swinging their detectors in wild arcs, others were slow and methodical, but each was waiting for that big thrill when his own detector would sound off that something was below.

This particular event was a meeting of the Prospectors Club of Southern California, but similar events are taking place all over the United States as a new and

exciting hobby is fast sweeping the country—searching for lost treasure!

I really should not use the term, "new hobby." People have been hunting for treasure since the beginning of time, and the early exploration of these United States was a search for gold. The Spanish explorer, Coronado, sweeping through Mexico with his mighty force, heard tales of the Seven Cities of Cibola. Cities of gold without end. Coronado sent scouting parties to the north in search of them.

There are many professional treasure hunters throughout the country. These are the closemouthed, tight-lipped gentlemen who make finds and say nothing about them. Recent large recoveries from sunken Spanish galleons off the coast of Florida have done much to awaken the adventurous spirit lying dormant in the hearts of most men.

I have been asked many times what my definition of treasure is, and my answer is always: "Treasure is anything that has value to anyone." Thus, the odd button is treasure to the button collector. To the bottle collector, the handmade bottle is treasure.

Many new prospecting and treasure hunting clubs have been formed, and these people are pooling their information to locate their share of lost treasure. Many of these people have never before tried this fascinating hobby, but are now anxious to get into the field. Prospectors and rockhounds, formerly only interested in their own hobbies, now have begun to combine the pleasures and profits of treasure hunting with their own activities.

Skin divers, once only interested in fish, now investigate old wrecks on the bottom of the sea. Here in California, skin divers prospect the waters of the rivers and streams that were once the scene of different gold rushes. The old sourdoughs stand on the bank and watch in amazement while these modern day prospectors bring up gold nuggets from the bottom!

Demand for information on lost treasures is so great that Richard S. Ladd, of the Library of Congress, Map Division, has compiled a booklet on maps on file in the library. You may obtain a copy of this booklet by sending 30¢ to the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Request "A Descriptive List of Treasure

Maps and Charts in the Library of Congress," L. C. Card 64-60033.

There are those who say that the old prospectors knew their business and would never lose a valuable find. I disagree! True, they knew their business, but even the best outdoorsman can lose his way. I pride myself on having a fair amount of "trail savvy" but all those canyons look alike! The only way is to mark the trail, or draw a topographic map.

The Incas in Peru, and the Aztecs in Mexico hid their treasures when it became clear that the Spaniards were bent on plundering. Some they buried or hid in caves, and still more is thought to have been sunk in the lakes of the area. The Spaniards themselves buried their loot through fear of robbery. When Morgan the Pirate raided Panama City, the people hid their valuables and no amount of torture could make them reveal the hiding places.

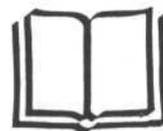
In the early history of our country, settlers often buried valuable caches when under attack by Indians or robbers. The Indians, in turn, buried treasure because

they didn't trust the white man and knew the yellow metal had a strong attraction for him.

Here in the West, we'll be poking around in old ghost towns looking for artifacts, crawling into old mine shafts, roaming the deserts and mountains for placer gold, lost mines, and the hidden loot of bandits and stage coach robbers. Wells Fargo was a major victim, and only a small percentage of their losses was ever recovered.

There are countless tales of treasures lost at sea, ships lost in storms, ships

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destroyed by pirates or wreckers, and ships sunk during time of conflict between nations. It is a recorded fact that nearly 25% of all the gold and silver ever mined has been lost in disasters at sea! Less than 5% has been recovered. British Admiralty records show that over 1600 documented vessels were lost in the English Channel alone, and that over five times that number has been lost in the general area of the British Isles. Between the years 1500 and 1968, over one million vessels have gone to Davey Jones' Locker with billions of dollars in cargo. Over 1000 vessels have been lost in the Great Lakes alone!

The value of the officially recorded lost and missing treasures on the earth today is estimated to be in the neighborhood of 500 billion dollars! Add to this the staggering total of unofficial but fairly well documented stories of still other treasures, and you have a vast sum that defies the imagination!

Until about 65 years ago, banks catered only to the wealthy. The ordinary person had only himself to protect his valuables. I wonder how many buried a

hoard of coins that were eventually lost when the owner died suddenly, or was forced to flee from Indians or other enemies? How many Gold Rush miners fearing claim jumpers, worked a vein of gold or silver in secret and died without revealing the location?

The current rush for lost treasure is partly due to the invention of modern undersea equipment and metal detection devices. There are many of my friends who have found treasure, and we'll try to tell you how you, too, can join the hunt!

#### WHAT TO DO FIRST

I cannot stress too heavily the importance of research. Use your library! This is probably the most inexpensive and helpful tool you have. Many of the larger libraries have a special research department, and they will be glad to help you dig up the facts! Join a club! They have many books on treasure, and members pool their resources. Many of the clubs also have spare equipment. A few other research suggestions would include old newspaper files, court records, police files, diaries, attorney's records, friends and relatives, descendants of the involved, and historical societies. Remember! Your field trip will be wasted if your homework is not done well!

#### NEEDED EQUIPMENT

One or two things are a must! After that, it really is up to your particular likes and dislikes. A good metal detector is a must! There are many brands on the market now, and they run the gamut on prices and claims of what they will do. There are a few on the market for less than \$20 and they range up to \$500, with the average cost being in the vicinity of \$150. I believe that buying a metal detec-

tor is like buying an automobile. It's a matter of personal choice. The machine can't do it all! You have to learn the machine and what it will do. Practice—Practice—Practice! Practice until you can fine-tune your machine backwards and forwards! At present there are no metal detectors that will distinguish between junk metal (such as bottle caps, beer cans, foil from cigarette packs, etc.) and gold and silver.

You will dig up a lot of things that have no value as treasure, but you will get a thrill every time your detector sounds off. An inventor who can come up with a device that will screen out the old iron and just detect the gold and silver can make himself a fortune. Do not overbuy! If you are going to look for coins on the beach, do not buy a great big heavy-duty machine. It won't find the small objects.

Next comes the black light. Many people will disagree with me here, but that's because they do not realize what the light will do. Use it on the wall of an old deserted cabin or cave, and any changes made in the original wall, such as a patched hole, will stand out loud and clear under the black light! The light is also great when looking for fluorescent stones.

The balance of your tools are common sense items: maps, small folding G.I. shovel, long handled sharp-pointed shovel, rock pick, light sledge hammer with short handle, pry bar, and about 50 feet of 1/2 inch rope.

#### WHERE TO LOOK

Let's be honest! If I could tell you exactly where treasure is, I wouldn't be

*Continued on page 37*

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## THEN...

## AND NOW

by Pat Holmes



HE year was 1878. Gold was the tune, Bodie, the Pied Piper, and thousands of people followed in answer to the call.

A year later, the residents of this town, a mile and half high, numbered ten thousand. Wooden buildings lined Main Street and spread across the flat to the sagebrush covered hillsides. Saloons and gambling houses outnumbered hotels, restaurants, stores, newspapers, livery stables, blacksmiths and banks.

The daily stages rushed into town with business men, gamblers, gay ladies and left loaded with gold bullion guarded by armed men. Others—miners, mechanics, laborers—arrived on foot and horseback. Freight wagons, drawn by teams of mules or horses, brought in loads of whiskey, lumber, machinery and drygoods; ore wagons rumbled through town hauling ore to the mills.

The singsong chant of the Chinese, herding the wood-laden pack trains, rose and fell when a herder threw a rock at a reluctant burro. The blast of the mine whistles and the thump of the stamp mills continued day and night.

Wood sold from \$8.00 to \$25.00 a cord, depending on the availability of supply and the weather. Milk was 50 cents a quart and eggs 50 cents a dozen. In Aurora, a side of beef was six cents a pound. Whiskey was two drinks for a quarter.

Day or night, drinks were sold and games of chance played. Rosa May and Madam Moustache hung their red lan-

terns in Virgin Alley and Maiden Lane. In opium dens, people played Fan Tan or lay in bunks smoking opium. Robberies of stages were a profession for some men. Nightly quarrels featured gun or knife play and often ended in Boot Hill.

Only the respectable were buried in the fenced cemeteries. But for a fee, the black hearse, with its glass sides and plumes swaying in silver urns, was available to anyone, even the Chinese. Their funerals were held with traditional ceremony which included the placing of food on the grave in their own graveyard.

In the fall of 1879, the town held a funeral for William S. (or Watermann S.) Bodey. (Variations of spelling are recorded by historians.) Bodey, for whom the town was subsequently named, discovered gold there in July of 1859 and died in a blizzard that winter. A fund was subscribed to erect a monument in his memory. Meanwhile, President Garfield died and the town decided to dedicate it to him instead.

Winters were cold and long. Temperatures slid to 30° below zero. Snow was 10 feet deep and the wind whipped it into huge drifts that covered some buildings almost to the rooftops. Families, in houses heated only by wood stoves, dreaded diphtheria and pneumonia. These illnesses buried many a child and miner. Life was hard, but miner's pay was good, four dollars a day, although there were mine accidents, fire and claim jumping.

The demand for lumber, timber, and cordwood to keep the mines running and the town supplied grew. All the hoists

and mills were run by steam-generated wood-fired boilers. The Standard Company's wood contract alone was for 7000 cords. Because the nearest trees were miles away, most of the wood was freighted in. The cordwood and lumber from the Mono Mills camp was shipped across Mono Lake and then hauled to Bodie by team. Later, in 1881, a railroad was constructed specifically to haul cordwood and lumber from Mono Mills to Bodie. The line was 32 miles in length and the four engines were named "The Mono," "The Inyo," "The Tybo," and "The Bodie."

The Standard Consolidated Mining Co. built a hydro-electric plant 13 miles away on Green Creek above Bridgeport in 1892. It would replace steam power with electric. The power line was built in a straight line as it was believed that power would jump off a curve. But the power was for use only in the mine and mill; the town had to wait until 1910 before it had electric lights.

Bodie boomed and waned periodically. In 1895, a new cyanide process was introduced which made the separation of gold from ore more economical, and thus the recovery of the metal from thousands of tons of tailings. The town prospered again.

The greatest fear in a wooden town is fire. And Bodie was prepared for such an emergency with a reservoir on a hill and pipe running from it to Main Street. However, one night in 1892, a fire broke



Methodist Church still stands.

# A Tale of a Bodie Bad Boy

by Ben T. Traywick

It could be said of Whitney Chidester that he was careful. He was particularly cautious when it came to spending money. His shack was sparsely furnished and, what rough furnishings there were, invariably were castoffs of others. The garments he wore every day were ripped and worn. His diet consisted of rough, cheap food, and as little of that as possible. He bought nothing except necessities.

The gold rush to California was in its last stages when Whit arrived. However, the gold country still offered more than ample opportunity to any shrewd young man—and Whit was a shrewd young man.

Money came to Whit quite easily and, as he never allowed any to get away from him, he soon built himself a tidy stake. He concealed this fact from everyone, giving the impression of being extremely poor.

His desire to get more wealth was the beginning of his downfall. Speculation in the Comstock Lode mines was a way of life in San Francisco, and Whit saw acquaintances become rich in a matter of days by such investments. He had visions of golden wealth pouring into his hands and could contain himself no longer. He plunged all his money into mining stocks. A stock crash soon afterward completely wiped him out.

Whit had to find a means of support and, as he liked to be around money, he secured a job as a bank clerk. He handled the bank's money with tender, loving care. This soon came to the attention of the bank officials and, when they had an opening in the Sacramento branch, Whit was transferred there with a raise in salary. He continued to handle the bank's money as though it were his own, and when a new branch opened in Marysville he became its cashier.

Unknown to the bank officials or anyone else Whit had a plan. With satisfaction, he watched the bank deposits grow. When the deposits reached a considerable sum, Whit disappeared and so did \$27,000 in gold coin and currency from the vault.

Whit moved from camp to camp for several months, taking care to leave no trail. At last, when he believed that both he and his stolen loot were safe, he moved to the tough, hell-raising town of Bodie, on the California-Nevada border. Near the edge of that boom town he built a crude one-room hut.

He played the role of a hermit who was

barely managing to survive. His act of being impoverished had one flaw; though he bought very little and always the cheapest of everything, he paid with cash money. Word of this spread around and in a short time he became known in Bodie as a miser. The tales of Whit's buried or hidden wealth began to circulate. With each telling the amount of the miser's hoard grew.

Whit stopped to loaf awhile in the blacksmith shop as was his custom. He liked to take a seat in a corner and watch the brawny smith at work. He was in his favorite spot when two men with guns tied low came into the shop. In the shop's gloom, Whit went unnoticed. His ears perked up when one of the two mentioned his name. Whit's interest turned to dismay as they discussed the amount of money he had cached away and how they could steal it.

In a state of panic, Whit rushed home, threw his meager possessions into a pack, grabbed the baking powder can containing the bank loot, and lit out down the trail to the stage coach stop.

The stage was due at any moment but Whit did not reach it. Two figures came out of the dusk. Recognizing the two hard-cases from the blacksmith shop, Whit knew he would lose either his money or his life, and possibly both.

Whit loved his money to the very end. The mere thought of losing it was unbearable. In desperation, he attacked the two thieves. Yelling, cursing and fighting he raised a terrible commotion. His attempt was futile, however; knives flashed and buried themselves in his heart. All the noise from the struggle attracted several miners from Bodie. They arrived at the scene of the struggle just as Whit collapsed. The two would-be thieves were subdued and dragged off to jail.

The miners pried the pack from Whit's dead, clutching fingers. It was unrolled and found to contain nothing of value. The baking powder can held only baking powder. Whit, in his fear and excitement, had picked up the wrong tin can. He had given his life to defend a can of baking powder. The remainder of the bank loot was recovered from the other can in Whit's cabin.

Dawn broke over Bodie the following morning to reveal the two murderers swinging gently in the breeze from a beam in front of the blacksmith shop. Justice, of sorts, had come to Bodie. □



*The school is one of the empty and deserted buildings.*



*In 1932 a fire destroyed all but the vault of the bank.*



*Because of hazardous conditions the Standard Mill is off-limits.*

out in a restaurant with the flames spreading quickly to the buildings next to it. Then the fire leaped from building to building, and soon both sides of the streets were ablaze. When firemen attached the hoses to the hydrants there was no water.

Although the reservoir was full, the water mains weren't working and by the time they were, most of Main Street had been consumed. Later, some empty buildings were brought from the back streets to replace those burnt—others were rebuilt.

In 1932, fire again destroyed almost all of Main Street. Again, there was no water. The screens at the reservoir had not been replaced after cleaning and rocks and mud clogged the pipes.

Bodie died slowly. Periods of activity alternated with decline. The mines yielded almost \$100 million in gold. Through the efforts of the Cain family, prominent residents of Bodie, the town became a State Historic Park in 1962 and dedicated in 1964 as a California Historic Site. Today the wind rattles the roofs and loose boards in the old wooden buildings. The dirt streets are overgrown with sagebrush.

Visitors examine the old wagons that once rumbled through town with freight or ore, and peer through the dusty window of the morgue at a white casket. They stop by the window of the Cain house to look at the collection of bottles. Camera bugs wait patiently for just the right shadow to snap the old safe, its rusty door ajar, sitting in a vacant lot.

Virgin Alley and Maiden Lane are gone, but nearby, the jail still stands. There are no windows in the cells, but the solid doors have a barred section. The bank vault of the Bodie Bank stands by the ruins of a stone warehouse. Down the street is the firehouse with its bell still intact. The Standard Mine and Mill is visible on the slope, but it is a restricted area because of hazardous conditions.

In the cemetery, crumbling wood markers are scattered among stone headstones. As you go through the cemetery gate, Bodey's grave and monument are to the right, next to the uphill fence. The monument that was dedicated to President Garfield instead of Bodey is in the middle of the cemetery.

Lottie Johl's grave is in the far upper back. Mr. Johl and Mr. Donnelly were

partners in a butcher store. Donnelly married an English woman who painted pictures. Johl fell in love with Lottie, a girl from the red light district, and they were married. Mrs. Donnelly would have nothing to do with Lottie, and neither would the town. Johl bought his wife a fine house, and she, too, learned to paint. When Lottie died the town quarreled on where she should be buried. Finally, the town decided on the last place in the upper cemetery.

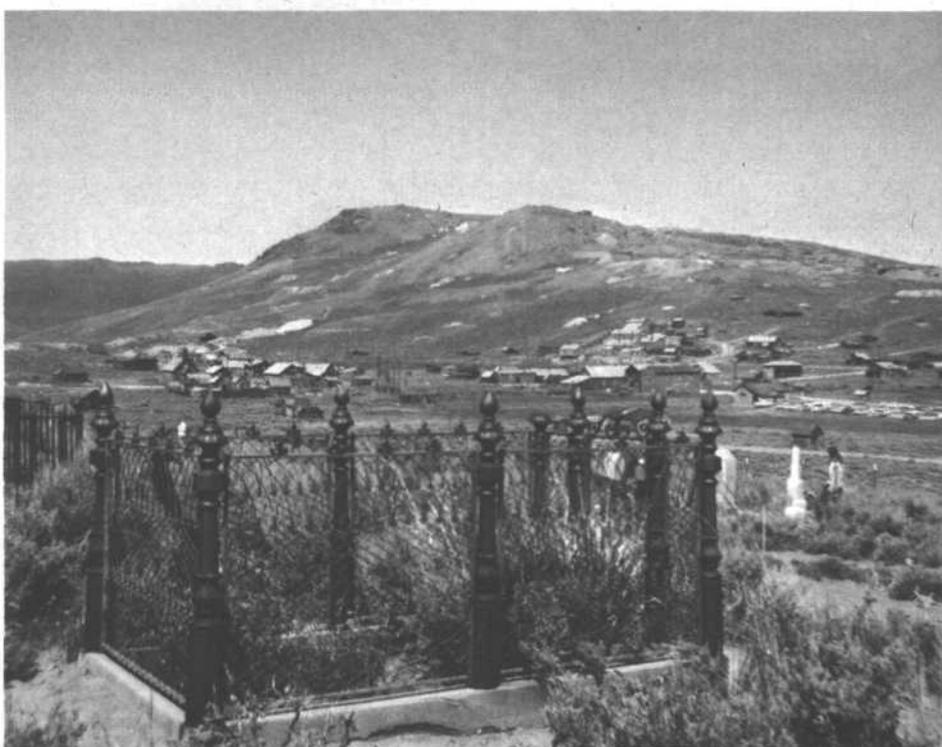
The museum is in the Miner's Union Hall. It is only opened intermittently because of the problem of staffing it full time. There are not enough rangers to station one there and do the necessary maintenance work for the "state of arrested decay" on the buildings. In the back of the museum is the horse-drawn black hearse complete with glass sides and plumes in the silver urns.

On the walls of the hall are paintings by Mrs. Donnelly and Lottie Johl and other paintings and posters, one advertising a Grand Ball. A display case holds an opium pipe, joss stick holders, a pair of Chinese ladies' slippers, Rosa May's red lantern and her picture. There are albums, postcards, pictures, and a mine and mill book from The Standard.

The best time to visit Bodie State Historic Park is in the summer. Snow closes the road by December and it is generally April or early May when it's plowed open. The turnoff on Highway 395 is six miles south of Bridgeport. The road to the park is gravelled and climbs steadily for 13 miles. The other road that comes in from Highway 167 is not in as good condition.

The parking lot is to the left just outside of town. No fees are charged. No gas, food or lodging are available. It is best to gas up either at Lee Vining heading north on Highway 395 or if headed south, Bridgeport. There is a small campground about a half mile from Bodie where you can eat a picnic lunch or camp for the night. However, there is a possibility that the State might phase it out.

Bodie may yet prove untrue what the old timers say, "A hanging and a church will kill any camp," for the town had both and, as a State Historic Park, still lives. □



*One of the graves in the Bodie cemetery is that of Lottie Johl, a girl from the red light district who fell in love and married a Bodie butcher store owner. Ostracized by the "good" women of the community during her lifetime, she was buried in an isolated part of the cemetery. In the background is Bodie as it exists today.*

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# Scenic Tour of LAKE MEAD

by Jack Delaney



ALTHOUGH MANY different kinds of travelers visit the Lake Mead National Recreation Area every month of the year, they all discover the world's largest man-made lake and its environs is a pleasant playground for the entire family.

Some of the travelers, driving over Hoover Dam as they migrate to or emigrate from California, decide to spend a few days in the area; some are tourists who visit the dam and elect to see other attractions; others are motor gypsies with trailers and campers who stay weeks and months; and still others are vacationers and weekenders.

Hoover Dam and Lake Mead may be reached by driving U.S. Highways 466-93 to southern Nevada, near the Arizona line. Highway 93, running from Alaska to Central America, has the distinction of being the world's longest continuous highway. The stretch of lakefront from Hoover Dam north to Overton is rich in scenic and recreational attractions. It offers so many interesting places to see, and things to do, that at least several days should be allowed in order to cover most of them.

A good idea would be to set up home base in Boulder City and take short jaunts out to the various points of interest. First, you'll want to visit Hoover Dam; then, by driving along Lakeshore Drive, which starts at the Lake Mead Recreation Area Visitor Center, you'll see Hemenway Harbor, Boulder Beach, Lake Mead Marina, and Las Vegas Bay. A short distance beyond this point, turn right onto North Shore Road which will provide an opportunity for you to see

Callville Bay Marina, Echo Bay, Rogers Spring, Stewards Point, Overton Beach, Valley of Fire State Park, and the Lost City Museum at Overton.

Boulder City is 24 miles southeast of Las Vegas, and about 5 miles from the lake. It is the headquarters for federal administration of Hoover Dam and Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Here, free movies of the construction of Hoover Dam are shown at the Visitors Bureau. Showings are offered at half-hour intervals daily. Originally, the town was built to serve as a home for the construction crews that worked on the dam.

The city was well planned and is now a beautiful oasis of green lawns and clean tree-shaded streets, with four parks, a swimming pool, tennis courts, and picnic areas available for public use. It is a garden city with a hotel, a dozen motels, and five modern trailer parks to serve the thousands of tourists who visit the region each year. The climate is comfortable and smog-free. In fact, a local tavern offers free beer any day the sun doesn't shine! It is "stuck" no more than once a year, according to the local chamber of commerce!

The greatest attraction in this area is Hoover Dam, a mammoth engineering marvel. It is the highest dam in the Western Hemisphere (725 feet high), and contains a larger volume of concrete than the Great Pyramid of Egypt! This awe-inspiring project, completed in 1935, is visited by more than a half-million people annually. Bureau of Reclamation tour leaders conduct visitors through the dam daily, for a nominal fee. An interesting touch, that I have never seen elsewhere, is a large shaded parking area,

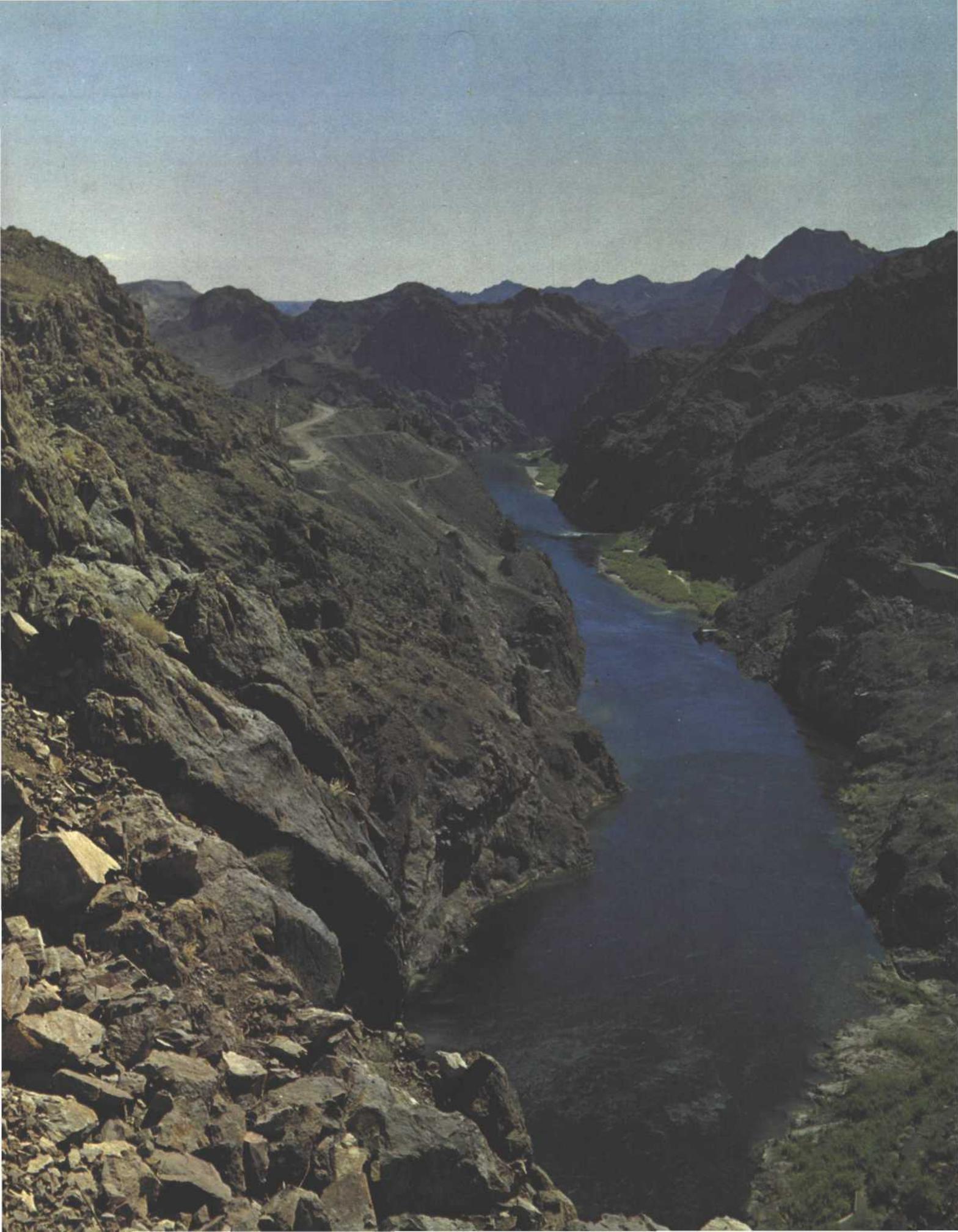
for cars carrying pets, located on the Arizona side of the dam.

Hoover Dam blocked the Colorado River in Black Canyon so the river backed up 115 miles into the lower gorges of Grand Canyon and formed Lake Mead. At its highest level the lake has a 550-mile shoreline, a depth of 589 feet, and holds 32,500,000 acre-feet of water. (At present, the level is somewhat lower than its maximum.) Temperature of the water in summer is around 75 degrees, which is much warmer than many other popular lakes.

The Lake Mead National Recreation Area includes both Lake Mead and Lake Mojave (below Hoover Dam) and extends out several miles around the perimeter of these two lakes. Its beauty is one of vastness and the splendor of great size. Also fascinating is the continual change in the vivid colors of this desert region and the surrounding mountains at various times of the day. Color photographs taken from a single point during each hour of the day will produce completely different results.

Hemenway Harbor is the first resort along the west and north shorelines of Lake Mead. It features boating activity and has a launch ramp, moorages, etc. Boulder Beach, next door, has a mobile home park; a camping section (with outdoor electric hotplates furnished); a swimming beach; and Lake Mead Lodge, a modern motel with a swimming pool and a beautiful view of the lake.

Lake Mead Marina is a center for boating, boat rentals, water skiing, fishing, and eating at The Nautical Flag. The three-acre floating marina is air-conditioned. Its free-floating design is practical because of Lake Mead's changing





*Elephant Rock is one of dozens of brilliant red rock formations in the Valley of Fire State Park near Overton, Nevada. It also has many Indian petroglyphs.*



*One of the many beautiful bays on the scenic drive along the shore of Lake Mead is Echo Bay. A modern motel, boating and camping facilities are located there.*

water level. A popular feature is the one-hour excursions several times daily, that provide an opportunity for you to enjoy a fish-eye view of Hoover Dam, from the surface of the water. An informative commentary is given during these trips, by a tour guide. The excursion charge is \$2.00 for adults and \$1.00 for children under 12.

We were guests of Gene Gatzke, Training Specialist of the National Park Service, during a tour of the lake. Our boat was the 38-foot, "Major J. W. Powell," named in honor of the first man to travel down the Colorado River. We circled around the base of the dam, thrilled to the Paint Pots and Fortification Hill, and explored several coves and nooks along the shoreline. At one point we rode over an old town named, Williamsville, now 320 feet below the surface; before its was inundated its population was about 3000 people. (The excursion boat also passes over this ex-town.)

Las Vegas Bay, the last resort area along Lakeshore Drive, is another popular spot for boating and water skiing. Here, in addition to an inspiring view of the lake, and a National Park Service office, you'll find a picnic area, campgrounds, a swimming beach and a snack bar for light lunch goodies and supplies. It is a short distance beyond this point that you turn onto the new North Shore Road for more of the Recreation-Area attractions.

Callville Bay Marina, still another boating paradise, has an interesting history. No swimming is permitted here, but a trailer village, campgrounds, and picnic areas make it an inviting vacation spot. The original settlement of Port Callville is now populated by fish—it is about 100 feet below the surface of Lake Mead. Elder Anson Call of the Mormon Church picked the site in 1864, and it served for years as a steamship river port. Ships made regular trips between Callville and the mouth of the river—and sometimes as far as Mazatlan.

Don Ashbaugh pointed out in his interesting book, *Nevada's Turbulent Yesterday*, that the Mormon Church, because of continued trouble with the federal government and threatened army attacks, sought a safe route over which to bring its stream of converts from Europe to Salt Lake City. It chose a back-door route

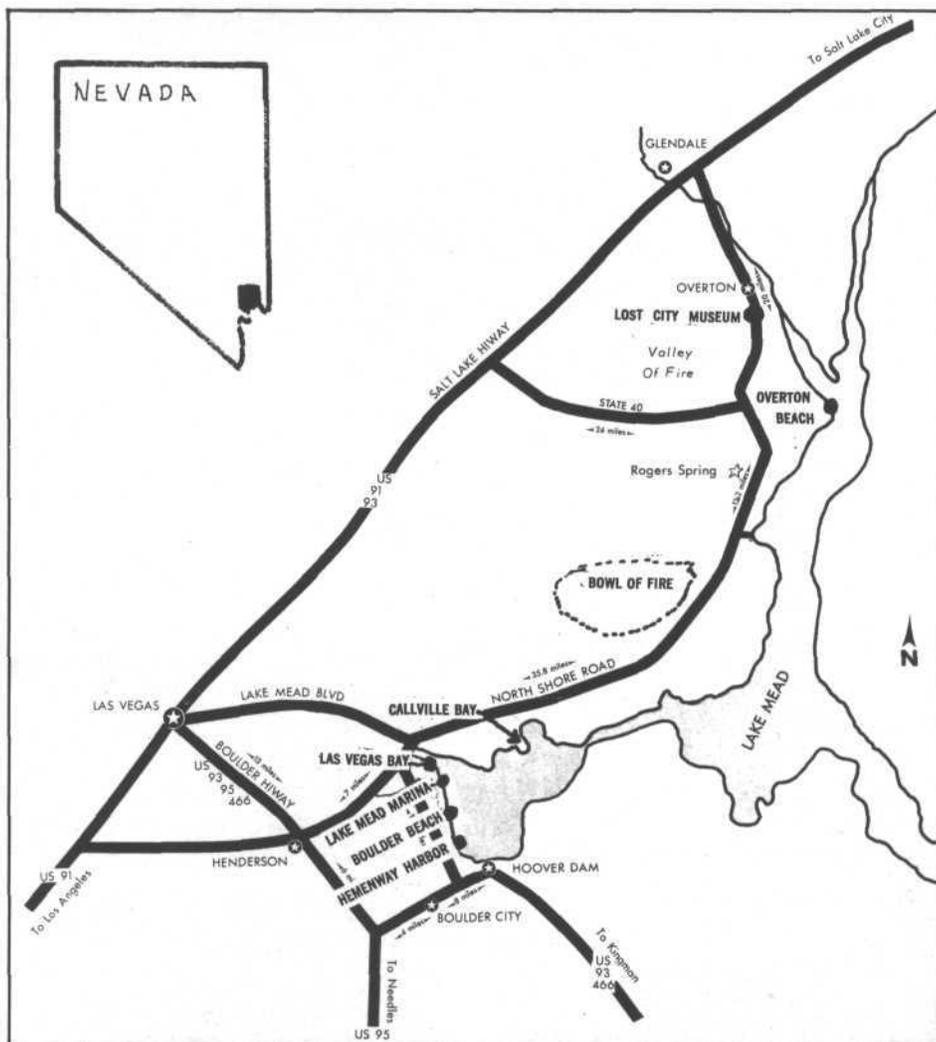
that took the faithful converts to Vera Cruz, or Panama, thence overland to the Pacific where they were trans-shipped up the Gulf of California and the Colorado River to Callville, then beyond by land some five hundred miles to Salt Lake City. When the railroads came, Callville died, and when Lake Mead came, it was buried!

During your drive along North Shore Road, from Callville Bay to Echo Bay, you'll see an extravaganza of Nature in the form of brilliant red Aztec sandstone, in various shades and shapes, which is known as the Bowl of Fire. While enjoying this display, keep in mind that it is only a small-scale preview of what you'll see later at Valley of Fire State Park. In other words, don't exhaust your supply of color film on the "preliminaries"—save some for the "main event!"

Echo Bay Resort has all of the features of the other marinas (boating, boat rentals, campgrounds, trailer park, etc.) plus an ultramodern luxurious hotel, with dining room, cocktail lounge, and coffee shop. Rates for the spacious rooms (two double beds in each) are \$12 if you like to face the mountains, and \$14 if you prefer to lull yourself to sleep while counting the boats on the lake. The whole resort has an orderly, new appearance—clean and nicely landscaped.

Rogers Springs, to the left of the highway, has a natural warm spring where you may bathe and swim the year around. It offers picnic grounds and limited camping facilities. Stewart Point is a scenic spot along the lake where more than 50 residents have homes that provide a pleasant way of life during most of the year. Overton Beach features charter boat service, boat rentals, and fishing supplies. It has a motel, cafe, store, marina, trailer park and swimming beach. The campground offers free sites supervised by the National Park Service, and you can fish 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Valley of Fire State Park is a wonderland of red sandstone, changing in form and hue with each hour of sunlight. It must have produced a semi-religious sense in the minds of early Pueblo dwellers, with its rock elephants, dragons, beehives, and anything else a free imagination can conjure. Tightly packed over a 30,000-acre expanse, this scenic spectacle comprises many miles of jagged, honeycomb-



*Due to the desert climate, aquatic sports and fishing are year 'round activities on Lake Mead. One hundred and fifteen miles long and with 550 miles of shoreline, the lake is clear and abounds in hard-fighting bass. All types of boats are available.*



*More than 12,000 years ago the fertile valley of the Virgin River was occupied by early man, and later by the Basketmakers and Pueblo Indians. Artifacts from these ancient civilizations are on display at the Lost City Museum, along with replicas of the homes of the ancient ones. Operated by the State of Nevada, the museum is open every day to the public but Tuesday.*

ed formations of eroded red rock, and areas of petrified wood. Here, you can eat lunch in a magnificent setting. Shady picnic areas are provided—each with tables, stoves, wood, water, and rest stations.

You will see many banks of petroglyphs in the Park. Some show clan symbols which were used by prehistoric people as we use our names today. In fact, some of the symbols are still used by the Hopi Indians in Arizona villages. Other writings tell of hunting trips or water holes; and still other show Prayer Sticks thanking the Great Spirit for a successful hunt. Valley of Fire State Park is open to the public all year, and there is no admission charge.

Overton, an agricultural town in the fertile Moapa Valley, was established by the Mormons around 1867. In 1869, Nevada demanded that taxes be paid in cash. The Mormons had no cash—they traded only in "Bishop's Chips," a medium of exchange issued at the town store by the ward Bishop in exchange for goods. Since "chips" were not acceptable to the state, the Mormon pioneers were forced to leave their homes and farms and return to Salt Lake City. At present, the town serves tourists with its stores,

service stations, bank, etc. However, the principal attraction here is a unique museum.

The Lost City Museum has one of the most complete and largest collections of early Indian artifacts in the southwest. Represented are the old Gypsum Cave people of 12,000 years ago, the ancient Basketmakers of 3000 B.C. to 500 A.D., the early Pueblo Indians of the Lost City, and the Paiute people who came about 110 A.D. Scientifically displayed are thousands of relics excavated from the once great metropolis known as the Lost City. It extended for 30 miles from the river, and had an estimated population of from 10,000 to 15,000 people.

You'll enjoy a visit with the Museum's curator, R. F. Perkins, who was one of the excavators of the Lost City and is an authority on southern Nevada—both its history and its present-day points of interest. All of the items on display are from this area, which is still producing relics. I learned from Mr. Perkins that only a comparatively small part of the Lost City was inundated by Lake Mead. More than 100 ancient dwellings have been excavated and explored thus far, with gratifying results. The Museum is open every day, except Tuesday. It is

operated by the State of Nevada, without admission charge.

All of the recreation spots you'll see on your trip from Boulder City to Overton, with the exception of the Lost City Museum and Valley of Fire State Park, are within the Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Fees for use of campgrounds range from \$7.00 for an annual Golden Passport to 50c for an individual day's permit. Rates for trailer space are \$2.00 to \$2.50 per night, or \$11.00 to 15.00 per week. Motel rates at Lake Mead Lodge and Overton Beach Motel start at \$8.00 per night for two.

Fishing and boating are most popular sports at Lake Mead. For fishing by boat, a license from Nevada or Arizona and a \$2.00 stamp from the opposite state is required. You can fish from the shore with only a license from the state concerned, but a stamp permits you to use the other state's shore also.

Regardless of whether you spend a day, a week or a month touring the Lake Mead National Recreation Area; whether you are a fisherman, water skier, skin diver, rockhound, photographer or just out sightseeing with the family, you will find the area an ideal spot for fun in the sun, 12 months of the year. □

# The Dragonfly

by Bob Young



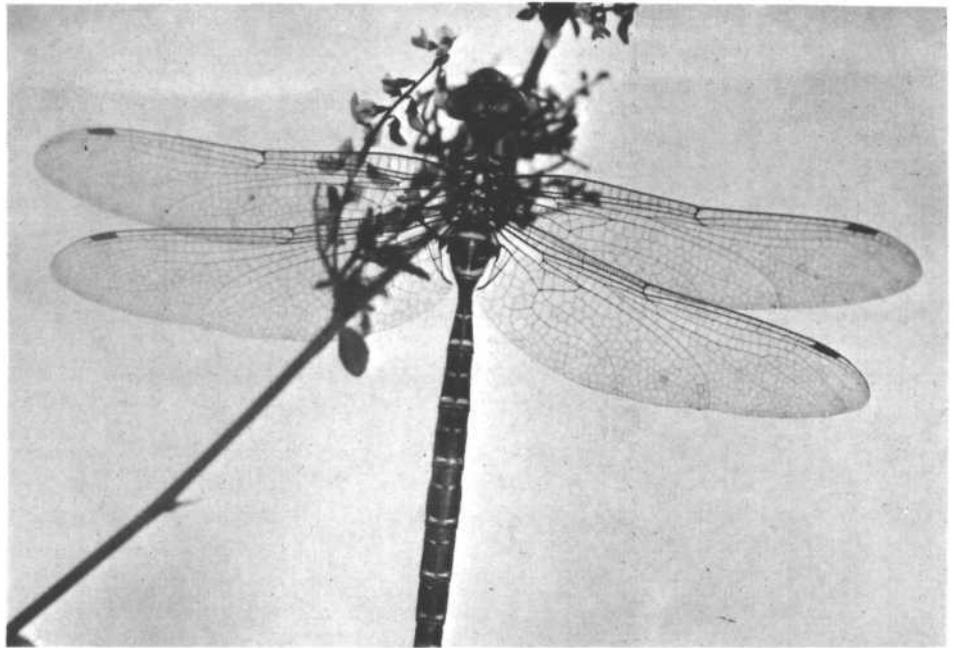
HE dragonfly is an aerial tyrant of unmatched ferocity and velocity. He is often called the "darning needle," which comes from the egg-laying habits of the 300 American species. The female punctures the stem of an aquatic plant, usually a cattail, with a double row of punctures as neat as a sewing machine, and then fills each hole with one egg.

Although the dragonfly is an aerialist supreme, the first stage of his life is spent under water. Whether the eggs are planted or, as in some cases, flung freely into static waters, they quickly develop into nymphs, which appear to be all eyes, mouth and appetite. These short, flattened, gill-breathing bugs scrounge in the mud in a relentless search for food, feeding on the aquatic larvae of mosquitoes. Each will eat its weight each day.

With such an intake, the nymph grows rapidly, molting its skin from time to time, until it finally reaches the day when it clambers on to a stem and makes the startling transformation into a winged, and breathing, dragon-of-the-air. As it sheds the drab, ugly form which has cloaked it from birth, there emerges a winged, shimmering, iridescent birdlike shape, which flickers with nervous energy from the moment the sun begins to warm and dry it.

It is scant wonder the dragonfly is nervous: for several days prior to its great drama, it hasn't eaten—which is something akin to a chronic drunk escaping a hangover of unparalleled severity. As strength surges through its slim, needle-like configuration, the veined wings begin a frenzied rhythm which will only cease when the insect dies.

From the moment the dragonfly first darts off into the air, it pursues a vagrant, airborne existence and never really lands



again. Though it has full complement of insect legs, they are all bunched up in front and completely useless in walking. Instead, they are used as a basket into which other flying insects are trapped, then leisurely munched on as the jaw-hooks grasp and push them into the maw. One scientist observed a dragonfly devouring 42 horseflies in an hour. Another saw a dragonfly bending its slim tail and inserting it in the huge jaws, consuming itself until it could reach no more!

With their darting speed, sometimes as high as 60 miles per hour, they outfly many birds which prey on them, and certainly out-manuever most anything in the skies. When rocketing in one direction, the dragonfly can alter or reverse its course, or even stop and hover suspended in the air. It becomes a meal for other predators usually by stealth or trick, or when it lays eggs.

Contrary to popular belief, dragonflies are entirely harmless and are among the most useful of insects. The adults feed on insects and destroy vast numbers of flies, mosquitoes and gnats. However, since it is easier to believe fiction than fact, the dragonfly is the subject of many legends.

Perhaps because both snakes and dragonflies inhabit swampy areas, lore has entwined them, particularly water snakes. Sometimes called "snake doctor, or feeder or servant," dragonflies are credited with standing guard and warning reptiles

of dangers. They also said in foraging food, tend to its medical needs and in turn are protected by the snake who turns on anyone threatening the dragonfly.

Because of its practice of stitching eggs into the cattails and its general resemblance to a needle, many legends have developed around its stitching abilities. In New England, nostrils, eyes or ears may be sewn together if the dragonfly's wrath is aroused. Iowans believe that the "darning needle" would sew together fingers and toes of anyone sleeping on the job.

But the one legend which strikes most terror is its treatment of those who tamper with the truth, and it was with great care that these facts were assembled knowing the penalty would be to have our lips stitched together. □

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# Topaz Mountain

by Earl Spendlove



OLD Hill, Treasure Mountain, Diamond Gulch, Dead Indian Draw are names on a map — but names that make weekend explorers travel many miles over rough roads in hopes of seeing an interesting place, or finding a faded page from the past.

Topaz Mountain was such a name, and when I read it I felt an urge to see what a mountain of topaz looked like. Two years slipped by before I found myself rolling down a gravel road toward this rugged gray mountain in the middle of a lonely Utah desert.

It was mid-morning when I reached a road junction where signs told me the nearest pavement was in Delta, Utah, 39 miles to the south, or 50 miles to the east at the Jerico railroad siding. Two miles to the west of the junction I turned off onto two ruts that wound northward over a rough, rocky bench toward a light gray mountain that sprawled lazily under the bright blue sky. The world's largest beryllium deposit is located a few miles to the west and scattered over the bench are posts of assorted shapes and sizes, standing at odd angles, marking the location of someone's claim to real or imagined wealth that lies underground.

I was busy trying to avoid rocks in the road when a movement off to the left caught my eye and I turned to see five antelope running through the scrubby desert vegetation. When I honked my horn they turned on a burst of speed and, running gracefully in a wide, smooth arc, passed in front of me and disappeared over the edge of the bench to the east.

A little over a mile from the main road, the trail forked and I turned left and drove a mile west to a sandy wash that ran south from Topaz Mountain.

Here the tracks turned north, followed the wash for about a mile, and stopped under four giant juniper growing in a rocky little flat at the bottom of the draw. The area had been used as a campground. In a sturdy mailbox made from a heavy pipe, I found a book that contained page after page of names of people who had come here in search of gems.

A statement on the first page of the book said the Mineralogical Society of Utah, and the Wasatch Gem and Mineral Society, both of Salt Lake City, hold four claims that cover the campground and a nearby section of Topaz Mountain. People are invited to look for topaz on their claims and requested to sign the book and show the time they spent looking for gem stones. People from 15 states, including Hawaii, and two foreign countries, Mexico and France, have stopped under the

trees and signed their names in the book.

Before making the trip to Topaz Mountain, I learned that kings of ancient Egypt forced their followers to collect beautiful, transparent crystals on an island in the Red Sea. The island, often surrounded by fog, was difficult for the early mariners to find and they named it *Topazios*, meaning to seek. The sparkling stones, shipped to Egypt for cutting and polishing, were soon called Topaz, a shortened version of the island's name.

Topaz crystals are orthorhombic prisms of aluminum flusosilicate with a hardness of eight. They are usually pale yellow in color, but may be brown, blue, pink, green, or colorless and perfect crystals are considered semi-precious stones. At Topaz Mountain the mineral crystallized from hot vapors escaping from igneous magmas, into honey-colored, trans-



*Topaz crystals collected by the author during his trip to Utah.*

lucent stones, which are found today in cavities in the rhyolite. They vary in size from as small as a pin head to as large as a man's thumb, but the larger stones are hard to find.

It takes work, perseverance, and a lot of luck to find and dig the real beauties out of the rhyolite. The more accessible areas, near the bottoms of the canyons and on the foothills, have been picked over rather thoroughly. But, in a half day's time, I climbed the mountain side and picked up two beautiful, yellow, almost perfect stones. One was a quarter of an inch long and a little larger in diameter than the head of a match. The other was a half inch long and about the size of a lead pencil. I found several stones with flaws in them, and I broke a few good crystals trying to get them out of the parent material.

Wind, water, and frost constantly erode away the rhyolite, and flood waters carry the crystals down the mountain and deposit them along the beds of the intermittent streams, and on the alluvial fans and benches at the base of the mountain.

The hot desert sun has bleached out these stones and colorless, clear crystals flash like diamonds in the bright sunlight. With luck a sharp-eyed person can, in a few hours, pick up several sparkling specimens. Everything that shines is not, however, a gem stone and the collector soon discovers that most of the flashes come from worthless fragments that litter the ground. He will learn, too, that many of the complete crystals are fractured and are of little value.

Topaz Mountain is located about 150 miles southwest of Salt Lake City. Highway 6-50 skirts the area on the east and south, but you must travel 40 or 50 miles, depending upon the route you take, over a gravel road to reach the mountain. If you are traveling south from Salt Lake City on 6-50, turn west at the Jerico railroad siding. Jerico is 18 miles south of Eureka, Utah, the turn-off is well marked, and you should have little trouble finding it. Follow the main traveled road west for about 50 miles and you will come to the junction mentioned earlier in this article. If you are coming from the west on 6-50, you can reach the same junction by turning north at Delta, Utah and following a well traveled gravel road for 40 miles in a northwesterly direction.

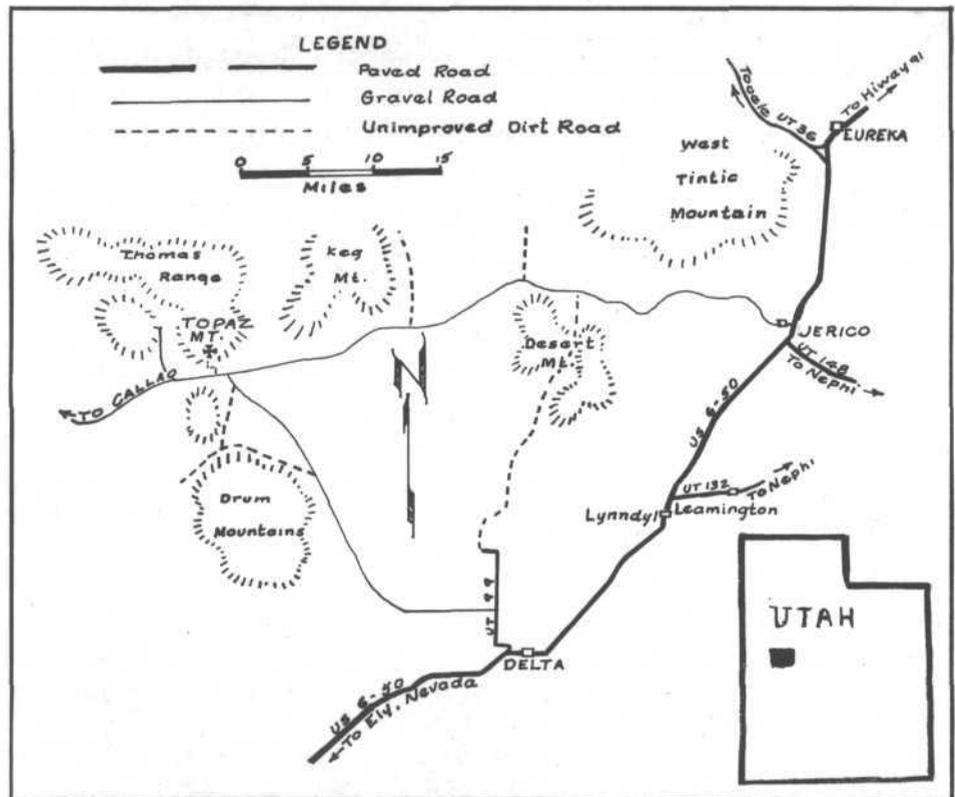


*Topaz Mountain rises in the middle of an isolated Utah desert.*

Both roads are passable throughout most of the year and if your vehicle is in good condition you should have little difficulty. Be careful of loose gravel and watch for wash-outs after a storm. Travel on both roads is erratic, so take food and water with you because if your car does

break down, it might be several hours before anyone comes along.

Winters at Topaz Mountain are bitter cold. Summers are hot. Spring and fall the weather is wonderful. So, if you would like to gather topaz and breathe some bracing air, these are the times to plan your trip to Topaz Mountain. □





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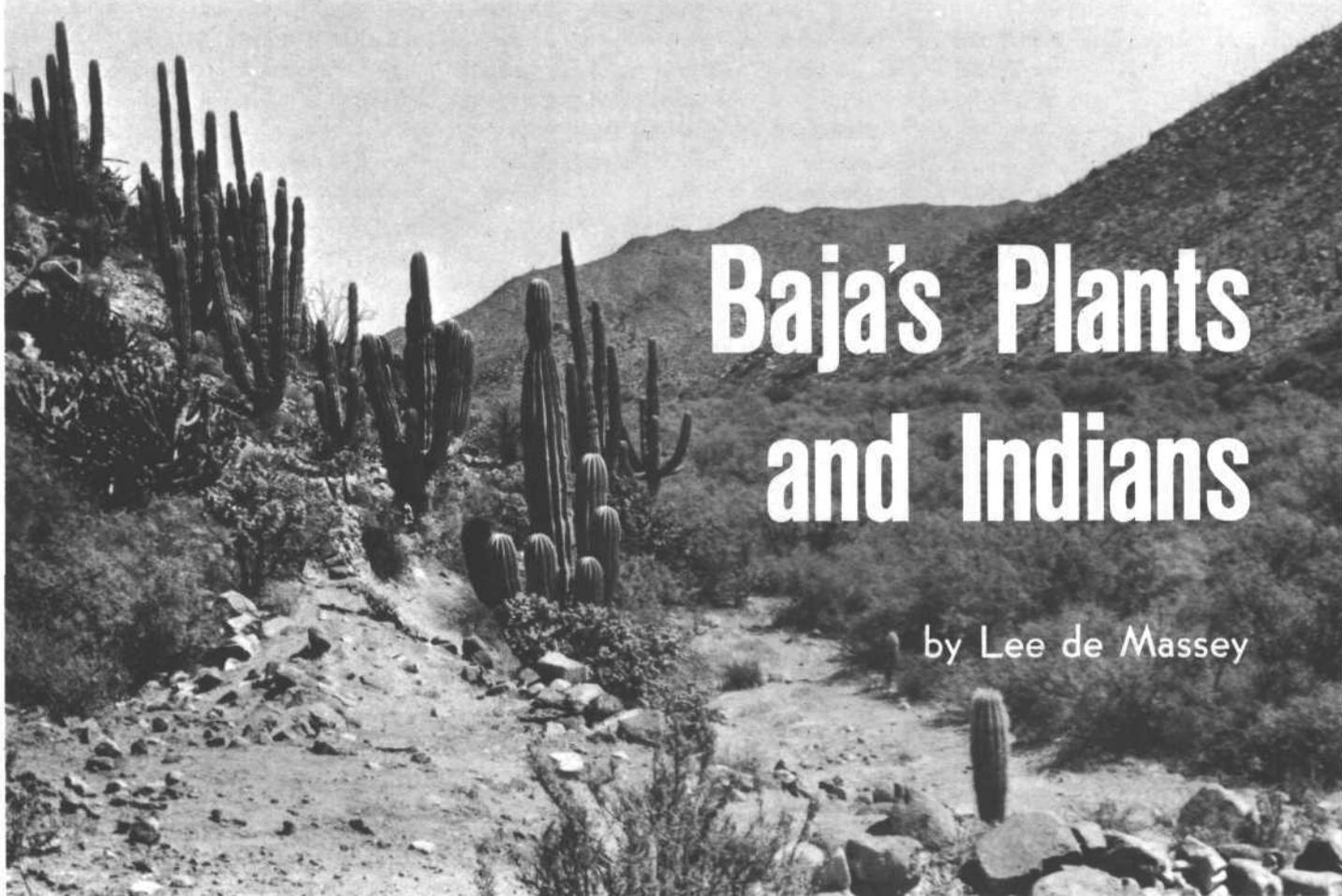
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# Baja's Plants and Indians

by Lee de Massey



DESERT plants are sometimes described as brave and inventive in their adjustments to arid land. "Resourceful" is a commonly used ad-

jective. The desert's people, however, are not infrequently pictured as willy-nilly wanderers who flounder about in the hope that chance will lead them to food and water.

As a way of life, nomadism is not so spectacular as making a living by performing on the high wire without a net, but the penalty paid for ineptness is exactly the same. Nomadic groups face a stern choice—efficiency or extinction.

The basic problem of finding water in a dry land is not a simple matter, even now. Although water is available in countless spots along Baja California's coasts and today's non-nomadic fishermen who visit remote areas know where to find it, most of us would soon die of thirst in these places, never realizing that a water source was nearby.

Knowing which plants will have what parts of their structures available for eat-

ing, and when, is another nomadic skill. One wonders how people discovered that certain poisonous parts of plants can be made edible by leaching out the toxic ingredient—and how many lives were lost in the process.

The heritage of nomadism, in short, is as complicated and honorable as that of agriculture. Both are the result of thousands of years of experimentation and evaluation.

In the sixteenth century, knowledge of crop-planting was still spreading slowly outward from central Mexico. It was being practiced in parts of Arizona, but had not yet been dispersed much further to the west. On the northeastern outpost of Baja California, word of the discovery had barely begun to drift southward. Although they lived in a land where the majority of us would starve if left to our own devices, even with modern equipment, the peninsula's Indians were able to do much better than merely survive—they thrived.

Estimates of population at the time of Spanish contact vary between 50,000

and 75,000. Both are respectably large figures. The Indians lived in bands the Jesuits called *rancherías*—a word that Spaniards had previously applied to groups of nomadic Mongols, Arabs and mainland Mexicans. Each *ranchería* traveled within the boundaries of an area to which it held ownership rights and trespassing was considered a hostile act, except under unusual circumstances. Each band had between 25 and 150 people, enough to create a network of trails throughout most of the peninsula. The size of the larger bands is remarkable; nomadic groups throughout the world usually have no more than 50 members.

That these nuclei of population could be so sizable was due to the nature of the peninsula and its food resources, and to the well-developed skills of the Indians.

The long land is considered hostile in our time, but in those days it amply supplied the needs of its nomadic people. Its shape, which now creates isolation, brought the bounty of the sea within easy reach of the interior. The rough terrain that blocks communica-

tion and makes agriculture difficult is an efficient filter and distributor of rainfall.

The water supply then was as it is now—not lavish, but adequate enough to support small and scattered groups of people. There were springs, subsurface sources, and the rock-bottomed pools and water-filled crevices that Mexicans today call *tinajas*—the same word used for a large jar. Subsoil water nourished the plants, and the heavy fogs that still sweep in from the Pacific's cool waters added their moisture to the coastal plains' desert jungles.

The overall pattern of plant growth was ideally suited to nomadic needs, a fact apparent today. Driving north from Todos Santos you reach the crest of a small rolling hill below which acres of yucca stretch across the land where arroyos have formed an alluvial plain underlain by groundwater. There are literally thousands of similar plant pockets throughout the desert and steppe lands of Baja California, on plains and hillsides and in canyons. This pattern of distribution is convenient for people who must walk to wherever a food supply awaits them. For desert nomads, they had it good.

Seeds, of great importance in the diet, were eaten as is, or toasted and ground into meal. Large grinding stones are still found occasionally, some hollowed in bedrock. Among the larger edible seeds were those of cat's claw, goatnut, ironwood, ocotillo, mesquite, palo verde and coral vine. Pinenuts and acorns were concentrated on the better-watered mountain heights. Annual and perennial grasses yielded small seeds. In addition to their seeds, the pulpy pods of the mesquite and the blossoms of the ocotillo were also eaten.

Cactus in its many forms supplied most of the fruit, supplemented by wild fig, wild plums and native palms. The roots that earned the Indians of California the name "Digger" did not stop at the border, wild sweet potatoes, jicama, and numerous lilies—some onion-flavored—were also on the peninsular menu.

There were many greens — among them purslanes, mustards, saltbushes and ice plants. The sweet heart of the agave was roasted and its juicy leaves were carried around as portable water supplies

when necessary. Yucca buds were eaten both uncooked and roasted. Pitahayas, wild plums, pinenuts and the purslane called *verdolaga* are plentiful enough to reach the markets of La Paz even today, along with a small wild chile also said to be native.

The peninsula's all-time No. 1 plant product is the fruit of several kinds of cactus that are lumped together under the common name *pitahaya* or *pitaya*. The sprawling sour pitahaya, or galloping cactus (*Machaerocereus gummosus*), is the preferred variety today, as it was centuries ago. Not really sour, it has an acid quality that makes upper teeth grate against lowers. Both skin and flesh are a deep bright red, and a large fruit is the size of a tennis ball.

The sweet pitahaya, or organpipe cactus (*Lemaireocereus thurberi*), is more plentiful and more bland in flavor. One kind has green-skinned fruit and white flesh, the other, fruit with red skin and flesh.

These and the less common pitahayas are probably responsible for about fifty percent of the derogatory things that are said about the peninsula's Indians, who recovered the undigested pitahaya seeds in a process the Spaniards wittily dubbed "the Second Harvest." During the fruiting season, excreta was deposited on prepared beds of rock or brush. After drying, the seeds were winnowed, toasted and ground into meal. Of the Second Harvest, Padre Jacob Baegert says, "Whether all of this happens because of want, voracity, or out of love for the pitahayas, I leave undecided." A statement that is probably the most perceptive the irascible padre ever made about Indian life.

The pitahaya season was the Indians' period of food prosperity. Nature provided nurture with little effort. The food surplus gave them a greatly increased amount of energy, which they were accustomed to budget in ways that probably would have been acceptable to the ancient Greeks, but did not earn the approval of the missionaries.

Pitahayas are still avidly collected by Baja Californians (without any noticeable amount of orgy). Most of the fruit is consumed immediately, although some is occasionally made into a jam that keeps for a short while (the long-

term preservation of fruit is not customary in Mexico).

In the south the popularity of the pitahaya is briefly rivaled by the small golden native plum. A La Paz legend says that if you eat a *ciruela* from El Mogote, the sand-spit across from town, you are fated to return—a legend doubted by those visitors who eat one without knowing that the bitter and rather furry skin should be discarded. The *ciruela* pit yields a kernel about twice the size of a pinenut and something like it in flavor.

The sea was a source of protein for the Indian nomads, and large shells strewn over hillsides far from the shore indicate their convenience as portable food containers. Thick shell middens spot parts of the coasts. Hooks-and-lines and fishnets were used except in the Cape Region, where the skill and bravery that went into the spearing of fish amazed early visitors.

Several large game animals are native to the peninsula—the desert mountain sheep, pronghorn antelope and deer. Even though the Indians had efficient weapons and were skilled hunters, the killing of a large animal was a major event.

Like the old-time Southerners of the piney woods who claimed that supper was "anything that runs across the yard," the desert nomads ate anything they could catch. In our terms the list is one to gag on, in terms of human survival in an area where protein is hard to get, grubs and snakes and mice are merely ordinary fare—in that day or this. The solutions of people who must face a constant protein shortage have always disgusted those who are more fortunate. Hipparchus, traveling about 100 B.C., did not care for the lives the people of Egypt's advanced civilization led, "forever plucking quails and slimy magpies." Baja Californians themselves were not entirely without food taboos. They did not eat the badger, which they thought acted rather like a human.

An Indian custom that could be called "Friendly Digestion" is responsible for the 50 percent of their bad press that is not due to the Second Harvest. In Friendly Digestion, a piece of meat was tied on a string, swallowed, allowed a slight period of rest, retrieved, and passed on to the next person—until it had disintegrated. Friendly Digestion is some-

times interpreted as having been another answer to the meat shortage, but it might also have been a ceremonial rite.

In their efficient exploitation of a well-endowed environment, the Baja California nomads were able to acquire surplus amounts of food even when there were no pitahayas. Not a great abundance, but enough so that they could do something besides hunt and collect.

The most striking evidence of this free time are the works of art that are still found on rocks. Designs of the northern third of the peninsula are mostly geometric, as exemplified by the well-known gallery at San Fernando. Cape Region drawings are usually of fish, turtles, deer and rabbits. In the central peninsula rock art reaches its zenith—not only in the famous paintings, but also in elaborately whorled designs that have been pecked in boulders, notably at Laguna Chapala Seca.

When the Indians first took Padre Juan Maria Rotea to see the paintings, in 1765, they told him that they had been created by a race of giants. Jesuit historian Francisco Clavijero recorded this in his compilation, and the story has been repeated ever since.

The evidence offered in support of the belief is that the art works are high on the sides of cliffs and rock shelters—but by this kind of logic, the Empire State Building proves that Americans are a thousand feet high. No giant skeletons have ever been reported authoritatively—although nearly everyone who lives between Villa Constitucion and Bahia de Los Angeles has a cousin who has seen one.

It is thanks to the priests, primarily the untiring and dedicated Jesuits, that so many descriptions of Indian life are available. But in reading these accounts,

it should be kept in mind that the padres were 17th century Christian missionaries, not modern-day social scientists. Statements that the Indians had no religions are sometimes followed by descriptions of practices that are clearly religious.

Techniques in linguistics have undergone refinement in recent times. Today's language experts say that *all* people have moral concepts and extensive vocabularies, no matter how savage and primitive they appear to be, and that no languages are "simple." Perhaps the Baja Californians had adequate languages which were never adequately studied.

Despite the language barrier, the Indians were from the first able to communicate their feelings about the white corn the priests gave them. It was not shaped like any of the seeds they knew and they refused it on the grounds that they did not eat human teeth. Eventually they learned to like the strange new food, unknowing that the civilization which came with it was destined to destroy them.

By 1850 the nomads of Baja California had reached their trail's end, adding their numbers to the countless other

primitive peoples whose passing Charles Darwin lamented on his *Beagle* voyage, "Wherever the European has trod, death seems to pursue the aborigine." □

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# Through

# Nevada's

# Dixie

# Valley

by Doris Cerveri



**N** a one-day trip from Reno, Nevada to Dixie Valley a family can see Indian petroglyphs, examine spectacular earthquake faults, visit an old Pony Express station and prowl through the deserted silver camps of Fairview and Wonder.

Sparks, just three miles from Reno, is often referred to as its suburb and consequently East Reno. It has had other names over the years, being called New Wadsworth, Harriman, and Glendale. The name, Sparks, was chosen in honor of the well-liked cattleman and mine owner, "Honest" John Sparks, who was serving as Governor of Nevada at the time.



*Built in 1905, Fairview was a booming town in its heyday.*

Leaving Sparks, it is a smooth, scenic, 65-mile drive to Fallon through the rugged Truckee River Canyon over a high-speed excellent highway. The small communities of Wadsworth, Fernley, and Hazen are passed on the way.

Long before the railroad located Wadsworth as a division point between Salt Lake City and Sacramento, funseekers from nearby communities converged there. Historically, the area contiguous to Wadsworth is best known as the scene of the Pyramid Lake Massacre, a disastrous conflict occurring in May 1860 when many whites lost their lives in a Paiute Indian uprising. Wadsworth later became just a spot in the road when the railroad moved their installations to Sparks, and the new highway by-passed it. Fernley, a trade center and winter feeding base for livestock, was also by-passed by the freeway.

Fallon is the center of the Newland's Project. Long a stock-raising center, it did not become important or well known until about 1908 when the Truckee-Carson Irrigation Project was completed. The farming area is famous for "Hearts of Gold" cantaloupe, but alfalfa is the principal crop. Another important industry is sugar beets. Fallon is a lively place on Saturday nights as many people converge upon it from surrounding farming and mining areas.

Approximately 15 miles from town, in the Stillwater area, is the city dump. Scattered among tin cans, old bed springs, and other litter, are some excellent petro-

glyphs which have been inscribed on black volcanic rock. It is possible that there may have been an Indian encampment in the area many years ago.

Leaving this vicinity the highway flashes past alkali-covered terrain, scrubby sagebrush and sun-baked salt marshes. At a point east of Fallon where Highway 50 crosses Twelve Mile Flat is Sand Springs, and to the left about a mile from the highway a dirt road leads to Sand Mountain.

Sand Mountain is a crystal white phenomenon composed entirely of extremely fine sand which contrasts sharply with the dark, bleak range of strange looking mountains partially surrounding it. Everywhere is evidence of tremendous early day violent eruptions. Many small black lava rocks, cinder-like dust, and large boulders containing bubbly formations cover the hillsides. Why a beautiful great mass of pure white sand rests serenely in the midst of upheaval country is an unexplainable mystery.

The "big sand pile" was used as a landmark over a hundred years ago by Pony Express riders, weary pioneers, and bearded prospectors who followed a trail within a short distance of it. They knew as little of its origin as is known today. Some say this high peak of sand was blown down from the north over an abrupt ridge, and gradually built up over the years. Another theory is that an eruption belched sand out of the earth many eons ago.

It is a weary, slow climb to the top, plowing through dense, heavy sand.

There is a crater or deep impression on top that extends downward to a considerable depth. According to an article in the Churchill Standard of 1904, an Indian fell into the depression and his body has never been recovered. From this aperture, and at certain times, a peculiarly weird sound, caused by millions of particles of sand rubbing together, echoes over the area. On windy days, especially, the eerie sound can be heard for miles, which prompted the name of Singing Mountain. Wind, too, causes the entire mass to shift and change from one beautiful, graceful shape to another.

Approximately 35 miles from Fallon, in the center of Dixie Valley on the edge of a dry lake bed, is Frenchman's Station, consisting now of a small cafe, gas station, and motel. Many years ago it was a relay station for the Pony Express and a stopping place for teams freighting to the mining camps of Fairview and Wonder.

The Dixie Valley-Fairview Peak area is a tourist attraction. Many people take the seven-mile detour off Highway 50 just a few miles from Frenchman's Station to observe first-hand the power of an earthquake. The granddaddy of Nevada quakes caused frightened Fallon residents to run out of their homes on December 16, 1954. The epicenter was in the Dixie Valley-Fairview Peak area. On one slope of Fairview Peak the earth slipped 23 feet, on another, the entire side of the mountain was sliced away as if by a knife. Spectacular faulting occurred along the base of Fairview Peak, twisting and turning like an angry torrent of water. Huge pine trees were up-

rooted in many places, and in some areas the break cut right between large trees clean as a power saw. The 1954 series of quakes in the Fallon, Dixie Valley area were remarkable for the scarps and offsets created over a wide area. Because of Nevada's arid climate, massive surface faults such as these are not washed away by rainfall. They can be studied and mapped, and may provide clues to information about future quakes.

Fairview is approximately five miles east of Frenchman's Station to the right off Route 50. On one side of Fairview Peak are the earthquake faults, on the other, what's left of Fairview. All that remains of the town proper is a steel and concrete vault, a few rocky foundations and dumps of tin cans, crockery, and glass. Fairview developed into a lively boom town just a few months after being discovered in 1905 by F. O. Norton. Its population zoomed to 2000, and a town sprang up in the flatland adjoining rolling hills. Growing rapidly the small community branched out until business structures and homes crept up to the hills, pushed through the draw at Devil's Gap, extending all the way to the top of the hills. Fairview Mountain yielded its treasure of gold, silver, lead and copper, with silver the big producer, and the Dromedary Hump Mine, the Gold Coin group of claims, and those owned by the Nevada Hills Mining Company being the richest.

A 20-stamp mill, built by the Nevada Hills Company, operated from September 1911 to June 1917, when it shut down for lack of ore. This company also erected a large boarding house for single men, as

well as numerous homes for men with families. With a bank, good stores, a newspaper, and other accommodations, the town became a prosperous trading center for ranchers around Dixie Valley, and for prospectors and cattlemen in the area until the mines petered out.

A Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Stratton visited Fairview in 1914, liked it and stayed for 40 years. Through their efforts, Fairview was known for a time as the best kept ghost town in Nevada. Windows, still left in deserted buildings, were washed regularly, tumble weeds pulled, and tin cans, bottles and trash were not allowed to accumulate. Approximately four years ago a serious flash flood forced them to leave the area.

From the way Fairview looks now, after the Strattons left, vandals, bottle hunters and rock hounds ransacked the area. Buildings were stripped, and everything that wasn't too heavy to carry or bolted down was carted away. Most of the better constructed houses were moved to Fallon and are still there.

On a hill at the top of a black-walled, steep canyon are the ruins of a mill which still presents a fair appearance. Near the mill is an enormous dump of a mine approximately 1650 feet deep. Walls of the canyon are honeycombed with holes, some natural, others drilled tunnels extending many feet inward, which have been blasted out in search of riches. The owner of a concrete plant in Fallon reportedly took out about \$20,000 from one such tunnel a few years ago.

Over and around another hill is the largest mine in the area, 2700 feet deep, which has created the largest glory hole in Nevada. This is an immense chasm connected with tunnels underneath. Also a tiny cemetery nestles in the hills.

When Fairview died out, a rush took place to Wonder in 1906 which mining men thought would be another Goldfield. It lies 12 miles distant over a rough road. William Seymour, one of the original locators, sold his claim for \$300,000. By 1908 the town had a good business district and a newspaper. Between 1907 and 1921 the camp produced bullion to the tune of over five million dollars, most of which came out of the Wonder mine. Only a few wooden cabins, some foundations of other buildings, and a row of dead locust trees remain. □



*Wadsworth was once an important railroad center.*

# Burial on Boot Hill

by Jack Sheppard



ELDOM Seen Slim will be seen no more. One of the last of the single-blanket burro prospectors, the 86-year-old hermit died August 10 in a hospital in Trona, California, near Death Valley, where he spent 60 years searching for a gold fortune he never found.

He was buried on Boot Hill in Ballarat, a ghost town 35 miles from Trona in Panamint Valley; the home of Seldom Seen Slim since 1922. He was the only permanent resident of the once-thriving mining town which died 50 years before Slim. It was the 28th—and probably last burial—in the wind swept and desolate desert graveyard.

Approximately 350 people—more than Slim had seen individually in the last 30 years—stood under a blazing sun to hear Reverend Donald Sweet, of Trona's Cumberland Presbyterian Church, compare the old prospector to John the Baptist.

The comparison was made on faithful grounds; they both shared a love of the desert. But one thing they did not share in common was the love of water. Slim claimed he had not had a bath for 20 years—except for the times he would slosh water over his body to cool himself as he stood alone and naked under the desert stars.

Reading from the 121st Psalm, Reverend Sweet intoned:

"The Lord is thy shade upon they right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night." Temperatures in Panamint Valley, adjacent to Death Valley, in the summer sometime hit 120 degrees in the shade. Slim often used to say, "It's hotter than hell here, but this is where I live and this is where I'll die—and when I do just bury me where the diggin' is easy."

Services were held in the abandoned adobe ruins of the general store. On hand were Slim's friends of his later years, desert rats and prospectors of former years, the curious, and a few stray dogs, pack rats and jack rabbits.

Although called Seldom Seen Slim, during his later years Slim enjoyed talking to the few visitors who came to Ballarat. He would tell them about the old days when Ballarat flourished—and show them the crumbling school house, the grocery store, the saloon and where once stood the bordello—all the while puffing on his corn cob pipe.

Slim's real name was Charles Ferge. He was born in Indiana where he spent his boyhood until the lure of gold made him move to Goldfield, Nevada in 1905. Some hit it rich in the booming town, but not Slim, so he moved to California's Mother Lode Country where he made a meager living panning gold. In 1922 he moved into the Death Valley area. He did not find gold, but he did find the peaceful life of a hermit—this was his bonanza. □



## YOU CAN BE A TREASURE HUNTER

Continued from page 16

publishing a magazine or writing this article! I'd be out there digging! I can tell you in general where to look when you get to your deserted cabin or cave, but not which cave or cabin to explore. When you reach a likely spot, check under old steps, in and around old patios or porches, tops of doors and beams, fireplaces and windows. Check everywhere for patches. The black light can be the difference between success and failure of your expedition. Check old mattresses. Many a paper dollar has been burned with a mattress. These same rules apply in old caves.

### TO SUM UP

FIRST, it is important that you believe lost treasures do exist.

SECOND, research is most important. Use your library and join a good club. To mention a few: The Prospector's Club of Southern California, 6101 Woodward, Maywood, Calif. 90270; The Association, P. O. Box 412, Oscoda, Mich. 48750; West Coast Prospector's Club, 1930 Stewart St., #5, Santa Monica, Calif. 90404.

THIRD, decide if you want to search for sunken or buried treasure. Pick one particular lead and read everything you can get on the subject.

FOURTH, remember what I said about learning your equipment. Know how it works. Learn to fine-tune it. If the soil content changes, you will probably have to retune. A fine booklet on metal detectors and their operations is *Metal Detector Handbook* by Art Lassagne.

FIFTH, check all the likely and unlikely spots. Kids are sometimes more successful than adults because they check the spots adults pass over.

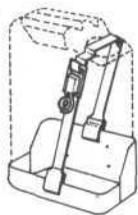
SIXTH, if you have a pretty good lead on lost treasure that is buried or hidden on private property, be sure to get permission of the owner *before* you start to dig! If necessary, offer to split with him if you discover anything of value, and *be sure* you get it in writing. This is very important as it is possible you might lose the whole works without a written agreement.

LAST, happy hunting and GOOD LUCK! You'll need it, but you'll have fun, no matter what you find! □



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# BACK COUNTRY

In publishing the results of the NOR-RA Las Vegas 7-11 races I inadvertently left out Brinkley and Sims who placed third in Class 4 in their dune buggy with a time of 38 hours, 11 minutes.

A letter from Dick Myers, southern vice president of the California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs, reminds us the 44 Southern Area member clubs will hold a clean-up meet October 5 and 6 at the Imperial Sand Dunes. Be sure and help on the project to show we are leaders in the conservation and preservation movement.

Did you see the big production given the New Years Buttercup Brawl competition for 4WD and dune buggies on the ABC Wide World of Sports? It gave us a new spark of enthusiasm for our annual meeting at the dunes this New Year.

More and more people are asking when will the dune buggy owners form their own organization, or when will the California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs recognize this fast growing band of outdoor sportsmen? Why isn't there a niche in the Association for these people to express themselves and work as a group to police themselves?

We have heard of three more off-road-racing-associations being formed. How many are really needed? Rumors have it dune buggy builder Don Arnett is behind one, East Los Angeles Jeep's Bill Hardy is forming another and Bronco race driver Ray Harvick is thinking of still another.

National Four Wheel Drive Association Director A. V. Neely said the annual NFWDA convention in Phoenix was a great success. Jack Cook was elected president. When will the NFWDA and the California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs ever get together and work as a unit?

I sure have received a lot of ribbing since the August issue of Popular Science came out last week. Erle Stanley Gardner interviewed me in an article in the publication calling me a "four wheel

drive expert." The definition of an expert is "an ordinary fool away from home."

Cool weather is coming again and its time to renew the search for Pegleg's gold. Be sure to stop by Desert Magazine and see the nuggets on display . . . this way you'll know what you are looking for . . . or what you might find by accident when you are just roaming around the desert.

From the number of people stopping by on their way to Colorado for vacation, it looks like the state is being overrun with Californians. Last night A. V. and Sylvia Neely came by with Merritt and Ruth Ladberry. A. V. now has his old Jeepster restored with four-wheel-drive under it. Of course A. V. will be the first to admit that if it wasn't for Chris, Bill Morrison and Earl Hughes it would still be sitting in his back yard.



*This picture of desert vandalism was taken by Robert Schulz, Los Angeles. After photographing the scene he "removed the unsightly vestments from the cactus, saving it further humiliation." We hope the person with the perverted sense of humor who did this has since learned to appreciate the beauty of the desert.*

We hear the 1969 California Association of Four Wheel Drive clubs convention will be held again in Fresno, only at the Del Webb establishment this time.

Everybody who attended the 7th Annual Santa Maria 4 Wheelers Jeep Jam-boree at Oceano Sand Dunes said they had a ball, with the Trailblazers from Bakersfield walking away with many of the prizes and trophies. Next month we will let you know the results of the PISMO 68 Rally being chairmanned by Charlie Erickson.

If you are planning a trip to Baja and want some company, let us know who you would like to go with and we will let our readers know. Traveling alone in Baja is not dangerous, but it sure gets lonesome when you break down and have no other vehicle along to go for parts. Some folks dropped by the other day in a Jeep pickup who spent two weeks driving to La Paz and back. Said they had no trouble and lots of fun.

There is a Jeep dealer in La Paz, a real nice accommodating fellow who speaks some English. Parts are another question. I recommend the La Perla Hotel right on the water front. Clean rooms, good food at reasonable prices and an excellent view of the harbor from the patio. The rates were 70 pesos (\$5.60) single, 90 pesos double (\$7.20) with shower. Don't leave home without the "Lower California Guidebook" by Gerhard and Gulick. It is available through the Desert Magazine Book Shop.

Looking for a place to camp, explore and rockhound for the weekend? Look to Corn Springs. Take Interstate 10 east from Indio and watch for the signs just east of Desert Center. There is a little bit of everything to see and do. From Aztec Well, the Indio club reopened the 1905 wagon trail down to the Red Cloud mine road. That part can be a rough trip, but lots of fun in a buggy or 4WD.

Want to trade club newspapers? Write to the Las Vegas Jeep Club, P. O. Box 1874, Las Vegas, Nevada 89101.

# TRAVEL

by Bill Bryan

## Calendar of Western Events

*Information on Western Events must be received at DESERT six weeks prior to scheduled date.*



## Imperial Valley Sidewinders Clean Up Valley Sand Dunes

by W. A. GRIFFIN, *Club President*

Recently the Imperial Valley Sidewinders held their conservation day on the sand dunes in Eastern Imperial Valley, near Buttercup Valley. As you know, this sand dune area is very large, and as we noted at the State Association Convention in Fresno, the many persons visiting the area each year are littering up the sand dunes. It is getting bad!

The Imperial Valley Sidewinders decided to make a dent in the mess. They took both sides of the frontage road just west of the rest area—right where the best section of the old Plank Road is—and spent one day picking up the pile you see in the picture.

The Sidewinders are a small club and the sand dunes cover a large area. The sand dunes are used by all the people of Southern California, so the Southern Section of the California State Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs Inc. has agreed to have as many members of member clubs as possible come down for a giant Southern Association cleanup weekend, October 5 and 6.

So Southern Area Jeeps, get your sand tires ready, bring along a light, two-wheel trailer (if possible), but most of all bring lots of hands to pick up litter on this SOUTHERN AREA CONSERVATION DAY, October 5 and 6.

SEPTEMBER 9-16, CALIFORNIA UNIT OF AVION TRAVELCADE CLUB, 1968 Fall Rally, Lost Creek Organizational Campground, three miles from Visitor's Center at Manzanita Lake, near north entrance of Mt. Lasser Volcanic National Park. All Avion owners now members, or wanting to be members, welcome. Main events Sept. 12-15. Write Mrs. Gene E. Young, P.O. Box 341, Topock, Ariz. 86436.

SEPTEMBER 14 & 15, LONG BEACH GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY'S 24th annual show at Oil, Chemical and Atomic Worker's Hall, 2100 West Willow Street, Long Beach. Public invited, no admission. Called "Rainbow of Gems" this year's show will include displays, working exhibits and demonstrations in the fields of lapidary, crystals, silverwork and fossils.

SEPTEMBER 15 & 16, MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY, Balboa Park Bowl, San Diego, Calif. Featuring Mexican singers and dancers, and mariachi groups, the annual event celebrates Mexico's rebellion against Spain. Public free.

SEPTEMBER 28-29, CABRILLO FESTIVAL, SAN DIEGO BAY. Celebrating 426th anniversary of the discovery of California at San Diego. Pageant re-enacts landing by Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo.

SEPTEMBER 28 & 29, NORTH AMERICAN ROCK AND MINERAL CLUB'S annual rock and mineral show, plus sport and hobby show. NAA Recreation Field, 5353 W. Imperial Highway, Inglewood. Door and drawing prizes.

OCTOBER 12, PAINTED INDIAN CAVES OF BAJA CALIFORNIA, color film and talk by Dr. C. W. Meighan, UCLA archeologist and Baja authority, San Gabriel Civic Auditorium, 532 West Mission Drive, San Gabriel, Calif. 8 P.M. Write Baja California Society, P.O. Box 643, Arcadia, Calif.

OCTOBER 17-20, THIRD ANNUAL BORREGO SPRINGS DESERT FESTIVAL highlighting the opening of the area's desert vacation season. Rock shows, art displays, guided tours and walks, 4WD trips, etc. Write Borrego Springs (Calif.) Chamber of Commerce.

OCTOBER 19 & 20, NORTHROP RECREATION GEM AND MINERAL CLUB'S Harvest of Gems annual show, Hawthorne Memorial Center, 3901 West El Segundo Blvd., Hawthorne, Calif. No admission. Write William Greenwood, 841 Bejay Place, San Pedro, Calif.

OCTOBER 26 & 27, SAN DIEGO COUNTY ROCKHOUND GEMBOREE, 7th annual show, Scottish Rite Masonic Memorial Center, 1895 Camino Del Rio South, San Diego.

NOVEMBER 4-7, SECOND ANNUAL NORRA BAJA 1000 RACE. For information write NORRA, 19720 Ventura Blvd., Suite H, Woodland Hills, Calif. 71367.

NOVEMBER 9 & 10, MONTEBELLO MINERAL AND LAPIDARY SOCIETY'S gem and mineral show, Gardens Masonic Temple, 6310 East Olympic Blvd., East Los Angeles. Free mineral specimen cards to teachers and grammar students.

# The Trading Post Classified Ads

## • BOOKS - MAGAZINES

OUT-OF-PRINT books at lowest prices! You name it—we find it! Western Americana, desert and Indian books a specialty. Send us your wants. No obligation. International Bookfinders, Box 3003-D, Beverly Hills, Calif.

"OVERLOOKED FORTUNES" in minerals and gem stones; here are a few of the 300 or more you may be overlooking: uranium, vanadium, tin, tungsten, columbium, tantalum, nickel, cobalt, gold, silver, platinum, iridium, beryllium, emeralds, etc. Some worth \$1 to \$2 a pound, others \$25 to \$200 per ounce; an emerald the size of your thumb may be worth \$1000 or more; learn how to find, identify and cash in on them. New simple system. Send for free copy "Overlooked Fortunes in Minerals," it may lead to knowledge which may make you rich! Duke's Research Laboratory, Box 666-B, Truth or Consequences New Mexico 87901.

AUTHENTIC SOURDOUGH COOKERY. Discover a lifetime of Gustatorial Delight making pancakes, waffles and breadstuffs with Sourdough Jack's Cookery Cookbook, complete with 75-year-old dehydrated Alaskan Sourdough starter. Many time-tested recipes and anecdotes. Only \$2.75 postpaid plus 10c tax for Californians. Sourdough Jack's, Dept DE, 1095 Kansas, San Francisco, Calif. 94107.

LOST DESERT GOLD, legendary and geological history of the southern California desert, with photos and maps to pinpoint locations. \$2.50 postpaid. Gedco Publishing Co., Box 67, Bellflower, Calif. 90706.

GHOST TOWN DIRECTORY — Pictures, maps, price \$1, or order free catalog, books, maps, for treasure, bottle, rock, arrowhead hunters. Pierce Publishing, Dept. T-25, Box 571, Georgetown, Texas 78626.

NEVADA TREASURE Hunters Ghost Town Guide. Large folded map. 800 place name glossary. Railroads, towns, camps, camel trail. \$1.50. Theron Fox, 1296-C Yosemite, San Jose 26, California.

RIVER OF GOLD, the richest treasure of them all. A new book "Treasure Travels" contains all new photos, maps and other valuable information on California's most fabulous treasure. \$3 postpaid. Gedco Publishing Co., Box 67, Bellflower, Calif. 90706.

ARIZONA TREASURE Hunters Ghost Town Guide. Large folded map 1881, small early map, 1200 place name glossary, mines, camps, Indian reservations, etc. \$1.50. Theron Fox, 1296-E Yosemite, San Jose, California.

SURVIVAL BOOKS! Guerrilla Warfare, Wilderness Living, Medical, Guns, Self Defense, Nature. Books—Vital, Fascinating, Extraordinary; Catalog free. Adobe Hacienda, Route 3, Box 517A, Glendale, Arizona 85301.

GUIDE TO MEXICO'S gems and minerals: localities, mines, maps, directions, contacts. English-Spanish glossary, too. \$2.00 postpaid. Gemac, Mentone, Calif. 92359.

"GEMS & MINERALS," the monthly guide to gems, minerals, and rock hobby fun. \$4.50 year. Sample 25c. Gems & Minerals, Mentone, Calif. 92359.

FRANK FISH—Treasure Hunter—said Gold is where you find it. His book "Buried Treasure & Lost Mines" tells how and where to look, 93 locations, photos and maps. 19x24 colored map pinpointing book locations. Book \$1.50. Map \$1.50. Special: both \$2.50 postpaid. Publisher, Erie Schaefer, 14728 Peyton Drive, Chino, Calif. 91710.

## • BOOKS - MAGAZINES

WILD & WOOLY WEST books: 30# Rails on narrow gauge trains, Mark Twain's Jumping Frog, Service's Yukon Poems, Uncle Jim's Book of Pancakes, Matthews' Navajo Weavers & Silversmiths, \$1 each postpaid. Cushing's Adventures in Zuni, Engler's Oliver Perry Wiggins, \$2 each. All profusely illustrated. Send stamp for catalog of Western Books. Filter Press, Box 5D, Palmer Lake, Colorado 80133.

OLD BOTTLES bring enormous rewards. Thrilling treasure hunt for the informed. Receive monthly magazine loaded with market information, illustrated articles, photographs. \$4 yearly. Write: Old Bottle Exchange, Box 243-D Bend, Oregon 97701 Request free bonus worth \$2.50.

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"ASSAULT ON BAJA," E. Washburn, 3934 Cortland, Lynwood, Calif. \$2.00 tax included, "zest of discovery" writes Belden; "wide-eyed experience" says Powell USC.

FOR SALE: Desert Magazines, first issues—November 1937, through July 1956. Best offer. Paul Agsten, 3952 Oregon St., San Diego, Calif. 92104.

FREE 128 page catalog on detectors, books and maps. General Electronic Detection Co., 16238 Lakewood Blvd., Bellflower, Calif. 90706.

## • BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

HOW TO MAKE money in mail order imports. Fabulous new method of starting your own mail order business from home. You don't invest one cent in merchandise. U.S. Government will help you! How to get free "ads" in national magazines! Includes Directory of drop-ship import mail order items. Booklet #MO-521, only \$1.00. Wade's Korner, Dept. 2, 1006 So. Gilbert Ave., Fullerton, Calif. 92633.

## • EQUIPMENT

GOLD DRY Washer plans, portable hand operated, recover gold from gold diggings, from dry river beds, etc., by air principle. \$2.00. R. Bown, P.O. Box 791, Arcadia, Calif. 91006

## • GEMS

SHAMROCK ROCK SHOP, 593 West La Cadena Drive. Riverside, California 92501. Parallel to Riverside Freeway. Phone 686-3956. Come in and browse; jewelry mountings, chains, supplies, minerals, slabs, rough material, equipment, black lights, metal detectors, maps, rock and bottle books.

CHOICE MINERAL specimens, gems, cutting material, machinery, lapidary and jewelers supplies, mountings, fluorescent lamps, books. Sumner's, 21108 Devonshire, Chatsworth, Cal.

POCKET GOLD, \$2. Placer gold, \$2. Gold dust, \$1. Attractively displayed. Postpaid. Money-back guarantee. Lester Lea, Box 237D, Mt. Shasta, California 96067.

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## • INDIAN GOODS

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AUTHENTIC INDIAN jewelry, Navajo rugs, Chimayo blankets, squaw boots. Collector's items. Closed Tuesdays. Pow-Wow Indian Trading Post, 19967 Ventura Blvd., East Woodland Hills, Calif. Open Sundays.

## • JEWELRY

JEWELRY 50% discount on all fine quality 14K jewelry. Free color Christmas gift catalog. Aikin Gem Company, Box 85D, Avery Texas 75554.

## • MAPS

SECTIONIZED COUNTY maps — San Bernardino \$3; Riverside \$1; Imperial, small \$1, large \$2; San Diego \$1.25; Inyo \$2.50; Kern \$1.25, other California counties \$1.25 each, Nevada counties \$1 each. Include 5 percent sales tax. Topographic maps of all mapped western areas. Westwide Maps Co., 114 West Third Street, Los Angeles 13, California.

CALIFORNIA TREASURE hunters attention! Here it is at last! Buried treasures and lost mines on a road map! Gold-bearing areas shaded in color, 38 inches by 25 inches, Northern and Southern California on opposite sides, 127 locations, 5300 words of clues and descriptions; keyed numerically and alphabetically, city and county indexes. Folded to pocket size. Only \$4. from your favorite rock, book and map shop. Or order from: Varna Enterprises, P.O. Box 2216, Dept A, Van Nuys, Calif. 91404. 5% sales tax, please.

MAP—ENTIRE PIONEER West (23 states), 50"x 50", old migrant, military routes, forts, railroads, stage, telegraph lines, Indian, cattle trails, ghost, mining, old towns. Price \$5. Used by Americas largest universities, libraries, historical societies. Van, N2, Tijeras, New Mexico 87059.

## • MINING

UTAH ASSAYING Company assays gold & silver, \$3.00, platinum \$3.00. Spectrographs \$5.00. 172 North 9th West, Salt Lake City, Utah 84116.

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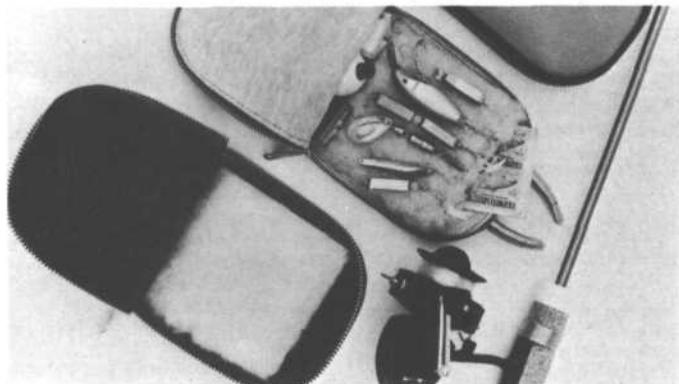
METAL & MINERAL MARKETS—Over 1000 possible buyers for over 100 different metals, minerals, ores, nonmetals and gemstones, \$2.00. D.V.D. Publishers, Box 16125, Salt Lake City, Utah 84116.

## • OLD COINS, STAMPS

CHOICE UNCIRCULATED silver dollars: 1880-81 S mint, 1883-84-85, 1899-1900-01-02 O mint \$3.50 each. 1878 CC mint \$15.00. Illustrated Coin catalogue 50c. Shultz, Box 746, Salt Lake City, Utah 84110.



# DESERT SHOPPER



## FISHERMAN'S LURE-WALLET

The Lure-Wallet can be worn on your belt or kept in your pocket so you will have lures and flies handy—not left back in the tackle box on shore. Made of Naugahyde it is unharmed by water, weather or wear. Sheepskin pad holds hooks firmly so they will not tangle. Under sheepskin pad is pocket for fishing license, leaders, etc. Costs \$3.95 prepaid. From Season Gifts, Dept DM, 1853 B Skyland Terrace Atlanta Ga. 30319.



## BIKE LOADER AND RACK

Designed for trailbikes up to 275 pounds, the 26-pound Easy-Lift attaches to auto or truck bumper (front or rear) in five minutes with four bolts. Long leverage handle rolls bike onto structural aluminum frame, taking strain out of lifting bike, according to manufacturer. Price is \$49.50, including freight charges. Order from Talbot Products, Dept. DM, Box 2706, Culver City, Calif. 90230.

## A Peek in the Publisher's Poke

Elsewhere in this issue the editor has taken full blame for a mistake that appeared in the last issue when our geography failed and we credited California with Oregon's Crater Lake.

As we are partners, I too apologize to all you Oregonians. You may well be proud of your state and by the way that ex-Oregonians have rallied to inform us of our error, it is evident that Oregon is still close to the hearts of many who no longer live there. Representative of the mail we have received is this jewel:

Dear Sirs:

In these days of violence in the streets, bizarre happenings, and vandalism throughout America, we should have become benumbed to shock, but I have to admit that I was completely flabbergasted to see that my favorite magazine, *Desert*, has been guilty of the greatest act of vandalism of the century.

I refer to their moving Oregon's scenic masterpiece, Crater Lake, to California—an earth-moving job fourteen billion times that of the Panama Canal.

If you are planning on moving Arizona's Grand Canyon to California, I suggest you check with Howard Hughes first. He may have bought it to move it to Nevada.

Yours, in shock,  
OLIVER C. APPLGATE, JR.  
Oakland, California.

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# Letters and Answers

Letters requesting answers must include stamped self-addressed envelope.

## An Apology to Oregon . . .

Governor Tom McCall  
State of Oregon  
Salem, Oregon.

Dear Governor McCall,

As the culprit who, in the September issue of DESERT Magazine, moved Oregon's Crater Lake to California, I want to apologize to you and the fine people of Oregon.

Since this is a time of extreme political views, I also want to assure you it was an honest editorial mistake and not motivated by any nefarious group to start a movement to annex all or part of Oregon.

Also the author of the article, Andrew Flink, had nothing to do with the error, so please do not ban him from your state as he has written many fine stories on Oregon.

During its 31 years of covering the West, DESERT Magazine has published hundreds of articles on Oregon without once changing its geographic picture. We will continue to cover the Beaver State, leaving your many outstanding recreational areas and places of interest where they belong.

Sincerely,  
JACK PEPPER  
Editor

## Cache of Guns . . .

This story was told to me by the man who lived it. His name was C. H. (Chris) McCain. Born in Julian 1874, died 1954.

In the year 1910, Chris McCain was running cattle on the San Jacinto mountains. One morning he woke up and walked outside and his two thoroughbred horses were gone. He was an excellent tracker and soon picked up tracks of another unshod horse, leading his horses off.

He started tracking the horses and could soon see it was going to be a long ride. He followed the tracks down through Warners Ranch, down to Senanac, to Vallecitos, to Carrizo, which had been a stage station years before. On towards Yuma, then the tracks cut south for a few miles, then turned a little westward towards the big mountains behind the Yuha wash, finally up through what we know as Davies Valley.

He knew he was getting closer so he spurred his horse to a faster walk and went into the rocks that surrounded Davies valley to the west. On the south end of Davies Valley there is a big wash called Pinto wash. The tracks went up it for a ways, then turned north through a smaller wash, then turned southwest, up the rocks through a well used trail.

He thought he was getting closer as there

was a huge rock up the trail a bit, and a good place for an ambush. He proceeded with caution and when he came to the big rock the tracks went by it, but as he looked around the rock, he could see a large opening in it. Lo and behold, there sat a Chinese. Behind the Chinese were nine cases of guns and four saddles.

He kept riding up the mountain. Finally he came upon a high peak and could see the trail below him and a man riding a horse and leading his two horses. He tied his horse up and went down the mountain on foot. The man on horseback kept looking back, but never up the mountain.

Chris got within 10 feet of the trail and waited for the man to come by, and when he did Chris stuck his 30-30 over a rock and said, "hands up" in Mexican as the man was a Mexican.

He then took the man up through the mountains through Jacumba (at that time it was called Ja-cu-may) to San Diego where the Mexican was put into jail for two years.

Chris never hunted the guns but many years later told us about them and we have tried many times to find them. We believe the guns are still there and were put there by the Mexican revolutionists and were scared to take them out for fear of reprisals.

The country is rough and the rains have washed out any sign of a trail, though there is an old Indian trail up the mountains to the southwest. It is almost gone but the markers (small rocks on large rocks) make it plain and easy to follow.

We go into this country twice a year and are slowly eliminating rock piles. All I can say is we know where the guns aren't. Good hunting.

LA VAUN MCCAIN.

## A Litter Is A Lot . . .

As your magazine is conservation-minded here is something your readers might like to know—what it costs them through taxes to keep highways clean. A recent survey of one-mile stretches in five different states showed a composite mile of highway would have the following litter: 1652 pieces of paper, ranging from complete magazines to cigaret packs and gum wrappers; 396 cans, mostly beer and soda pop; 254 bottles, majority of which, but not all, are non-returns; 50 assorted parts of automobiles, from spark plugs to bumpers; 12 pieces of clothing, and 68 miscellaneous items, including dead animals and loose currency.

The ignorant and thoughtless people who throw trash out of their cars may not have consideration for other people, or the natural beauty they are destroying by such vandalism,

but maybe we can appeal to them through their pocketbooks. The survey findings show it costs taxpayers \$2500 per mile to pick up litter during each year—which works out to 32 cents for each piece of litter picked up!

JON F. HAMAN,  
Pleasant View, Colorado.

*Editor's Note: DESERT Magazine feels the only way we can prevent vandalism and destruction of the beauty of the West is through education of thoughtless people. Sometimes we think it is an uphill battle, but we will continue to fight for the right of our readers to enjoy clean outdoor areas. Maybe a bumper sticker with Mr. Haman's tax angle such as "Litterbug Attention: It costs you 32 cents in taxes every time you litter the highway!" might help do the job. Let's hear from DESERT readers; maybe you can help us get through to the litterbugs.*

## Safe and Found . . .

My wife and I spend every free minute we can in the desert and have for many years. We usually are completely isolated from campgrounds, and may not see another person while we are out. Over the years, while taking the grandchildren with us, we have had some close calls as to someone nearly being lost. We have that solved now.

Our method is to take some brightly colored balloons and a small bottle of helium, which we carry in our Jeepster all the time. When we park, we tie a couple of balloons on long strings filled with helium to the Jeepster. Each person leaving the vehicle area has a balloon tied to them or their equipment. It is very reassuring to look out over the desert and see the balloons bobbing in the breeze even though you may not be able to see the person. From very great distances we can see the balloons in the air, indicating our camp position. On windy days we put up a large kite at the camp location as balloons tend to lay low in the wind.

BOB ROBERTS,  
Alpine, California.

## To the Rescue . . .

My daughter and I, with four children, were returning from a visit to Randsburg when we had a flat tire near Adelanto. We had hardly stopped when two men in a camper pulled up and fixed the tire. It was Memorial Day and very hot; one man almost burned his fingers. They had been fishing and were late in getting back to San Diego to go to work, yet they took time to help us and refused any payment. In the excitement I failed to get their names. My heartfelt thanks to them.

MRS. MILDRED DUMOND,  
Pomona, California.

