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TULE SPRINGS: A DESERT OASIS

A LOOK AT FLOYD R. LAMB STATE PARK & ITS HISTORY.

Just 10 miles north of Las Vegas off Highway 95.

To look around Floyd R. Lamb State Park today you would never know the trials and tribulations or the sweat and blood needed to make it happen. It's easy to assume the lush lawns, cool lakes and giant shady trees were there all the time. To the contrary, Tule Springs was not an easy place to develop, the caliche plateau and the blazing summer sun fought all who tried to make it green.

In 1916, when Bert Nay applied for water rights he stated: "This is a small spring and has never had any development work done on it and there is no ranches or improved land near it. I do intend to make this my home. I have a family."

Now take another look and see the difference seventy-one years makes. Nay's efforts were just the beginning of something he wanted for his family. Today, thanks to Nay, P. J. Gourmond and others who kept the dream alive, we have something bigger than a watering hole. We have a beautiful oasis that can be enjoyed by all.

The short tales printed here cannot reflect the total picture of Tule Springs but they will give you a glimpse of the yesterday.

MAMMOTHS & MAN

Eons ago, when Tule Springs was much cooler and wetter than today, mammoths, camels, bison, horse, giant sloths and other strange animals lived in the canyons and lush valleys. Artifacts dating to 11,000 years ago have been found here, making Tule Springs one of the oldest confirmed early man sites in Western North America.

The first published discoveries near Tule Springs were in 1913, when scientists from Santa Fe, New Mexico gathered bits of pottery, arrowheads and other items. Fossil bones were collected in 1933 by scientists from the American Museum of Natural History and the first documented "dig" took place the same year. Additional organized excavations were conducted in 1955 and 1956.

The most ambitious project began in September of 1962 and finished in January of 1963. The results from this extensive excavation placed the Tule Springs discoveries at the respectable age of 10-11,000 years ago, dismissing earlier notions that man was in Las Vegas Valley 28,000 years ago. Most important were the remarkable fossil remains of mammoths,

bison, camels and other Pleistocene fauna. Tule Springs is well known in the paleontologic world for these dramatic finds.

TULE SPRINGS INDIANS

Long before the first white man wandered through Las Vegas Valley nomadic Indian tribes frequented Tule Springs. These Indians called themselves "tudini" which meant "desert people" Tule Springs was a natural watering hole and in winter the tudini stayed nearby in temporary shelters made from mesquite branches, shrubs and tules.

The most recent inhabitants, the Southern Paiutes, descendants of the aboriginal tudini, followed the seasons, gathering food crops, hunting animals and collecting materials for making baskets, clothing and other things. Rock circles, bits of pottery, arrowheads and similar relics can still be found here.

Probably the most celebrated Indian to frequent Tule Springs was Queho (key-hoe), the renegade Paiute. According to oldtimers who lived and worked here, on some occasions Queho was labeled for certain crimes against the miners and others in the Nelson Canyon area when in reality he was laboring on the ranch. This shows he was blamed for crimes he didn't commit. Old time justice had a way of creating stories and even enacting laws to protect the story and not the individual. Queho and countless other Indians were scapegoats to the whims of the white-man's law.

Parts of the desert near Tule Springs were shunned by the Indians as being haunted and inhabited by evil gods. Even to this day some Indians will not travel near certain sections.

A WATERING HOLE FOR THE STAGECOACH & RAILROAD

In 1869, Lieutenant George Wheeler of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers stopped at Tule Springs while making a recon-

Hidden Forest

Explorers see scenic wonders.

LV Age: 1926

The following article was written by Howard M. Loy, assistant highway engineer, who was a member of the party under the leadership of Governor Scrugham which explored the Hidden Forest recently.

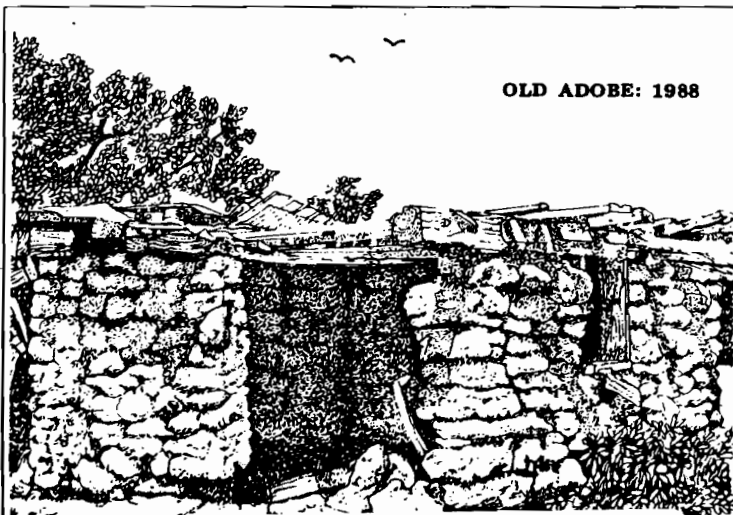
Driving along the road from Las Vegas toward Tule Springs and on out by way of Corn Creek, we see on either side of the valley a range of apparently barren mountains and find it hard to realize that hidden away in the range to the east is an extensive forest of virgin pines. Sage brush and an occasional Joshua tree are to be seen but there is no sign of vegetation different from that common to the desert.

We leave the main Las Vegas-Tonopah highway nineteen miles from Las Vegas and passing by the Corn Creek ranch, follow the old road toward Caliente. Leaving this road at a point thirteen miles from Corn Creek we drive across the easterly slope of the valley to the mouth of a canyon which leads into the heart of the Sheep Mountain Range. The mouth of this canyon is at an elevation of 5,000 feet and the slope of the canyon is considerably steeper than the valley slope approaching it.

As we drive up the canyon we notice a change in the vegetation. Joshua trees become more and more numerous and larger in size. About a mile from the mouth of the canyon we enter a veritable forest of these sentinels of the desert and here the canyon walls become much higher and very precipitous. The cliffs and rugged sky line of the canyon add much to the beauty of the scene and remind one of the sheer cliffs and sky line of Yosemite Valley.

Passing on up the canyon which is now much narrower, we soon enter an area dotted with small pine and cedars. After a short distance is passed the canyon widens again and we find ourselves in a basin thickly covered with heavy pine forest. The timber extends far up the mountain slopes and the fresh green of the needles is a brilliant contrast to the gray of the rock crags above.

We reached the Hidden Forest after a two and one-half hour drive from Las Vegas traveling forty-



OLD ADOBE: 1988

Committee on Ways & Means

Date: 4-17-07

Exhibit: D

Submitted By: Assemblywoman Kulkpatrick

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Southern Nevada Times

Published by
Phil Benson: Editor/Publisher

Southern Nevada Times examines the interesting history of Las Vegas and Clark County. Whether you are a resident or tourist, you will find the information both interesting and enlightening. The old western newspaper style captures a brief, artistic and inexpensive way to learn more about this part of Nevada.

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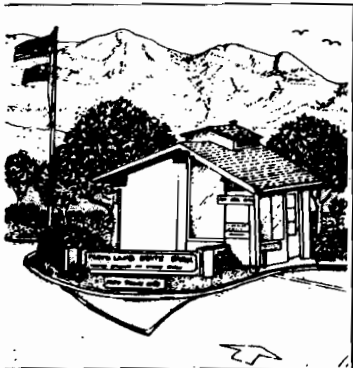
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FLOYD R. LAMB STATE PARK

Tule Springs, Nevada

Phone: (702) 486-5413

Robert Urwin Park Supervisor
Karen Rennick Ranger I



WILDLIFE

Though most species of desert wildlife are nocturnal, some animals can easily be seen during the day time. The Cottontail rabbit and Antelope Ground Squirrel are regular visitors in the desert area surrounding the landscaped picnic sites.

FISHING & LAKES

Fishing is a popular pastime at the park. The four lakes offer bullhead catfish and bluegill.

MOAPA VALLEY TIMES

By Orville Perkins, Overton, Nevada

ARROW CANYON

Few people have seen the beauty of this natural wonderland, even though it is relatively quite near. It lies scarcely half a dozen miles north of the Upper Muddy in the Pahranaagat Wash.

For eon's of time the winds and rain have eroded the rocks to make a miniature Grand Canyon Rain's falling in the area drained by the Pahranaagat Wash had to have a place to draw off the water. No doubt at one time there must have been a lake, but little by little a cut was made until today we have the natural miniature canyon

Early man used the pass or canyon when traveling from north to south. Here, he would stop in the shade in summer or get out of the wind in winter. This was good hunting grounds for mountain sheep. Water holes could be found most of the time. Evidence of camp sites and writing on the walls gives testimony they spent considerable time in this area.

The first whites following down this wash in November 1849 discovered that one could walk or ride a horse through the canyon; it was not wide enough for a wagon Henry W. Bigler and party must have been the first whites to see the canyon. The Bigler party had been looking for the Walker cut-off but had given hope of finding it at Coyote Springs. Here, they decided to go south and find the Spanish Trail. They told of how they traveled through a narrow canyon where the slightest noise was like a pistol shot. Some ten miles south, they found Jefferson

Hunt on the Spanish Trail and reported they had found the canyon, also the head waters of the Muddy River.

Arrow Canyon got its name from the high amount of arrows that had been shot up in a crack high above the canyon floor. This crack is found about half-way through the canyon on the north side of the big wash that comes in from the west. Legend has it that the Indians of Moa-pah and Pahranaagat were about to go to war. They met at the spot and a peace council was held. Peace was decided on and to show their good faith a large amount of arrows were shot up into the crack. These poor savages did not have spears to make into plow shears or swords into pruning hooks so disposed of their arrows. In later years, Indians and whites passing that way could see where primitive man had used their good judgement and avoided a war. This was one of the few disarmament conferences in history to have worked.

Modern times came and the white man in all of his infinite wisdom could not let the arrows stay where they were. A popular past-time for many years was to go up to Arrow Canyon with high power rifles and see how many arrows could be dislodged from the crack. Soon the arrows were gone, just the name remained. People moving into this area could only hear stories that there was once, indeed, a place where arrows stuck into the rock wall.

In the nineteen-thirties a C.C.C. camp made a cement dam at the head of the canyon. This small dam holds up the water even today and at times has been quite useful in the control of floods. Big floods still roll over the top and roar down the canyon as they have done for untold centuries.

To go to the canyon one gets the feeling of smallness. Echos can be heard vibrating like pistol shots in the still clear air. The walls over six hundred feet high tower over man and beast and one gets a feeling of reverence in the grandeur of this forgotten land

PLANTS

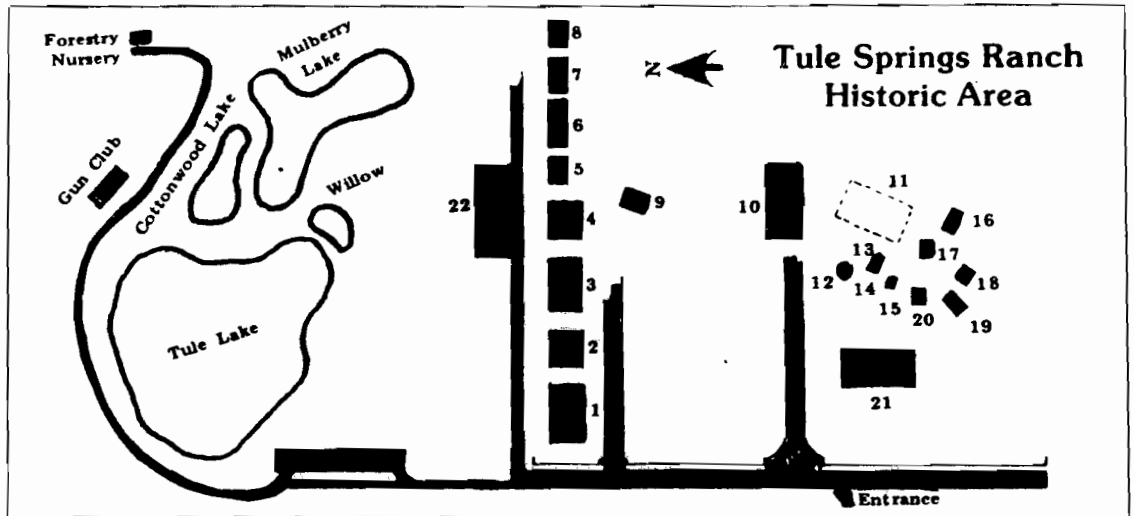
Many different species of plant life can be seen at Floyd R. Lamb State Park. The park grounds are landscaped with grass, pine trees, cottonwoods and many other types of trees and shrubs. Visitors can

also enjoy over 80 species of desert wildflowers and cactus in the surrounding area.

BIRDS

The four lakes, lush tules, landscaped areas and surrounding desert provide ideal habitats for

a wide variety of birdlife at the park. The visitors can see such birds as the Great Blue Heron, Canadian Goose, Killdeer, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Roadrunner, Gambel's Quail, Mallard Duck and Snowy Egret.



GUIDE TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS

- BUNKHOUSE:** Housed ranch hands; 4 bedrooms and a common living area.
- MACHINE BUILDING:** Storage for equipment (tractors, harvesters).
- STABLE BUILDING:** Former toolshed, laundry room, canning area, tack room and horse stalls.
- & 5. CHICKEN COOPS:** Housed domestic fowl (chickens & turkeys).
- DAIRY BUILDING:** Housed "Angus" cattle dairy cows, walk in cooler to store dairy products and meat.
- ANIMAL HOUSING:** 8. **ANIMAL HOUSING:** Pigs.
- ADOBE HUT:** Oldest building on the property. (circa 1916)
- GUEST HOUSING:** Four apartments housed guests who came for a "dude" ranch experience, or to wait out the six week residency requirement for divorce.
- SWIMMING POOL:** Originally a reservoir that also served as a water source for the vegetable garden. Later a pool used by guests.
- PUMP HOUSE:** Pumped water for water wheel (no longer standing).
- DUPLEX:** Two added apartments built to accommodate more guests.
- GAZEBO:** Fieldstone base. Fresh spring water and other refreshments provided for guests.
- ROOT CELLAR:** Storage for vegetables, canned goods and liquor.
- GENERATOR BUILDING:** Housed a huge diesel engine for electrical power.
- BATH HOUSE:** Changing rooms for swimmers.
- POWER HOUSE:** Housed small generator, original power source of ranch.
- SPRING HOUSE & WELL:** Residence of P. J. Goumonds granddaughter, Margo, Washing Well for guests.
- WATER TOWER:** Maids quarters and stairway to outside platform for guests to view panorama of the ranch. Only wooden structure on the ranch.
- FOREMAN'S HOUSE:** Residence of Foreman Cliff DeVaney and wife Pat
- HAY BARN:** Stored the 100 plus acres of alfalfa and hay grown north-east of the ranch buildings

D-2

TULE SPRINGS: . . .

naissance through southern Nevada in quest of a railroad route through to Los Angeles. In his journals he noted Tule Springs having "good water, no wood, no grazing" and on his map he showed a "good wagon road" heading north. Years later the "good wagon road" would become the lifeline for the famous mining camps of Rhyolite, Bullfrog, Goldfield and Tonopah.

By the turn of the century the "good wagon road" bore scars of ore haulers, freight wagons and buggies. The Overland and Bullfrog stage lines were vying for the ever-increasing traffic; in the summer of 1905 the Overland won.

LV Times: August 10, 1905

—A consolidation of all stage lines running south of Goldfield took place on the 2nd inst., and the combined companies will hereafter be known as the Overland Stage company.

Tule Springs was now a major watering hole for travelers going to and from the gold fields. In a few short years it had become a bustling stage stop with its own tent city including a booze joint, eatery, livery stable and blacksmith shop. This facade was about to crumble — the railroad was on its way.

In the fall of 1905, this advertisement appeared in the Las Vegas Times:

WANTED

Teamsters and graders for the Tonopah and Tidewater Railroad

Apply at office

Opposite R R Depot, or at Buol Tract
Good Wages and Long Job

By late summer of 1906, activity at Tule Springs had ground to a halt. Earlier in the year, Senator William Clark of Montana, owner of the Las Vegas & Tonopah R.R., derailed Borax Smith's plans for the Tonopah and Tidewater Railroad through to Las Vegas via Tule Springs. By late spring tracks had been laid a mile west of Tule Springs and on toward the gold fields by Clark's railroad — soon the journey from Las Vegas to Rhyolite and beyond would be made in a few short hours. Tule Springs had been passed by and was known only as "Mile 15" it would be all but forgotten for several years. By fall of 1906, all that remained was a few abandoned tents and an adobe

structure. Once again the desert held its court.

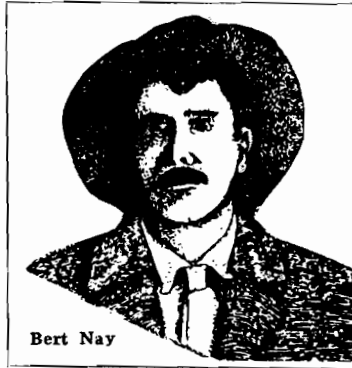
**BERT NAY
—A REAL BUCKAROO**

Bert Nay was a young buckaroo living near Gold Butte in the Virgin Mountains when the following item appeared in a local newspaper:

Las Vegas Age,
May 26, 1906

"Surrounding the springs, which seem to have a plentiful supply of good water, there are a number of acres of land of rich loamy character, susceptible of producing fruits and vegetables to perfection, and some day some intelligent tiller of soil will establish a home there and become the possessor of one of the best paying properties in the State of Nevada."

John Herbert (Bert) Nay and his young wife Anne moved to Tule Springs around 1910. At that time the adjacent land was owned by Millard Blodgett. Initially, Bert, his wife and three children lived in an old abandoned adobe while they tended to their flock of angora goats, several horses, some cattle and a few farm animals and burros. The industrious pioneers repaired the adobe, built fences, horse corrals, pens for rabbits and chickens, added a garden, planted fruit trees and raised the family. In time they built a house. In 1916, Bert filed for the water rights on the springs. Since he legally had the only source of water it wasn't long before



Bert Nay

Blodgett made him a deal on the land.

By 1924, his "tribe" had grown to two boys and five girls and the ranch comprised a full forty acres and included a large reservoir, shearing pens and dipping vats. Angora wool proved to be a good cash source and it fed and clothed the family.

Bert Nay was well known and well liked. His reputation as a champion bronc rider earned him extra recognition. At times he carried guns, as men did in those days, but he seldom used them — his fists answered all his needs.

Bert made a habit of treating the local Indians with respect and, on one occasion, freed a group of them from jail. When he needed help to mend fences, clean out a spring or whatever, they were the first to give him a hand. Among the Indians who occasionally worked on the ranch was Queho the notorious Paiute, who at the time, was thought to be hiding somewhere along the Colorado River.

Bert continued to work the ranch until 1927, when it became a

burden and his health started to fail. Later that year he peddled, or gave away, all the livestock and moved his family to California. In 1928, he sold the ranch to Gilbert Hefner, for \$2,100.

Bert Nay died on December 4, 1928. He did more than become, as the article states, "a tiller of the soil." He planted a "seed" in the desert which years later P. J. Goumond would harvest. Bert Nay indeed the first "true buckaroo" at Tule Springs.

Over the next few years Tule Springs would again return to the desert — but not totally. Prohibition and bootleg whiskey would keep it alive.

**BROOMS
& BOOTLEG WHISKEY**

Paul "Swisher" Huddleston told people who came to Tule Springs that he prospered as a broom maker (hence his nickname "Swisher"). In reality, he was one of several people in the area making illegal whiskey and during Prohibition "bootlegging" was a federal crime. The local citizens didn't care. After all, someone had to stifle the thirsts of the workers at the Hoover Dam Project, the local miners, townfolks and cowhands — what the federal agents didn't know, didn't matter.

Unfortunately for Swisher his large inventory of brooms caught fire and burnt his house down. This didn't stop the flow of whiskey. His still was located away from the fire in an abandoned adobe teamsters shack. Other stills, operated by a friend of Hud-



deleston's named Cressman, were "stashed" in a dry wash a few miles away —business flowed as usual.

Tule Springs was a natural setting for "brewin' makin'." The water from the springs was considered to be the purest in the valley. But, most of all, Tule Springs was far enough off the beaten track to avoid detection by the pesky "revenuers" and their local agents.

The feds never found the stills until almost the end of Prohibition (1933). They were destroyed, but by then there were so many bootleggers in the area (Boulder City had a whole canyon devoted to this enterprise) the local drinkers and thirsty tourists never missed a drop.

P. J. GOUMOND & THE DUDE RANCH ERA

In 1941, when Proctor Jacob (P.J.) Goumond purchased a run-down ranch from Sheriff Gene Ward he had no idea he would create a legacy. The ranch had been vacant for years and all that survived the ordeals of bootleggers and former ranchers, were some trees, part of an orchard, a few tent structures, some busted stills and an old adobe. P. J. cleaned up the property and cleared the nearby desert of creosote, cactus and mesquite and erected a ranch house, hay barn, horse stalls and other structures. Why he didn't remove the dilapidated adobe remains a mystery. In P.J.'s time this beautiful oasis was known as Tule Springs Ranch. Today we know it as Floyd R. Lamb State Park.

Initially, Tule Springs was a working ranch —a place where P.J. got away from the day to day rigors of running the Boulder Club and went home to enjoy a slower paced life with his family and friends. There were many acres in grazing fields, an orchard, and a large vegetable garden. Cattle, pigs, dairy cows, chickens, turkeys,

hay and alfalfa were raised. The drilling of wells and creation of a swimming pool and small lake complemented the atmosphere. Somewhere along the way peacocks were purchased to brighten the scenery; even today their descendants roam the property. All in all, there were over 800 acres in use. An article in the Las Vegas Review Journal, dated August 29, 1942 stated: "Some time ago, P. J. Goumond, of the Boulder Club, purchased the old Tule Springs Ranch, an historical landmark, 11 miles northwest of Las Vegas, and has since been quietly converting it into a veritable desert oasis paradise." Little did P.J., or the paper, know the best was yet to come.

During World War II, P.J. extended guest privileges to nuns, townspeople and service men stationed at Nellis Air Force Base. He was very generous and made a habit of giving departing guests something from the ranch like a sack of vegetables, or a ham, or even a turkey. After the war and the advent of Strip hotels and increased gaming activity, he extended this gratitude to others including entertainers and popular people. It soon became commonplace for celebrities to visit or stay at the ranch.

In the late 40's and early 50's prosperity reigned and P.J. saw an opportunity to capitalize on the latest fads —the "dude ranch" and Nevada's liberal divorce law. He added tennis courts, skeet and trap shooting facilities, increased the grassy areas, put canoes on the lake and added more riding horses. A major advertising campaign went into full swing and soon Tule Springs Ranch was in high gear with its share of "dudes" bouncing in (and out of) the saddle and lonely women in tennis togs or swimming suits seeking a tall, slim, silent cowboy.

Movie stars, entertainers, the wealthy and soon to-be divorced now comprised the cash crop. Cowboys spent most of their time herdin' dudes rather than cattle. The dinner bell called folks to elaborate meals, not beans and bacon.

P. J. Goumond died in 1954, and his granddaughter Margo inherited the ranch. He was a pioneer in a different era and left alegacy for you and our descendants. On top of the bones of mammoths, remnants of early man and Indian arrowheads, sweat of buckaroos and drippings from illegal stills, now rests a true oasis—Floyd R. Lamb State Park (Tule Springs Ranch).

HIDDEN FOREST . . .

seven miles and rising from an elevation of 2,000 to an elevation of 8,000 feet above sea level. We are in a section of southern Nevada which prior to a few months ago had been seen by only a very few white men. The air is quite cool and after the sun passes over the western rim of the canyon, the cheerful warmth of the campfire is quite inviting.

There are many fine trees in the forest. Several are seen from our camp which measure at least five feet in diameter and we are told that six distinct varieties of conifer have been found. We see here several splendid specimens of the fox tail pine, a rare and beautiful species, that heretofore has been considered to exist only in the forests of California.

From the camp we may follow the foot trails which lead to the rim of the basin and from points of vantage look over the broad expanse of green forest which appears as a thick velvety carpet below. Sheep Peak a few miles from the Hidden Forest, which rises to an elevation of 9,750 feet affords a wonderful view of the surrounding country.

Mountain sheep are numerous in and around the Hidden Forest. These animals have been so little hunted and molested in this region that they are comparatively tame and will stand within a hundred

yards of us and watch our actions with much interest and evident curiosity. It is planned in connection with the development of the Hidden Forest to create a state game reserve and thus protect the mountain sheep here for they are nearing extinction in other parts of the country where not protected.

We are also told there is much evidence showing that this basin was used by the ancient Indian inhabitants of the state as a meeting place or convention ground. Discoveries thus far made indicate that this section may prove an interesting and fruitful field for archeological investigations.

The basin of the Hidden Forest is ideal for recreation camp or resort. Springs of pure mountain water rise in the basin and these can be developed to provide an ample water supply. With a comparatively small expenditure the road into the forest can be greatly improved and the Hidden Forest will be readily accessible from Las Vegas and Caliente.

**SHEEP MOUNTAIN
LV Age: 1906**

A prospector returning from the east slope of Sheep mountain, says it is forty miles northeast of Tule Springs by a good road. At the base of the mountain is an old well of good water, used years ago by the Mormons who had a saw mill in the timber near by.

