



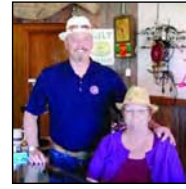
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# TREASURE HILL CHRONICLES

PIOCHE THEN AND NOW

Summer, 2010

## Pioche Celebrates 105th Labor Day



Welcome to the Labor Day issue of the Treasure Hill Chronicles. This coming Labor Day weekend will mark our 105th anniversary of this event. Pioche's Labor Day celebration has been continuous through good times and bad and has experienced many changes, but it is always eagerly anticipated by Lincoln County's present and former residents, especially those in and from Pioche. Several things have been continuous over many of the years, you might say a tradition, such as the sunrise salute to literally shake people out of bed on Monday morning, mining events, various sporting events, kids games, the fireworks, the Labor day Parade and great meals. Roscoe Wilkes has contributed a story about Labor days past, see p.11. We have included a schedule of the numerous events that start on Friday night, September 3rd and continue through Monday afternoon, September 6th.

### Friday

Things get going on Friday evening, September 3rd with the start of the softball tournament. This attracts teams from all over the region and lasts through Sunday. Amazon Ranch in nearby Dry Valley features a Kids Horse Camp, with a trail-ride, sleep-over, Dutch-oven dinner and breakfast. The busiest day with the most things on the agenda is Saturday, so if you can only spend one day, this is probably the one to pick. If you are staying over, it pays to get here on Friday and find a place to camp or stay. Hotel/motel rooms are hard to come by because those in the know book them a year ahead, but there are three full-service RV Parks in the vicinity and a free town RV park that provides water only and there is lots of open space for those that are self-contained. A couple of suggested trailer overflow spots are in front of the Catholic Cemetery and the parking lot of the Lincoln County Golf Course (this has portapotties). The businesses uptown can provide most of your needs, but in order to handle the additional guests, the following organizations provide meals at a reasonable price at the Ramada in the Town Park: The Masonic Lodge provides breakfast Saturday, Sunday 7-10 and Monday 6-9; the Pioche Chamber of Commerce sponsors a dinner on Saturday at 5 PM until the food runs out, catered by Great Basin Foods in Caliente; The Pioche Firemen and their wives provide dinner from 4 to 6 PM on Sunday and the Catholic Cemetery Ladies run a Taco Stand from 11 AM until they run out (this is very popular, so it doesn't take long).

### Saturday

The goings on at the Town Park on Saturday include the aforementioned softball tournament starting at 7AM; a chili cook-off, 9 to noon, and farmer's market 9-10 AM; a Hay Scramble (money is hidden in the hay and kids frantically search for it) and Cake Walk (the participants walk to music on numbered squares and when the music stops, the person on the winning number receives a cake; this continues until the cakes are all claimed)-these events are held at the T-Ball Field at the bottom end of the Town Park at 10 AM; the kids can all swim for free at the Pool from 12 to 2 PM. Children's mucking starts at 1 PM (they are timed on how fast they can shovel a pile of muck (dirt) into a small wheelbarrow); Singles Horseshoes starts at 2 PM and usually lasts until late because this is a very popular event and there are many participants. The adult mucking starts at 2:30 PM (contestants are timed on how long they take to fill an ore car, level to the top, with a pile of muck). Also at 2:30 PM is the Grudge Match Softball Game between the Pioche and Caliente Fire Departments. A hilarious and popular new game has been added in recent years and this is called Chicken-chucking (a shovel is used to toss a rubber chicken over the shoulder as far as possible). This event comes off at 3:30 PM. There are several other popular events on Saturday at scattered venues. They include the Lincoln Links Golf Tournament at the Lincoln County Golf Course, start times at 7 and 9 AM, see P. 12. 8 AM is the Turkey Shoot at the Rifle Range (just below the golf course on SR322), sponsored by the Pioche Rod and Gun Club. A craft show at the Pioche Town Hall on lower Main Street runs from 9 AM to 5 PM. The final event of the evening is the Night Parade and Street Dance on Main Street uptown. The dance goes from 7 PM until midnight, featuring Headz or Tailz band. The dance is interrupted at 9:15 for the Electric Light Parade.

### Sunday

Sunday starts at 7 AM with the resumption of the softball tournament and the Eagle Valley Resort's Fishing Derby out at Eagle Valley Reservoir. The Farmer's Market continues from 10 to 11:30 AM at the Town Park. There is a Golf Auction at the Ramada in the Town Park at 11 AM (they auction off serviceable donated items to raise funds to improve the golf course). The Doubles Horseshoe Tournament starts in the Town Park at noon and usually lasts all after-



A grand fireworks display begins at 9 PM on Sunday, Sept. 5

noon. The kids free swim continues from Noon to 2 PM. There will be an open house at the newly renovated Thompson's Opera House from Noon to 3 PM. The Adult Mining events have been moved this year from Monday to Sunday at 1 PM and will be held at the Town Park to allow for more out of town participants; events include Liner and Jack-leg and cash prizes will be awarded. Also at 1 PM is the Pet Show at the Old Pioche Grammar School. New this year are Lawn Mower Races, being held at 6 PM at the Horse Arena down by the Honor Camp. The evening ends with the most popular event, the Fireworks. These start at 9 PM and attract residents from throughout the county. We take a back seat to no one when it comes to our pyrotechnics; they are spectacular.

### Monday

Finally comes Monday, and we make a special effort to get the weary celebrants out of bed at the crack of dawn with the Sunrise Salute, you

don't just hear it, you feel it (several sticks of dynamite set off one right after another for several minutes). A 10K Fun Run departs from the Town Park at 8 AM, followed by the Labor Day Parade on Main Street at 10 AM. This year's theme is "My Favorite Decade" and all the floats are judged with that in mind. After the parade, everyone that isn't bolting for home heads for the Taco Stand and the Kids Games in the Town Park. The final event is the drawing for the raffle prizes. This year's prizes are a Vizio 42" Flat Screen TV, a Cannon Power Shot SX210 Digital Camera, a Wii game and a Weber Q220 Portable BBQ Grill. Tickets cost \$5 each and only 1,500 are sold. Be sure to stop by our stores and Chamber of Commerce while you are here. We have Labor day shirts, Labor Day buttons and other mementos. Just a gentle reminder; you are subject to be thrown in the Hoosegow on Main Street if you are not wearing a Labor Day Button. These only cost \$1 and there are numbers on the back for a cash prize drawing during the parade.

# WHERE WAS PIOCHE?

By Leo Schafer

The town of Pioche was founded, as were many other Nevada towns, due to vast mineral deposits located nearby. As one looks up the mountain from town many remnants of these mines are easily visible. During the big boom Pioche would reach a population of over 7,000. Throughout this period these mines, and others not as obvious, shipped nearly one-half a billion dollars worth of silver (at today's value of money). Things were certainly different then. When the silver was discovered, there was one factor that was uniquely different from now; Pioche was not in Nevada. Rich silver can be very influential and could even move a state's boundary.

The silver that moved the boundary was not in Pioche, but was about 50 miles directly to the southwest. It was discovered about the same time as the Pioche ore. The district had several names during its inception. They included Pah Ranagat, Pahrnanagat, Pahrnanagat Lake, Hiko, and others. A Post Office was opened in Pah Ranagat in March of 1867, but after a few months the name was changed to Hiko. A new county was created to accommodate the mining district, formerly in Nye County. The county was originally going to be named Stewart after William Stewart, the Nevada senator, but the recently deceased President, Abraham Lincoln, received the honor.

Hiko served as county seat for the newly formed county for a period, and then was relocated to Pioche. The Pah Ranagat Mining District fizzled after a while due to the fact there was very little ore there but, before it did, it drew national attention. It also drew the attention of the Governor of Nevada, and the Governor of the Utah Territory (Utah not yet a state); along with Eastern investors, especially in New York.

The Utah Governor arrived on the scene first. The Governor of Nevada was on his way but his party had encountered difficulties and had been delayed.

The Daily Union Vedette, April 27, 1866:  
"The Pahrnanagat Silver Mines."



"From letters written by parties now in the East we learn that these mines are now exciting considerable interest in the New York market, and for the information of all, we will give a few facts regarding them which we obtain from his Excellency, (Utah Territory) Governor Durkee, and others of his party who have just returned from a visit to the above mentioned mines.

"They are situated in the southwestern corner of Utah or the southeastern corner of Nevada, about 400 miles from this city (Salt Lake City)..."

His Excellency must have been impressed because he offered to invest in one of the new properties and claimed authority over the district since it was in Utah. When the Nevada Governor arrived, he claimed the district was in Nevada. The entire area was very much a wilderness and had not yet been surveyed. A survey would seem to be the logical way to decide where the boundary was. But the Congress of the United States had a much more expeditious idea; they would move the eastern boundary of Nevada, just to be sure the new district was in Nevada. The reason given for this is that it was felt by many that the Silver State, Nevada, could better deal with the extraction of precious metals than Utah. Also, at that time, Utah was not held in high esteem by various members of congress. So the bound-

ary was moved under the protest of the representative of Utah. In part the CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE, 39TH CONGRESS, 1ST SESSION PART 3:

#### BOUNDARIES OF NEVADA.

"...The bill was read. The first section provides that, as provided for and consented to in the constitution of the State of Nevada, all that territory and tract of land adjoining the present eastern boundary of the State of Nevada, and lying between the thirty-seventh and the forty-second degrees of north latitude and west of the thirty seventh degree of longitude west of Washington, shall be added to and made part of the State of Nevada.

"Mr. ASHLEY, of Ohio. 'In the Territory of Utah, where it is supposed this Pah Ranagat district is situated there is no law regarding mining claims. And if this bill should pass...it is proposed that the possessory right to those claims shall remain the same as if they had been originally discovered in Nevada...'

"...The Mining committee, of which I am a member, as well as the Territorial Committee, have had this matter under consideration, and are unanimous in favor of amending the bill in this way in order to secure the interests of parties who have made large outlays..."

"Mr. HOOPER, of Utah. 'This is a question affecting the Territory which I represent here; and from the reading of the bill I have not been

able to trace distinctly the line of division proposed. I therefore ask the chairman of the committee to state what extent the committee proposes to dismember the Territory of Utah'.

"Mr. ASHLEY, of Ohio. 'They propose to take off eighteen thousand square miles...'

Mr. GRINNELL, of Iowa. '...I hope we will by all means give Nevada a slice, thus securing more arable land to that State which is well governed and is now yielding a very large revenue to the Government.'

...Mr. HOOPER, of Utah. 'I ask the House, in the name of justice, and in respect to the rights of a people who have done as much as any other to sustain the Government, to reject the bill...'

Mr. ASHLEY, of Ohio. 'In a moment I will yield to the gentleman from Nevada, who is more interested in this matter than any other member of the House...'

...Mr. ASHLEY, of Nevada. ...'The reason we want this territory for Nevada is that our people from Nevada have discovered mines in that degree of latitude, and we are occupying the country now. I live in the eastern part of Nevada myself, and I know of but one Mormon family in that degree of latitude. The Mormons have always been adverse to mining; they have crushed it out in that Territory, and I can tell this Congress that our people who discover and work mines there do not wish to be under the control of the government of Utah; and I tell you that it is for the benefit of the United States that they should not be...'"

The two Ashleys [no known relation] defeated the objection of Mr. Hooper of Utah and the bill passed, thus enlarging the State of Nevada. Also worthy of comment is that the bill was written by one of Nevada's senators.

#### Where was Pah Ranagat?

Years later, a survey would determine it was in Nevada the whole time. After Congress passed the bill, the President signed it into law. It moved an entire degree of longitude, east of the area that is now known as Pahrnanagat, from Utah to Nevada, not affecting the Pah Ranagat Mining District at all. But the bill affected, along with other communities, Pioche which ended up in Nevada. So silver, very little as it

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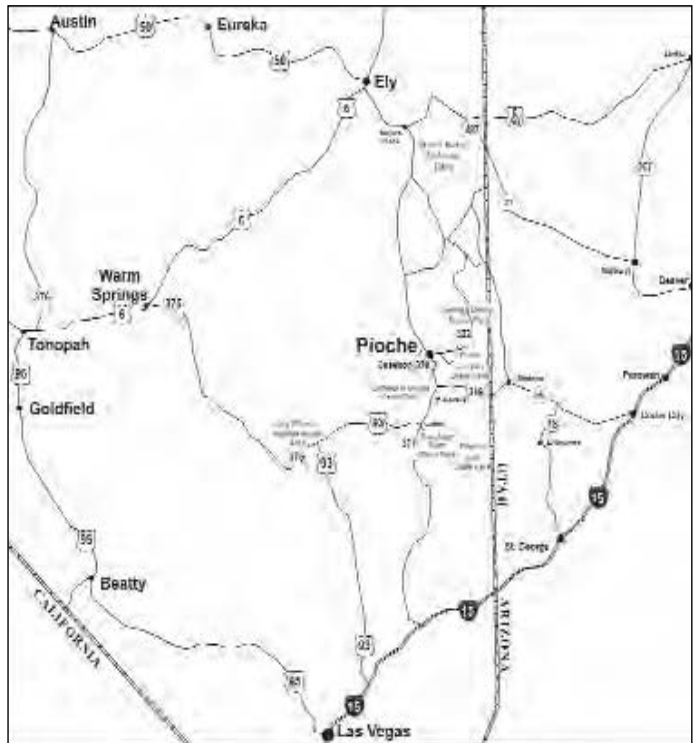
would turn out, actually changed the border.

As to all the minerals taken from Pioche, are they depleted? Not by a long shot. In a report published by the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology, the production/reserves of the following ores are still in the ground in Pioche. The two precious metals, silver and gold, total between nearly two to four billion dollars, and there are more ores that could be extracted. Iron, more than 200,000,000 pounds; lead, more than 100,000,000 pounds; manganese, more than 200,000,000 pounds; and zinc, more than 100,000,000 pounds.

## Mines of Pah Ranagat



## PIOCHE ON THE MAP



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# PIOCHE, NEVADA

## WALKING TOUR



### 1. The Million Dollar Courthouse

The Million Dollar Courthouse was designed by Edward Donahue and was built in 1871. It is constructed of brick and stone and borders on the "Classic Revival" style of architecture with its detailing and proportion. The Courthouse originally cost \$16,400, and the jail an additional \$10,000, for a total of \$26,400. Due to "cost over-runs" at the beginning of the project by politicians, and delayed payments with mounting interest, the price soon ballooned to nearly 1 million dollars (\$800,000) by 1936 when it was finally paid off.

### 2. McCannon/Cedar Streets

McCannon/Cedar Streets are where the first prominent families built prestigious homes, some of which are still in use today. Several of the homes were built by mining bosses, while others were occupied by doctors and lawyers. These streets were considered to be the fashionable place to live in early day Pioche.

### 3. The Miner's Union Hall

The Miner's Union Hall is presently the Episcopal Church. It is a 3-story wood framed structure with a gable roof. This building was built to fit into the landscape and is a typical example of "Plain Early" 20th Century style. The Miners Union was a center of social activities in this community for nearly 50 years.

### 4. Meadow Valley Street

Meadow Valley Street was the original entry street from Meadow Valley to the south of Pioche's business district. Many of the miners' cabins were located on the southeast end, and businesses flourished on the northwest end. It was one of the main business streets with the Catholic Church, Hanley's Opera House, 2 livery stables, blacksmith's shop, bakery, and dentist office being some of the first businesses located here. A few of these buildings were moved to Delamar in 1894 when that town started booming.



### 5. Main Street

Main Street runs from the famous Treasure Hill to the current Lincoln County Courthouse. From the days of mud and ruts to its present day concrete walks and asphalt paving, there have been thousands of exciting, tragic, happy, and wonderful events that have occurred along this Main Street. People from all over the world have traversed this small area and were charmed by its charisma. Some have stayed. Many have returned again and again. With its gun fights and killings, Pioche became known as the rough-

est, toughest mining camp in the West. Most of this happened on Main Street.

### 6. The Lincoln County Museum

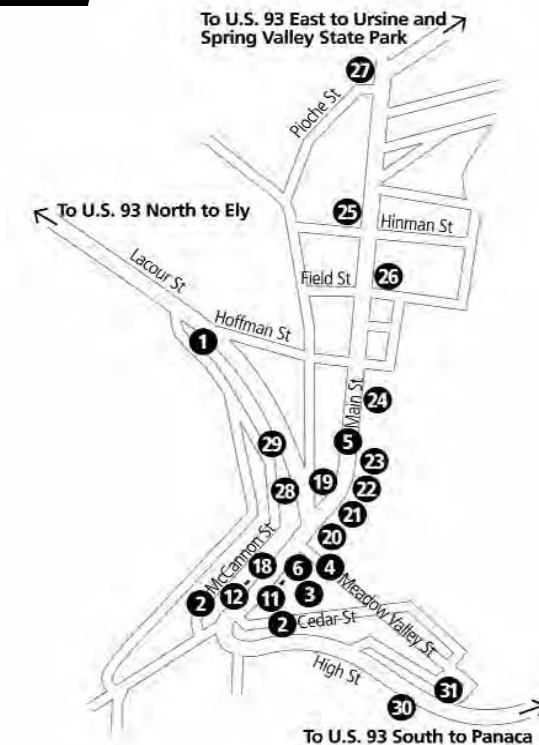
The Lincoln County Museum is housed in the building built by A. S. Thompson around 1900. A victim of a fire, it was rebuilt once, then later remodeled in 1929 to make it more modern. Upon the death of Charles Thompson, Sr., the building was sold to James Gottfredson, Sr. and he operated a mercantile and clothing store for a time. Later, the store was closed and the Gottfredson family donated the building to Lincoln County in 1962, to become a museum. Over the years, it has evolved into one of the best museums of its kind in the state of Nevada.

### 7. The Pioche Odd Fellows Lodge

The Pioche Odd Fellows Lodge was built in 1872 and was originally J. J. Halpin's Hardware Store before he moved his business to Silver Reef, Utah. It has been used for many lodge functions, community dances, parties and social gatherings.

### 8. The Nevada Club

The Nevada Club generally dates back to the early 1900s. It is on the site of the original Pioche assay office that had been destroyed by a fire. The present structure is constructed of brick, concrete and stone to reduce the fire hazard potential.



### 9. The Pioche Hotel

The Pioche Hotel dates from the turn of the century. The hotel was operated by Virginia Cottino and family until the mid-1950s. It is now a private residence.



### 10. The Commerce Cottage

The Commerce Cottage was one

of several lending libraries in Pioche that was operated by commercial establishments in the late 1800s. In 1940, the Lincoln County Library system was started with the purchase of this building which had been a jewelry store. It served as a library for 10 years. After a number of years of neglect, this building was refurbished in 1984 to become the Pioche Chamber of Commerce "Commerce Cottage" and Information Center.

### 11. The Pioche Record

The Pioche Record is the second oldest continuously printed weekly newspaper in the state, which was started in May 1870. Through the years it has changed owners and editors many times. The newspaper office was located for many years in the current Peggy's Store at 768

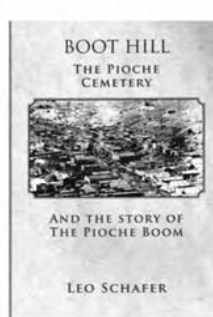
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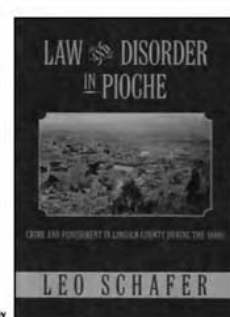


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Main Street, a building that appears to date from the early 1900s. The Pioche Record is now known as the Lincoln County Record and is headquartered at 195 Clover Street in Caliente. Two of its most notable editors have been E. L. Nores, who bought the paper about 1920 and ran it for many years; and Thos. L. Clay, a retired attorney, who bought it about 1970 and ran it until his death in 1979. More recently, Connie Simkins was the editor for 28 years, from 1979 to 2007. The current Editor/Publisher is Raymond Thompson.

### 12. The Stockum House

The Stockum House is one of the rare survivors of age and fire in this part of Main Street. It was built in 1866 and has been used as a residence, boarding house, hotel, church and once housed the Francois L.A. Pioche Art Gallery. It is presently a photography portrait studio.



### 13. Pioche's First U.S. Post Office and Western Union Office

Pioche's first U.S. Post Office and Western Union Office building was constructed in 1864 of stone to resist fire. The post office was established on August 17, 1870. Western Union service commenced in 1873. The front was later remodeled and modernized several times, but in 1985 the owners, the John Christian family, had the front rebuilt to its original design. Over the years, it has served as a cafe and has housed many other businesses. It is presently used by Rainbow Cable and Cell Phone Sales, a division of the Lincoln County Telephone System network of services.

### 14. The Alamo Club

The Alamo Club was originally built in the mid 1800s and was The Pioche Bank. It is noted for the large bank vault in the rear of the building. Throughout the years this business has hosted many notables and derelicts alike. Ernie Ferri operated the Alamo Club bar and gambling business for about 30 years, and

upon his death, his wife Lena continued to run the business. The Ferris owned the oldest continuous gaming and liquor license in the state of Nevada for many years until the 1988 sale. The current owner, Jim Marsh, renamed the bar to "The Bank Club."

### 15. Stever's Store and Beauty Shop

Stever's Store and Beauty Shop, originally built in the late 1860s, was partially burned and then rebuilt several times. It served as Stever's Apparel Store and The Garden Bar from the 1934 until 1997, when the Stever family sold the business. It has gone through several hands since, and the current owner is the Southern Nevada Water Authority.

### 16. The Pioche News Stand

The Pioche News Stand was originally built in the 1860s, and was partially burned then rebuilt in the early 1870s and in 1919. The false front "Pioneer" style and treatment of the fake brick tin appears to date from the early 1900s. The first telephone system was operated from this building and was owned by J.W. Christian. For many years, part of this building was used as the Pioche Post Office. The Rag Doll gift shop now occupies this area. The News Stand and Phone Company area is now used as storage by the owners, the Christian family.

### 17. The Pioche Mercantile

The Pioche Mercantile was originally known as Hodges & Cook Mercantile. The Christian Brothers, Edwin and Lloyd, operated the store for about 40 years, following the death of their father in about 1925. For years they handled groceries and would order any amount of needed mail order supplies that you would want. The business was acquired from Edwin Christian by Jerome and Tom Sears, descendants of J. L. Sears, a telegrapher that came to Pioche around 1873 from New York. Tom sold the business in 2001. Ted Daskas is the present owner, and it is now a second-hand store.

### 18. The Bank Club Building

In the Bank Club Building, former businesses Lincoln County Market and Treasure Chest had weathered the storms of Main Street, including fires and the mining boom and bust cycles. Many businesses have come and gone in these buildings. John Valenti operated the Bank Club bar and cafe for many years and in 1996, it was remodeled into the Grubsteak Dinner House, which closed in 2001. It is now Grub Pub and Deli. Next door is the new Dougherty's Fine Jewelry shop that opened in 2009. It was previously a deli. The Lincoln County Market housed the Navajo Bar before being converted into the Stop and Shop grocery market, which closed in 2002. That site is being offered for sale. The antique store was first Welland's Mercantile, then Gottfredson's Dry Goods, followed by Cowley's Drug Store and later, the Baptist Church-Treasure Chest. Corbett's Antiques opened in 1993 but has been closed the past few years. Leo & Dee Schafer opened Purple Onion Antiques & Collectibles in May 2010.

### 18 A. Historic Silver Café

Historic Silver Café, located north of the antique store in number 18, has been in business for 102 years under several owners. It is one of the oldest continuously operated businesses in the state. Sisters Judy Kwiatkowski and Julie White have owned and operated the restaurant for the past three years. They expanded last year with the opening of the adjacent Silver Mine Gift Shop.



### 18 B. Miner's Market

Miner's Market is located north of Silver Cafe, on the corner of Main St. and LaCour St. Owners Orlando and Debbie Sandoval opened the market in 2008. The town had been without a grocery store since the closing of the last one in 2002. In earlier days, the building was the site of Amsden Garage, Foglianos' car dealership, Orr's garage for almost 30 years, and Alfano Brothers' The Workshop (custom woodwork).

### 19. The Commercial Club/Amsden Buildings

The Commercial Club/Amsden Buildings, built about 1865, are located at the junction of Main and LaCour streets and were once the hub of community activity. Pioche's old Fire House is adjacent to the Amsden building, and it served for nearly 40 years as the fire house and apartment for the fire chief. Attorney A. L. Scott owned the Commercial Club Building for about 50 years beginning around 1916. He conducted his law practice on the first floor and lived in the basement area.

### 20. The Leader Store Building

The Leader Store building is the impressive building on the northeast corner of Meadow Valley and Main Street. It was owned for many years by the Ben Cohen family and operated as a dry goods store. It now houses a used merchandise business.

*Walking Tour continued on Page 6*

Historic

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**Walking Tour, Continued from page 5**

Next door is a massive stone building once used as a bar, the Allen's Cash Store, and a warehouse for the Leader Store business.



**21. The Overland Bar and Hotel Building**

The Overland Bar and Hotel building was constructed in 1940 by Bob Free. It has been burned and rebuilt several times over its colorful past. It originally had a bowling alley in the basement, and the west half was rented to the Allen's Cash Store for more than 30 years. This part is now a dance hall, with an antiques shop up front. Candace and Ron Mortenson have owned the Overland since 1995.

**22. The Brown/Thompson Opera House**

The Brown/Thompson's Opera House has survived from its 1873 construction date and was recently extensively renovated. It is entirely constructed of wood and has a classic revival

style combined with an early pioneer board construction. It was built by Aleck Brown in March of 1873 and renamed the Thompson's Opera House in April of 1892. It was later used as a movie theatre. The Opera House is currently owned by Lincoln County and will be used for public meetings and can be rented for private use. After the new movie house was built, the Gem Theater, the Opera House was used for weekly dances for many years. The Gem Theater showed movies until 2003, when high winds blew the roof off. The roof was repaired, but the owners decided not to reopen because it was more of a community service than a viable business.

**23. The Orr Garage**

The Orr Garage was built in the early 1870s and was constructed of stone. Its original use may have been as a blacksmith shop or harness shop. In later years, from about 1915, it was used as an auto repair garage.



**24. Pioche School**

Pioche School was built in 1909 in a "Mission" style of architecture. This was the oldest

continuously used school building in the state of Nevada in 1999 when it was abandoned for a new building, built on the northwest side of town by the Pioche Division of Forestry Honor Camp. The original school building was sold and is now privately owned.

**25. The Pioche Town Hall**

The Pioche Town Hall was built in 1936-37 by the Mormons with donated labor, material and money as the first LDS meeting house in Pioche. It was dedicated in 1950 when it was completely finished and paid for. In 1986 when the new LDS chapel was built, the old building was sold to the Town of Pioche for a public meeting place. Now known as the Pioche Town Hall, it serves many organizations for weekly or monthly meetings and social events. The most noteworthy activity held here is the "Pioche Heritage Days," which takes place in June or July and again on the Sunday of the Labor Day celebration. The presentation includes plays, usually one being a melodrama and the other an original, locally historical sketch about the colorful Pioche characters of the past.

**26. Boot Hill**

Crime was rampant in Pioche in the early 1870s. During the first settling of Pioche, it was said that 72 men "were killed with their boots on" before anyone died a natural death. Many of these men are buried in the "Old Boot Hill" Cemetery. A monument commemorating Boot Hill was built and donated by E. Clampus Vitus in 2009.

**27. The Lincoln County Court House**

The Lincoln County Court House was constructed in 1938 to replace the historic courthouse on the hill. It is a simplified version of the modern Art-Deco style, and it continues to house most all of Lincoln County's government functions. The Sheriff's Office and Jail have been moved north of town off S.R. 322. Excellent park facilities are located adjoining the courthouse with a swimming pool, ball fields, horseshoe pits, playground and picnic areas.

**28. St. John's Masonic Lodge**

St John's Masonic Lodge has been in continuous operation since 1873, making it one of Nevada's oldest lodges. It is constructed of stone and brick and is a typical "False Front Pioneer" style.

**29. The Mountain View Hotel**

The Mountain View Hotel was built in 1895 by the Ely Valley Mines to house their guests. It is a combination of styles including "Shingle" style and early 1900s "Classic Box." The building is presently in need of restoration.

**30. Treasure Hill (Nevada Centennial Marker No. 5.)**

Silver ore was discovered in this range of mountains in 1864, but no important developments took place until 1869 when mines were opened and the Town of Pioche appeared. Pioche soon became the scene of a wild rush of prospectors and fortune seekers and gained a reputation in the 1870s for tough gunmen and bitter lawsuits. Over 5 million dollars in ore was taken out by 1872, and by 1900 Pioche was nearly a ghost town. Designated the seat of Lincoln County in 1871, Pioche survived hard times as a supply and government center for a vast area. In later years, notably during World War II, profitable lead and zinc deposits were developed.



**31. Pioche Aerial Tramway**

This aerial tramway operated in the 1920s and 1930s carrying ore from the mines on Treasure Hill to Godbe's Mill in the valley. Built by Pioche Mines Company, the tramway was mainly gravity powered with the aid of a 5 horsepower motor. The ore in the full buckets rolled toward the mill and provided the momentum to return the empty buckets to the bin. In 1928, the cost of delivering ore to the mill via this tramway was six cents per ton.



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Eagle Valley Reservoir



Meadow Valley Wash, Rose Valley



Echo Point, Echo Canyon State Park

## PIOCHE BIRDING ADVENTURES

By Barbara Rohde

Pioche is an excellent place for birding, not only right in the town, but also in some of the nearby State Parks and the wooded areas on public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management. Listen in the morning, from your motel room or RV, for the raucous cries of the Pinyon jays that fly from one end of town to the hills above, in their search for pine nuts and juniper berries. These bright steel-blue birds tend to stay together in flocks, and they call to one another as they fly.

Mountain and Western Bluebirds are also bright blue birds, though much smaller than the jays. These insect-eating birds spend the winter around town, where they may find seeds and berries to eat; as it gets warmer, they return to their mountain habitat such as along the Mt. Wilson Back-country Byway, or around Highland Peak. Nuthatches and Chickadees may be seen or heard in the pine and juniper trees in the wooded outskirts of town. Red-shafted Flickers and several species of woodpeckers are also resident in town as well as in the wooded areas adjacent.

Spring brings the return of swallows and flycatchers of several varieties. Their favored habitat is around the town park, where they swoop low over the swimming pool and baseball field to catch flying insects. Say's and Black Phoebes, and Western Kingbirds also feed on those pesky insects, and can be seen in all parts of town. As the weather warms up and the wildflowers emerge on hillsides and in gardens, hummingbirds return to this higher elevation town. Black-chinned, Anna's, and Broad-tailed Hummingbirds are early visitors; the Rufous Hummingbirds generally come later in June. Western Tanagers, Bullock's Orioles, and several varieties of Warblers may be seen in the deciduous trees where they feast on caterpillars and insects throughout the spring and summer, and the Orioles also visit hummingbird feeders to augment their diet.

To see many varieties of ducks and shorebirds, take a drive to Echo Canyon and Spring Valley State Parks, east of Pioche via State Route 322. Echo Canyon Reservoir has a gently sloping shoreline that gradually drops throughout the summer; this is ideal for the shorebirds that probe in the mud for small fish and frogs. April is the best month to see a large variety that changes daily: Great blue herons, several species of egrets, Avocets, White-necked Stilts, sandpipers, and White-faced Ibis. Terns, gulls, and a variety of ducks also come through, including Cormorants, Teals, Ruddy ducks, Grebes (3 varieties), and even Loons. In canyons above the lake itself, you may see nesting Golden eagles and hawks, and hear or see both Canyon and Rock Wrens, and White-throated Swifts or Cliff Swallows. Occasion-



Pahrangat National Wildlife Refuge.

ally you may spot the nest of Great Blue Herons, that stay nearly year-round at the reservoir, or be treated to the sight of a Belted Kingfisher (which nest in the mud banks along the stream). In the willow trees lining the stream coming into the lake, you may hear or see yellow-breasted Chats and the Common Yellow-throat, both warblers.

A County road continues east from Echo Canyon into Rose Valley, and this is a rewarding drive for birders. In the summer, bluebirds may be nesting near the alfalfa fields, where parents can find plenty of insects to feed their young. Lark Sparrows and Lincoln Sparrows may serenade from a fenceline, while you may catch a glimpse of Roadrunners pursuing their

favored prey, lizards and snakes. Turning east after crossing the bridge in Rose Valley, the road continues through a narrow canyon of Ash-fall Tuff rocks, where the Cliff Swallows often nest within sight of the road. There are more willow and cottonwood trees lining the stream, where you have another chance to look and listen for Chats and Yellow-throats, or Black Phoebes. When the road emerges into Eagle Valley, the fields again provide opportunities for glimpsing insect-eating birds. Several large stands of cottonwood trees in the middle of the valley have been used as a Great Blue Heron rookery for decades. The most likely time to see the herons in the rookery is April through June; then the fledged young herons disperse to their own territories along Meadow Valley Wash.

The main street through Ursine in Eagle Valley twists and winds back to State route 322, which continues north to Spring Valley State Park. Meadow Valley Wash runs alongside this road, and there are several places to stop, look and listen for avian occupants in the willow, cottonwood, and box-elder trees. A few stands of chokecherry and elderberry trees provide fruit for birds in the early fall. Venturing into the BLM's Meadow Valley Campground may provide glimpses of Blue-grey gnatcatchers, Solitary vireos, and Nuthatches, though they are more likely to be heard than seen.

Spring Valley State Park's centerpiece is Eagle Valley Reservoir, which provides habitat for many ducks and geese. The paved road turns to graded gravel where it skirts the reservoir to the north, and continuing along this road may reward you with glimpses of Egrets and Herons in the wet meadows above the lake. Several miles beyond the park headquarters, at the 7-L Ranch, there is a meadow where Sage Grouse congregate, in a "lek," in the springtime. Ask the Ranger for directions if you are interested.

Returning to Pioche on State Route 322, keep an eye out for hawks and eagles, and especially for Mule deer and occasionally Elk that cross the road at all hours.

If you have another day to enjoy in or around Pioche, take a drive south to Cathedral Gorge or Kershaw-Ryan State Parks. The cliffs in both of these geologic-wonderland parks sustain rock and canyon wrens, white-throated swifts and violet-green swallows, and nesting habitat for owls, ravens and hawks. Additionally, the deciduous trees at Kershaw-Ryan and the seeps along the canyon floor provide habitat for rarely-seen Summer Tanagers, and Rufous-sided (spotted) Towhees. Gambel's quail and Chukar Partridges might be seen at either location, along with Roadrunners.



Cathedral Gorge State Park

# STATE PARKS IN LINCOLN COUNTY

By Barbara Rohde

Nevada

Lincoln County is blessed with some of the greenest scenery in Nevada, and within a 50-mile radius of Pioche, also has one of the largest concentrations of Nevada State Parks. In 1935, wanting to diversify Nevada's economy beyond mining and agriculture, the State Legislature created the State Park System, and in 2010 the Nevada State Park System celebrates its 75th year. Residents of Lincoln County

were pleased that three of the first four State Parks were in their own back yard: Cathedral Gorge, Beaver Dam, and Kershaw-Ryan.

Cathedral Gorge, located 10 miles south of Pioche right along U.S. Highway 93, dated back even further, however, having been declared a "State Park and Wildlife Refuge" by Governor James Scrugham in 1926. This scenic canyon park had been a favorite among Lincoln County residents from the 1890's, when its name was changed from "Panaca Gulch" to "Cathedral Gulch" by the wife of Pioche mining engineer William S. Godbe. Mary W. Godbe sometimes accompanied her husband on his trips to Bullionville, and she would ride her horse and buggy just over the hill to explore the eerie rock formations along the base of the eastern-most cliffs of the gorge. She exclaimed "Why, this is like God's own Cathedral," and she extolled the scenic qualities of the gorge to anyone who would listen. As it turned out, a lot of people listened, and started visiting the gorge, to explore the slot canyons (nicknamed caves), and enjoy a pleasant Sunday outing in the natural setting. During the 1920's, many open-air pageants and plays were put on in the Gorge, and in 1964, the Nevada (and



Meadow Valley Wash in Rose Valley

Panaca's Centennial Pagaent was produced with the backdrop of the Gorge, in the area where the 1930's C.C.C.-constructed picnic ramada still stands. Over the years, improvements were made, including a 22-unit campground and a nice tree-shaded group area, along with the Regional Information Center at the park's main entrance. A network of trails provides access to the park's features, and back-country.

Beaver Dam State Park (35 miles east of Caliente) was also established in 1935, having been "just off the main road" for the earliest years of its use. The little community of Clover Valley (Barclay) was established in 1864, at the same time as Panaca, and families from both of those towns would often go to visit families that lived in Beaver Dam Wash. They would go fishing along the natural stream that was dotted with beaver dams, or just enjoy a picnic under the native cottonwood and willow trees along the stream. The "Acoma-Shem Highway" was the first "all-weather" road from Lincoln County into Utah, and it passed only a few miles from Beaver Dam Wash. It was a "natural" to become a Nevada State Park; although the 1935 Civilian Conservation Corps crews spent a lot of time constructing camping and picnicking facilities at Beaver Dam, the floods in 1937-38 destroyed most of their work. A man-made dam in 1961, Schroeder Dam, controlled the floods, and provided a small lake for fishing; but severe floods in 2004-2005 breached the dam and led to its destruction. The area once again is a natural setting for primitive camp-



Kershaw-Ryan State Park



Echo Canyon State Park

ing; two developed campgrounds with 30 sites are set among the pinyon and juniper forested setting of Beaver Dam canyon, and a network of trails offer exploration opportunities.

Kershaw-Ryan State Park (2 miles south of Caliente) was the third park established in 1935. The Samuel Kershaw family had homesteaded this little canyon in 1870, and had an orchard and garden that was watered by the natural springs that emerge from the base of towering igneous-rock cliffs. After 30 years (and Mr. Kershaw's demise), the canyon was sold to James and Martha Ryan, who did not actually live in the canyon. During their years, local residents would come to picnic and enjoy the shady canyon, and the Ryans decided to donate Kershaw Canyon to the State of Nevada in 1934, to be made into a public park. The C.C.C. companies developed camping and picnicking sites, a wading

pond (from one of the springs), and a caretaker's cabin. The City of Caliente generously provided a caretaker during the years that Nevada's State Parks were not funded by the Legislature; and when funds became available in the early 1960's, a 12-unit campground with modern toilets and showers was built in the area surrounding the wading pond. Floods in 1984 destroyed most of the manmade features of the park, and it was a 13-year struggle to rebuild and reopen the park in 1997. In 2009, the long-awaited new campground opened, located well away from the flood channel.

Spring Valley State Park (18 miles east of Pioche) started as a county park, when Eagle Valley Dam was built in 1965. Eagle Valley Reservoir once covered 65 acres, but has shrunk a little over the years.

*Continued on Page 10*

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# State Parks of Lincoln County

*Continued from Page 9*

It provides a good trout fishery, with deep and cold waters that fill the canyon at the southern/western end of Spring Valley. Water is released for ranching in Eagle Valley and Rose Valley, for natural irrigation of the pastures.

A campground in Horsethief Gulch was built at the same time as the dam, and the campsites are tucked among the pinyon and juniper woodland. In 1969, Lincoln County turned over operation of the park to the Nevada State Park System, and it was renamed as Spring Valley State Park, though locals often just call it "Eagle Valley." The park now includes the pastures, and several of the homesteaders' homes in Spring Valley-proper. One of these, the Stone Cabin Living History Museum, is available for tours, having been renovated in 1995 to its original appearance. There is a trailhead at the Stone Cabin for a 2-1/2 mile trail that ends at the "Ranch Campground," a 6-unit "dry" campground near the park headquarters, the old 7-L (Hollinger) Ranch.

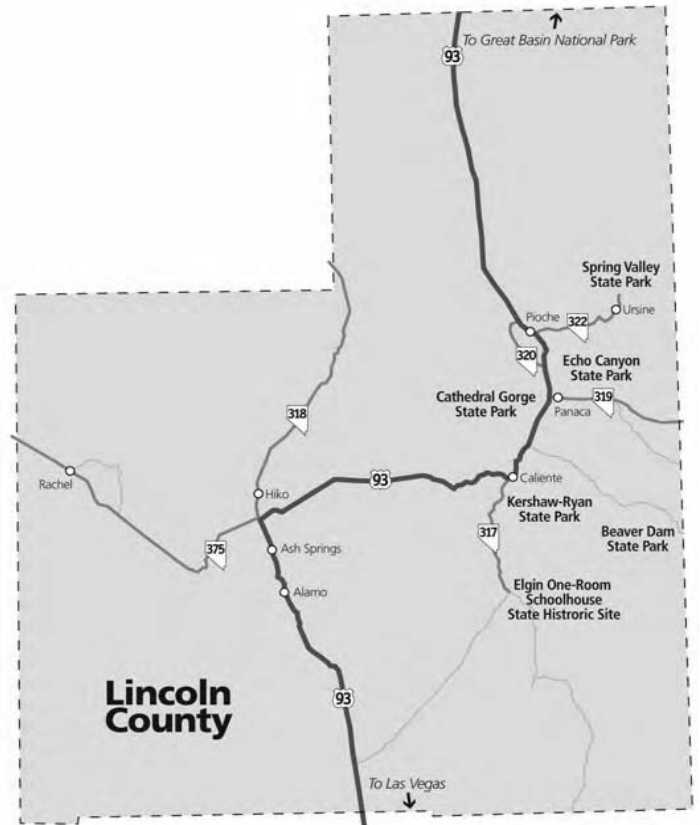
The graded gravel road continues beyond the 7-L Ranch to become the "Mt. Wilson Back-country Byway," which loops back around to Highway 93 about 60 miles later. High-clearance vehicles may enjoy this road in the summer months; it is often snowed in by November.

Echo Canyon State Park (12 miles east of Pioche) also started as a county park, when Echo Canyon Dam was built in 1969. Its campground amenities were identical to those at Spring Valley, except for lacking showers in the restrooms, or power to keep the restrooms heated and open through the winter months.

After completion of the dam and campground, the county turned over operation of the park to Nevada State Parks. An ongoing problem since the dam's first years, is the loss of water through the gravel lakebed (which was not "sealed" when the dam was built). Echo Canyon dam was built in "Dry Valley," which the pioneers named for the habit of the Meadow Valley Wash (stream) going underground at this point, and re-emerging from springs a few miles further south.

However, the lower water level of the lake makes it an ideal "warm water" fishery, for bass and crappie, and also a good location for finding "trophy size" bullfrogs (when the Great Blue Herons don't beat you to the catch). Another feature of this park is that all portions of the shoreline may be reached by vehicle (Spring Valley has only one side of the lake accessible by car, and by scrambling down a hillside). It is also less crowded than Spring Valley, and is the best location near Pioche for seeing ducks and shorebirds.

The newest addition to the State Park



System in Lincoln County is the Elgin One-Room Schoolhouse State Historic Site. This original schoolhouse was restored by the family whose members built it in 1922 to educate the schoolchildren of ranchers and railroad workers in lower Rainbow Canyon. At this time, there was no "bus service" as we know today, and the children needed to be educated closer to their homes.

By the 1960's, bus service was increasing, and the number of families living in Rainbow Canyon decreased – so the school closed after the last Bradshaw child finished 8th grade. In 1998, one of the Bradshaw family members decreed in his will the wish to see the schoolhouse restored; and in two short years, it was dedicated by the Bradshaw families and friends that funded the restoration. In 2005, the Bradshaws donated it to the Nevada State Park system for operation and maintenance. The flooding down Rainbow Canyon in January, 2005, has limited access for the present; but State Route 317 is undergoing repairs during spring of 2010.

We welcome you to explore and enjoy the Nevada State Parks!

Spring Valley State Park

# LABOR DAY - THEN

By Roscoe Wilkes

By this paper there is no intent whatsoever to deride Labor Day as it is celebrated today. In fact, to me the ones in charge are doing a great job. My purpose is only to go back, way back, and refresh recollections as to how it was then in the late 20's and early 30's.

Pioche, Nevada in 1929 was a unique town of 600 people. It was different, as it is yet today. After Pioche was made the mold was thrown away. There is no other place in this wide world quite like it, and to those who "really know" Pioche love it. It has a charm, hard to explain, but definitely a charm.

In 1929, give or take a few years either before or after, Pioche celebrated Labor Day with an intense vigor, the effort was all out, no holds barred. I hope I can describe it accurately. It deserves an honest portrayal. To give it less would be a travesty, if not a crime. As one of the very few people remaining from back then I will give it my best shot, bear with me.

It always started with the "Sunrise Salute." I will not hazard a guess as to how many sticks of dynamite or perhaps boxes Theodore Johnson took to the top of Lime Hill and set off as dawn was breaking. He took enough that the vibrations shook the town, and I don't mean figuratively, I mean literally. You could feel it as your bed shook, and the sound, it was there in full force. There was no doubt in anyone's mind it was "Labor Day."

I do not recall there being community breakfasts as done today. If there were such, I don't recall it. In mid-morning there were children's sports followed by adult sports all taking place on LaCour Street from the corner garage to the courthouse.

Did the town's boys and girls look forward to the "Children's Sports"? I will say that they did and with a passion. There were so many events and for all ages from the very small to the upper teens. Dive into tubs full of white flour to retrieve the quarters, nickels and dimes in the bottom of the tubs. Then with face covered with white flour go to the pie eating contest where a juicy blueberry pie awaited your fast eating, so long as no hands were used. The winner got a quarter, all others got a dime. There were no losers. There were foot races, three-legged races, pillow fights and more. All that was necessary was to participate, and a boy or girl could come away with a handful of coins, this whether you won anything or lost.

The adult sports were also varied. My recollection brings to mind two events that stood out, the 100 yard dash and the women's nail driving contest. A good footrace is always of interest. Glen Roeder won it for some number of years in a row, he was fast. Then Sam Graham came to town and took Glen down by a couple of yards. Time, out of shape and age caught up with Glen. He ran no more.

The women's nail driving contest caught my eye. A large timber about 12 inches square and 10 feet long was placed on saw horses. Each lady was given five long nails and a regular hammer: Who would drive- all five nails into the timber first? It was no contest. Ma

In 1929, give or take a few years either before or after, Pioche celebrated Labor Day with an intense vigor, the effort was all out, no holds barred.

Steward swung her hammer much like a professional carpenter, with weight from her shoulders landing force to every swing. Ma had all her five nails in deep while the other ladies were tap, tap tapping away at No. 1.

Pioche being a mining town, pure and simple, the Labor Day mining events held a prominent spot in the day's program and were much anticipated and eagerly watched. There were several events, two of which commanded wide interest: "mucking" and "single jacking".

If you are uninformed "mucking" means "shoveling". A one-ton ore mining car was placed in a prominent spot for viewing. Alongside of the mining car was a substantial pile of muck, consisting of mixed sand, gravel and dirt. Each contestant was, in his turn, given an empty mine car, a shovel and the muck pile. Rex Bentley stood by with a stopwatch in hand, close by and watching. At the ring of the starting bell, the mucker, usually with shirt off, attacked the muck pile in deadly earnest, shovel full after shovel full as fast as his energy level and strength would permit. As the muck in the ore car was getting to the nearly full level, Rex would with his right hand smooth it out level to make sure the car was level full when he clicked his stopwatch. This event required great endurance and strength. The contestants had it, obtained by their every day doing so down in the mine.

The single jack contest. Again if you are uninformed, a single jack is much like an ordinary hammer except that the head is a "sledge", a large piece of "heavy" forged steel with a wooden handle inserted. For the contest, along with a single jack, was a large piece of granite rock about 4' x 6' x 6', mounted on the back of a truck or a to-boy and a piece of one-inch diameter octagonal steel about eighteen (18) inches long. The steel was sharpened, like a chisel, on one end. The other end was flat to be pounded on by the single jack.

The contestant, with the steel in one hand and the single-jack in the other, would pound the steel into the granite rock against the stopwatch, i.e., being timed. So you know, with each blow of the single jack, the steel would need to be rotated with the other hand so as to chip out little pieces of the granite. When the allotted time was up and the stop bell was rung, the hole would be measured for depth to ascertain the winner.

I can see it now. Owen Walker would at the start strike the steel into the rock dry for

maybe a dozen or so blows. He would then say: "Water." A man standing by with a hose would commence the, running of a small amount of water into the hole. With each blow, at the beginning, water would splash onto Owen's shirt and face, not important, the heavy blows would continue, each blow accompanied by a noticeably loud grunt from Owen. Owen Walker hit that steel hard and fast. It took great strength to keep it going. Owen had it. He was "all man." No one ever beat Owen. With others the completed hole might measure 8 to 10 inches. With Owen it was more like 12 inches. He was never defeated.

At noon or thereabouts one would see Claude Cole behind a little counter cutting beef from a big roast and making generous sandwiches on buns. Additions were there as one chose. All of it free, no charge, and come back again if you could handle more. All in all a delicious treat and a break during a busy, busy day.

Early afternoon- saw the start of the baseball game. I recall several Pioche vs. Panaca games. Pioche had Speck Dolan who as the team's pitcher had a fast ball, immense. It was fast enough that Tuffy Cline, catcher, would buy a piece of round steak, place it in his left hand before slipping it into the catcher's mitt, this to keep his hand from being burned or beat up. I recall players, Dan Franks, Ikey Orr and others.

Yet in spite of Speck's fast ball they were not a match for Panaca. That Panaca outfit was just plain flat out too tough. They had the Ronnow boys and the Lee boys and others. Bud Ronnow was their left-handed chucker with Kenneth Lee behind the plate (catcher).

Don't try to steal 2" base on Kenneth, you won't make it. Adding Bill Ronnow, Charlie Ronnow, Lorrin Ronnow, Keith Lee and Ted Deck made for a formidable bunch.

I must mention Ted Deck (1st base)., Ted was a man of good size, handsome as all get out, a neat man, and how he could clobber that ball. Most every game I ever saw with Panaca in it, Ted put one "out of the park". Big and strong Ted swung hard every time. Ted left some grandsons who have carried on those athletic traits, the Rippetoe boys of Panaca.

The ballgame over, let us retire to upper Main street, to the area inside the turn at the top of Main. There the ring was set up for spectacular boxing. Ira "Gummie" Van Ausdale was undefeated if my memory is correct. Also worthy of mention was Art Bernard and Pat Callahan. Pat was at age 51 still punching it out with the younger bucks on an even basis. Rumor had it that Pat Callahan formerly of Butte, Montana, once lasted 7 rounds in a bout with the then light-heavyweight world champion. I remember Ma Steward in the ring vs. Daisy Cunningham, two big ladies duking it out - - - would you believe it.

By the time the fights were over it was beginning to get dark and not too far away from the ballpark again and the fireworks. Ben and Joe Cohen donated the fireworks as a goodwill gesture from their "Leader Store." Their building still stands, across the street from "Tillies."

We are not through yet. At 9:30 everyone would proceed to the grade school gymnasium for the "Labor Day: Dance," a function that saw that building "packed." And why not with that outstanding Wilcox Orchestra playing all the popular tunes with a perfect beat for dancing. Frank "Prof" Wilcox, piano; Evan (Cooney) Edwards, big bass horn; Don Ashworth, drums and singing "I Cried for You." Mel Cowley was an outstanding trumpet. Carlyle Wilcox, Tuffy Cline and Glen Roeder composed a fine sax section. One woman once remarked in my presence: "Seven men who make it sound like fifteen." She was right. How fortunate Lincoln County was to have that orchestra for many years.

It would be nice to do it all again. It was a day never to be repeated in that same fun-filled way.





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## GOING FOR A DRIVE IN THE DIRT

By Peggy Decker

The Lincoln County Golf Course is located on Lincoln County Recreation Park land off SR322 at mile-marker 2 (there is a sign at the road entrance). Membership is \$25.00/year, but everyone is welcome to play. There is no set fee but a suggested minimum donation of \$5 per round will be gladly accepted. We have no paid staff, therefore the course is improved and maintained completely by volunteers and all donations and fund-raisers go entirely into improvements to the course.

The goal for our course is to be a model for what low maintenance golf can be without just playing on dirt. Constructing and maintaining grass greens and tee-boxes is prohibitively expensive and labor intensive for small, remote communities, so we settled on a nine-hole executive course with the latest technology in artificial turf greens. We have special rules for the dirt fairways: mats or tees are allowed and winter rules are in force. The ball can be moved up to two club lengths in the rough, with is really rough, but no aids such as tees or mats can be used, although if a handy weed or tuft or grass happens to fall within those two club lengths, the players are allowed to place the ball upon them. We have also formed a summer league each year and encourage anyone who enjoys golf to come join in the fun. Please call 775-962-5206 for more information.

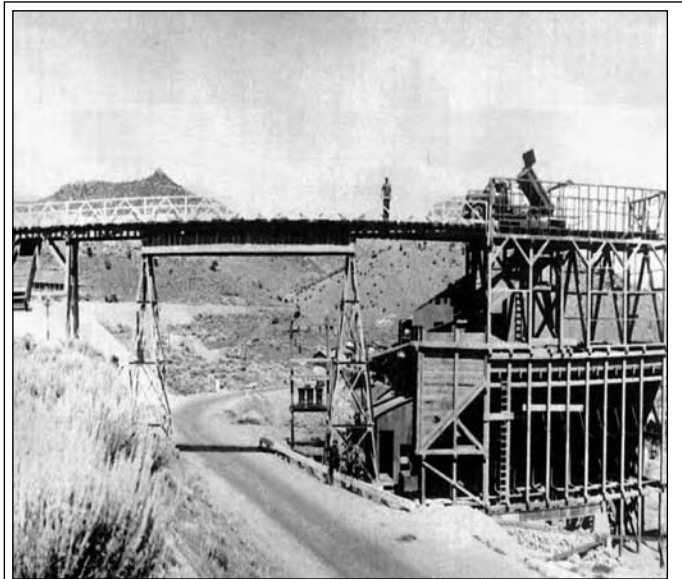
The course is a work in progress, and we are so proud of our accomplishments to date. This spring we put in an additional 20,000 sq ft of sod, to expand the 7,500 we had already installed. There are now real grass landing zones on holes #1, #3, #4 and #9. The grass has a sprinkling system around each hole that is watered by gravity flow from donated tanks installed above the course. We now have all nine holes in greens and tee boxes of artificial

turf, 5 with artificial fringe and 4 with grass landing zones.

Several fund raisers are planned for this fall - we will have our 9th annual Labor Day Tournament on Saturday, Sept. 4. It will be a 4-man scramble and tee times will be 7 & 9 AM at a fee of \$15.00 per person. In addition to your round of golf, you will receive a special t-shirt. If you are interested in joining us this year please call 775-962-5206 for your tee time (past year's tee times have been filled but if needed, a third round can be added). First, 2nd and 3rd place prizes will be awarded and a great time will be had by all. We are planning our annual auction for Sunday, Sept. 5. This has turned out to be an eagerly anticipated event that is enjoyed by all ages. All items are donated and are usually of fine quality; there is something for everyone.

This year we are doing something special in conjunction with "Toys for Tots." We are hosting a tournament (2 or 4-man scramble) on Saturday, Sept. 18 at 7AM; the fee for this will be \$10.00 per person plus a toy. Half of the fee will go to "Toy for Tots" and the other half to the golf course. We hope to have a great turn out for a wonderful cause.

Our last fund-raiser for the year will be our annual steak dinner to be held Sat., Sept. 25 this year (usually in June, but due to park improvements had to be delayed). It will be at 5 PM at the Pioche Park Ramada and the dinner will consist of a boneless rib-eye steak, dutch-oven potatoes, green salad, homemade dinner rolls, a drink and home-made peach cobbler for dessert, all of this for the price of \$15.00. Tickets will be pre-sold and will also be available at the gate. Only 200 dinners will be served, so get your ticket early. Remember, all proceeds from the fund-raisers go into course improvements so we do need your continued support.



By Leo Schafer

This tram terminal is still visible on route 321 on the east approach to Pioche. It was built for the Pioche Mining Company during the 1920s and used through the 1930s. The tram is a double-rope system with automatic dumping buckets. The term "wire-rope," rather than cable, was often used in the early days of the development of the ore trams which peaked in the United States during the period from 1890-1920. The tram can traverse topography that a road or railway cannot. Generally, it travels in a straight line making it the shortest distance from loading terminal to the discharge terminal. This method of transporting ore would often cost only pennies per ton, as was the case here, compared to dollars per ton.

The mechanical mechanism with bull wheel is still clearly visible. The track or upper cable is stationary and attached securely at both terminals. At each terminal it becomes the lower cable, while inside the structure. The heavy ore buckets proceeding to the mill at a gross vertical drop of nearly 500 feet produced almost enough energy to propel the tram with only a five horse power motor, located at the loading terminal, needed to overcome the friction. Ore was transported a distance of one and a half miles to the mill.

The crushing plant at the mill greeted the ore. The crusher could reduce 30 tons of ore per hour. The ore was further processed at the milling plant and two 250 ton bins were available to store the finished product until it was transported out via the Union Pacific Railroad.

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# GRAND OPERA

## PIOCHE VENUE AVAILABLE

After Lincoln County completed a major renovation of the Thompson's Opera House, the building was reopened in 2009. The unique facility is now available for rent by public and private parties. It is a perfect venue for many events, such as weddings, business meetings, reunions, small conferences and entertainment. Recent use includes weddings, seminars, and community meetings.

What is now Thompson's Opera House was built in 1873 and opened as Brown's Theater. It had been a central gathering place for the residents of Pioche, Nevada from the time it was built. Thompson's had enjoyed community use as a dramatic theater, musical hall, dance hall and movie theater over the years, until it closed in the 1940s.

Rental inquiries should be directed to Leslie Derkovitz at 775-962-5426 or Cory Lytle at 775-962-5165.

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Non -Profit use (governmental entity)  
**\$25 per event not exceeding 72 hrs.**

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## PIOCHE VIOLENCE

By Leo Schafer

Author James W. Abbott:  
 "The cemetery became in a sense an institution of local pride and for a time each new comer was told in boastful language the number buried there who had not died with their boots on. 'Pioche in '72' has been celebrated in song and story for its men who were with the trigger."

"He had sand in his craw,  
 But was slow on the draw;  
 So they buried him out in the dew,  
 In Pioche in '72."

Author Nell Murbarger:  
 "...the New York Herald drew national attention to the uninhibited conduct of this Western fleshpot. According to the story in the Herald, Pioche's Boot Hill was the repository of more than two hundred murdered persons. Law enforcement was only a mockery, her merchants robbed their patrons by day and their competitors by night...bandit gangs surged through her streets unmolested."

Boot Hill can still be seen in Pioche. From the Overland Hotel and Saloon (center of town), travel four tenths of a mile north, downhill, on Main Street to the junction of Main, Austin, and Comstock. Turn right on Comstock Road, travel two tenths of a mile past the IOOF and Masonic Cemetery, then past the Public Cemetery to Boot Hill. The Catholic Cemetery can also be seen by traveling further down Main Street, on the left.



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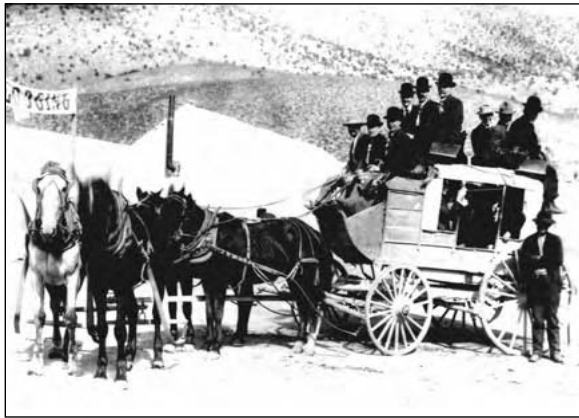
## THE PIOCHE STAGE

By Leo Schafer

Pioche had a variety of stage routes connecting it to various towns at different times. Some of these towns were mining towns that boomed and then died. One such town was Hamilton, Nevada. In October of 1871 the stagecoach from Hamilton to Pioche had sixteen passengers booked for the trip but seventeen arrived. The agent commenced an investigation. He wanted to know the identity of the "dead head." His examination was concluded when he discovered that a Mrs. McCarthy had given birth to a son.

The old stagecoach had three benches inside, each bench accommodating three passengers. The top of the coach was also used, and additional passengers could be placed there. Accommodations on top were, by and large, considered less than premium. These passengers were appropriately referred to as hangers-on.

A stable stage line connected Pioche to Salt Lake City for many years, since Salt Lake had not died like so many of the boom towns had. The trip to Salt Lake, inside the coach at today's value of money, would cost about \$700. On top, a seat in the "tourist class," would run about \$500. The best seat of all was often considered to be that next to the driver. That luxurious location would cost between \$800-\$1000. The trip to Salt Lake would take three and a half to five days depending on the weather and road conditions.



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**A Yankee trader in the gold rush; the letters of Franklin A. Buck.** Compiled by Katherine A. White ([http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/calbk:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(calbk067div138\)\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/calbk:@field(DOCID+@lit(calbk067div138)))).

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**Geology of the Great Basin** by Bill Fiero, University of Nevada Press, Reno, 1986, 197 pp.

**Nevada Map Atlas; Nevada Department of Transportation,** 1263 South Stewart Street, Carson City, NV 89712, 775-888-7000, [pjo@ndot.state.nv.us](mailto:pjo@ndot.state.nv.us), [www.nevadadot.com](http://www.nevadadot.com).

**Nevada Department of Wildlife,** <http://www.ndow.org/>.

**Bureau of Land Management,** [http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/ely\\_field\\_office.html](http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/ely_field_office.html).

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**Nevada Commission on Tourism,** <http://travelnevada.com/>.

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# New Businesses in Pioche

## Purple Onion Antique Store Opens

By Dave Maxwell  
Lincoln County Record

Dee and Leo Schafer have opened the Purple Onion Antique store in Pioche. Leo is becoming prominently known for the well-researched, well-written histories and articles of the Pioche area he has published.

The store opened on May 28, and Dee says the reason for having the store is, "to make another investment in the area."

She said they purchased the building without thinking it would become an antique store. "My husband had no intentions of it becoming a store," she explained, "but I prevailed. I felt that Main Street deserved a store, not a private residence or a pictured up building."

A retired electrical engineer, Leo Schafer has written books on Boot Hill in Pioche and one about Law and Disorder in Pioche. Ten years before Tombstone, Arizona earned its reputation as the Town Too Tough to Die, Pioche, Nevada was the toughest town in the west, where the only law was the six-gun, and it spoke often!

He has also written articles for the Treasure Hill Chronicles, which is published quarterly by the Pioche Chamber of Commerce.

Mrs. Schafer said Purple Onion will not be carrying "the fine, high-end antiques, because this is not the market for that and it's not our interest. It's not in sync with this community." The Purple Onion will have more of an "eclectic mix," she said, "and I think people will buy here

because they haven't had these kind of pieces readily available. I think the prices are going to be pretty reasonable. I wouldn't want to put something in here priced higher than I would be willing to pay for it."

The building where the store is located was once Corbett's Antiques which opened in 1993, but has been closed for several years until the Schafer's bought the building. In its past the building once was home to Welland's Mercantile, Gottfredson's Dry Goods, Cowley's Drug Store, plus two other drug stores under other names. It also once served as the Baptist Church, with a small apartment for the pastor in the rear.

One of the unique features of the building, at the rear of the store is a jail cell. Mrs. Schafer said she does not know the why or the wherefore of the jail cell. It is quite small, just a little larger than to accommodate a bunk bed. Whether it was a functioning jail cell at some time, or just a place to put children who misbehaved in Sunday School, is unknown.

There is still some leftover inventory from the store the Corbett's had, but some that the Schafer's bought last fall on a buying trip.

Store hours are expected to be Friday and Saturday from 1 - 6 pm and undecided as yet for Sunday. It will not be open full time however.

"I encourage people to come in and look around, see what we have," Schafer said. "If they are interested in something we don't have, be sure and let me know. We'd like to carry things people would like to buy."



## Gift Shop Opens at Overland Hotel

By Dave Maxwell  
Lincoln County Record

The famed Overland Hotel in Pioche has opened a small gift and antique shop right next to the hotel.

Candace Mortenson and her husband Ron said the store carries, "Souvenirs, antiques and gifts, and native American things."

Candace said the reason for opening the store is "because we need to revitalize Pioche. We need as many store fronts as we can get open."

She says the gift shop is not in direct competition with the Purple Onion, just a short distance up the street, "because they sell different stuff than we do."

There are lots of items and souvenirs that Ron and Candace Mortenson are the proprietors of the Overland Hotel Gift Shop.

The store will be open 10-6, Wednesday through Sunday, but that could change, she said. "We'll have to see how the traffic goes."

Built as a portion of the hotel when it first opened in 1940, it has not always been directly tied to the hotel. It once was a grocery store, then a coffee shop. Part of the room that included the grocery store is now the dance floor for the hotel.

Recently the area was a shop for motion picture memorabilia, and a store for medical supplies.


About having a gift shop now, "We're not looking to get rich," Candace said. "It's just an adjunct to the hotel. If you don't have something for the tourists, then you have nothing." Ron said, "It doesn't look good if you have an empty building right next door, so we're trying to utilize it."



Photo courtesy Lincoln County Record



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 Motherlode Motel ..... (775) 962-5159  
 Overland Hotel ..... (775) 962-5895  
 Sweet Life Guest Cottage ..... (775) 962-5188  
 Wright's Country Cabins ..... (866) 810-7303

## RV Parks

Eagle Valley RV Park ..... (775) 962-5293  
 Pioche RV Park (775) ..... 962-5570  
 Roll Inn RV Park ..... (775) 962-5566

## Transportation (getting here)

### Major Highways

From Las Vegas I-15 northbound to U.S. 93 north  
 From Ely U.S. 93 southbound  
 From Salt Lake City to Cedar City I-15 southbound  
 To UT SR-56 to NV SR-319 to U.S. 93  
 Lincoln County Airport ..... (775) 728-4409  
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## Bus Service

Lincoln County Transportation..(775) 728-4477

## Education

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 Elementary School K-6  
 Junior High School ..... (775) 728-4655  
 Students bus to Panaca, 12 miles south  
 High School ..... (775) 728-4481  
 Students bus to Panaca, 12 miles south

## Utilities

Pioche Public Utility ..... (775) 962-5840  
 Solid Waste – NWS Crestline .... (775) 728-4333

## County Government

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## Taxes

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 Caliente Clinic ..... (775) 726-3121  
 Steven Klomp, Dentist ..... (775) 728-4432  
 12 miles south in Panaca  
 Lincoln County Ambulance ..... 911  
 Shannon Kirchesh, Masseuse .... (775) 728-4325  
 Panaca  
 Lincoln County Physical Therapy (775) 726-3117  
 Caliente  
 Meadow Valley Pharmacy ..... (775) 726-3771  
 Caliente

## Churches

Berean Baptist ..... (775) 962-5886  
 Christ Church Episcopal ..... (775) 962-5835  
 Holy Child Catholic, Caliente ..... (775) 726-3669  
 LDS, Pioche Ward ..... (775) 962-5469  
 United Methodist Church, Caliente. (775) 726-3665

## Newspaper

Lincoln County Record ..... (775) 726-3333  
 Caliente admin@lincolncountyrecord.com

## Other Community Services

Pioche Senior Center ..... (775) 962-5378  
 (serves lunch daily)  
 Pioche Chamber of Commerce . . . (775) 962-5544  
 www.piochenevada.com  
 Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce  
 www.lincolncountynevada.com  
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 unteers always welcome. .... (775) 726-3447  
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Looking down on Pioche from the slopes of Treasure Hill.

## PIOCHE PROFILE

Much in contrast to its colorful past, today Pioche attracts new residents with its friendly, picturesque hometown appeal. Pioche is the Lincoln County seat; the courthouse is a prominent fixture of the town. With full amenities, Pioche offers good food, lodging, shopping, automotive and emergency services. The town's recreation center includes park and picnic facilities, a swimming pool and a baseball diamond. A 9-hole golf course, with artificial turf T-boxes and greens, is located 2 miles north of town at mile-marker 2 on SR322.

Pioche has two parks. The Mining "pocket" park is located at the upper end of Main Street, where the Business route from Highway 93 comes into town. It has a bandstand with a bench, overlooking a mine tunnel replica. The main town park is at the lower end of Main Street, by the new Courthouse. It has a baseball field, large grassy play area, a large picnic shelter with cooking areas, and playground equipment. This is where the Labor Day celebration events are held, including the mining/drilling competitions. The town swimming pool is located on the other side of the baseball field, and is open only during summer months.

The town's free R-V Park is located across the street from the swimming pool; six pull-through sites are available for short-term stays (less than one week). Water and sewer are available, no electricity, and a donation is requested for use. No restroom facilities are provided at this RV park. There are two commercial full-service RV parks for those wanting or requiring all the amenities.

With a population of about 800, Pioche is the northern-most community in Lincoln County. It is located 175 miles north of Las Vegas on U.S. 93 at 5,500 to 6,200 foot elevation in the high desert of southeastern Nevada. The relatively high elevation and location out of the rain shadow of the Sierra gives the town an invigorating 4-season climate. Average daily temperature:

- July average high, 89 degrees F.
- January average low, 21 degrees F.
- Annual rainfall average, 13.5 inches
- Annual snowfall average, 44 inches.

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