

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

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Welcome to Lake Mead Country





ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

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Front cover
An ecological and geological wonderland surrounds the sinuous course of the Colorado River through Black Canyon, near Willow Beach. J. Peter Mortimer photo

Inside front cover
Desert sailors "hike out" as their catamaran heels with the wind. Vast open basins and low surrounding hills make lakes Mead and Mohave ideal for sailing.
Alan Benoit photo

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Lake Mohave winds its way south through the rugged desert country of western Arizona.
J. Peter Mortimer photo

The Desert Shores of Mead and Mohave

Tracing the flow of the river Colorado from its headwaters to the sea is a complete course on the personality variations of western geology. Well-known to most are the towering, tapestried walls of Lake Powell, swelling the river to a 1900-mile girth of endless canyons. Then, the one and only Grand Canyon slims and accelerates her coursing through sliced strata, exposing millions of years of the Earth's forming. Crashing and churning white water is finally spent in the western canyon, only to gather and grow again into a lake called Mead.

Mead and her sister lake, Mohave, are often lost in the shadows of comparison with the Colorado upriver neighbors. While the Grand Canyon and Lake Powell give dimension to the term scenic grandeur, Mead and Mohave are content to enclose the river with relatively low desert mountains. This surrounding land is quite unique in its own right, with a variety of flora, fauna, and shoreline styles. The canyons in the vicinity of Hoover Dam are deep in somber shadow, while bright sunny beaches around Katherine Landing mask approaches to the 19th century gold laden areas of Chloride and Goldroad. The

Valley of Fire is punctuated with amoeba-like stone formations. The vast Mojave Desert is peopled with the haunting Joshua tree. Visible from both lakes are the shifting populations of desert bighorn sheep and his forage competitor the wild burro.

Other portions of the river may hold their reputations on visual magnitude, but those of Mead and Mohave seem to rest on subtlety and serenity. Come explore with us the details of beauty within the lakes called Mead and Mohave.

Gary

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Joshua trees, bighorn sheep, and the inimitable burros are also big attractions in this recreation area's natural scene. By James Tallon.

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The miracle started with Hoover Dam back in 1935. Suddenly, the raging waters of the Colorado River were calmed and the harsh and bitter land of beaver hunter and steamboatman, camel driver and cavalryman, wild Indian and righteous missionary was no more. And then came the rest of the miracle. It's called...

The Lake Mead National Recreation Area

It's empty, eerie country where the Colorado River squeezes past the last of the sheer cliffs and sharp shelves of the Grand Canyon and rolls into a rounder, softer — yet still colorful — land of volcanic hills and gravel flats, then back through sharp canyons before easing its way down to the sea.

This is where the Powell Expeditions ended — and it's where prospector James White was washed ashore after claiming to have been the first man through the Grand Canyon... but that was more than a hundred years ago.

Today it's filled with two long lakefuls of fishing, swimming, boating, water-skiing, and year-round camping beneath clear skies.

Lakes Mead and Mohave, and the once-rambunctious river pouring into them, are the main attractions of the hundred-mile-long Lake Mead National Recreation Area.

They draw weekend visitors from half a dozen Western states and vacationers — long-term and just-passing-through — from all over the United States and from far-off Canada and nearby Mexico, to boot.

Hoover and Davis dams are flood-controlling, water-storing, power-producing monuments to America's determination to make its deserts livable. At the same time, the reservoirs and their shores offer infinities of fun in scenic settings.

Visitors may take fast elevators on a

52-story ride deep into the innards of 726-foot-tall Hoover Dam for a look at its formidable and complex structure — and for a gopher's-eye-view of the dynamos spun by force-fed flows of water to generate an average 4 billion kilowatts of power per year primarily for the fast-growing cities of Southern California.

On the still, clear, and sun-warmed water behind the dams, boaters may lose themselves in the back canyons and find themselves at one with nature in wide-open spaces where desert-dwelling animals come to graze on marsh grasses and to guzzle from a plentiful — and reliable — supply of water, a rare commodity in the parched terrain surrounding the Colorado.

Even today, the northwest section of Arizona is a bit out of the way for anyone not driving between Phoenix and Las Vegas.

Interstate 40 — old Route 66 — rolls through Kingman, south and west toward Los Angeles, while Interstate 15, the Salt Lake City-Los Angeles freeway, goes through Las Vegas. Between Las Vegas and Kingman, though, there's only U.S. 93, carrying travelers across the top of Hoover Dam — an adventure today as it has been since the dam was finished in 1935.

Davis Dam, too, provides a crossing — between Kingman and the California-Nevada border, by way of State Route 68.

Once into this forbidding land, access to the lake and riverside beaches is easy: Paved roads off U.S. 93 lead to South

Cove and to Temple Bar, on the Arizona side of Lake Mead, and to Overton Beach, Echo Bay, Callville Bay, and Boulder Beach.

Below Boulder Canyon is Willow Beach, on the river. Down the way, Cottonwood Cove and Katherine offer access to Lake Mohave.

Long before these places attracted motorists to a bleached, baked — and endlessly fascinating — corner of the country, some truly tough travelers turned the Colorado's southward bend into an important crossroads.

Soul-searing and body-broiling as it was, this land of oven heat and Turkish bath humidity was a place some of the American West's most daring adventurers were happy to see.

California-bound riders still had to cross the Mohave Desert, and the often muddy water of the Colorado was the most they'd see before San Berdoo.

From the south, trekkers would follow the Colorado up from the Sea of Cortes — or from mid-desert, where the Gila River comes in above Yuma.

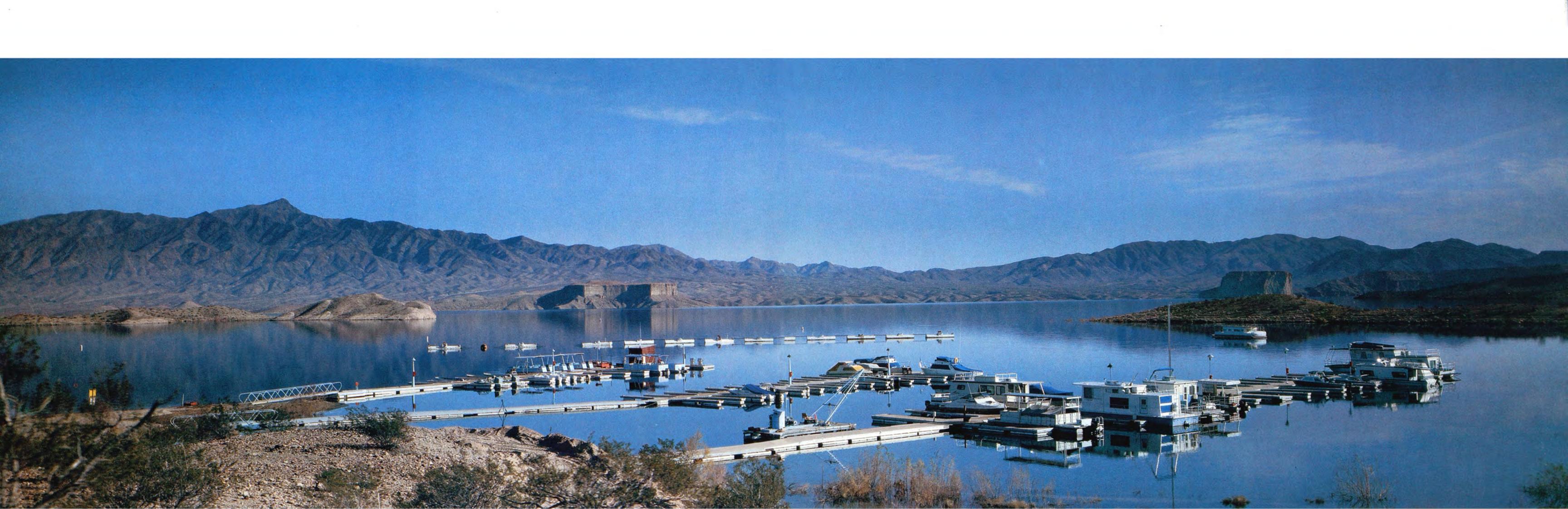
That's where James Ohio Pattie, the rip-roaring mountain man, headed north after trapping his way down the Gila from New

(Right) The creased and folded landscape of Boulder Canyon, Lake Mead. In the late 1800s, steamboat traffic plied the length of the lower Colorado River, and Boulder Canyon was the upriver terminus.

David Muench photo

BY BILL WATERS





(Above) Temple Bar Resort and Marina in Temple Basin, on upper Lake Mead, features a motel and dining room, bait shop, and small boat rentals.

Temple Bar is the nearest resort to the west end of the Grand Canyon, which is easily accessible to small boats. Temple Basin is famous for its fantastic trout, catfish, largemouth and striped bass fishing, and for the waterskier, the Basin offers runs of up to 20 miles. Carlos Elmer photo



(Above and right) Houseboating is the perfect way to vacation, spending lazy sun-filled days cruising through the scenic beauty of lakes Mead and Mohave and star-filled nights around a campfire on a secluded beach. And you bring along all the comforts of home on your floating resort. Alan Benoit photos





(Top) An aerial view of Lake Mead. Hoover Dam is just right of center. For a close-up view of the dam, the tour boat Echo, left and above, ventures out four times a day complete with a tour guide.

(Right) The steam-powered stern-wheeler Explorer was the first boat to navigate the wild Colorado River upstream from Yuma to Boulder Canyon, on an 1858 expedition headed by Lieutenant Joseph Christmas Ives.
Alan Benoit photos

Mexico, where he mostly made war on bears and hostile Indians — when he wasn't wooing Spanish señoritas.

Pattie and a handful of cohorts beaver trapped their way up the Colorado in 1826. As told to an Eastern preacher a few years later, Pattie's path upriver simply bristled with Indian arrows.

"They poured upon us a shower of arrows, by which they killed two men, and wounded two more.... My own hunting shirt had two arrows in it, and my blanket was pinned fast to the ground by arrows," goes the Pattie narrative. "There were 16 arrows discharged into my bed."

All in a day's work for the peripatetic Pattie, who wandered the entire West — yesterday's Mexico, and today's as well — in search of pelts, romance, and adventure.

Pattie was particularly impressed with the Indians he met on his way up the Colorado. After all, he wasn't *always* fighting them.

"A great many of these Indians crossed the river to our camp, and brought us dried beans, for which we paid them with red cloth, with which they were delighted beyond measure, tearing it into ribbands, and tying it round their arms and legs; for if the truth be told, they were as naked as Adam and Eve in their birthday suits.

"They were the stoutest men, with the finest forms I ever saw, well-proportioned

throughout and straight as an arrow."

Other travelers would share Pattie's awe of the Mojaves, Hualapais, and Chemehuevis of the Colorado corner. Others, too, would find themselves fighting with some of them and trading with others. The three tribes were reluctant hosts, mostly. They'd accept Anglo incursions sometimes — but when they figured they'd been done wrong, they'd aim their arrows and the bullets of their burgeoning arsenals against the intruders. Still other times, their refined senses of humor and curiosity would leave them amused and bemused over what the white-eyes might think of next.

The Indians of this part of the Colorado were simple only in the eyes of their materialistic observers from the Western World.

The broad-shouldered Chemehuevi warriors were skilled hunters. Their women planted crops along the river while the precision bow-and-arrow work of the men kept them well supplied with deer and mountain sheep — not to mention lizards and rabbits.

They're known as talkative, yet they know when silence is stronger. They're proud, yet capable of laughing at themselves.

Their sense of the supernatural was well advanced and so was their lore — much of it delightfully told in Carobeth Laird's book, *The Chemehuevis*. They had tales

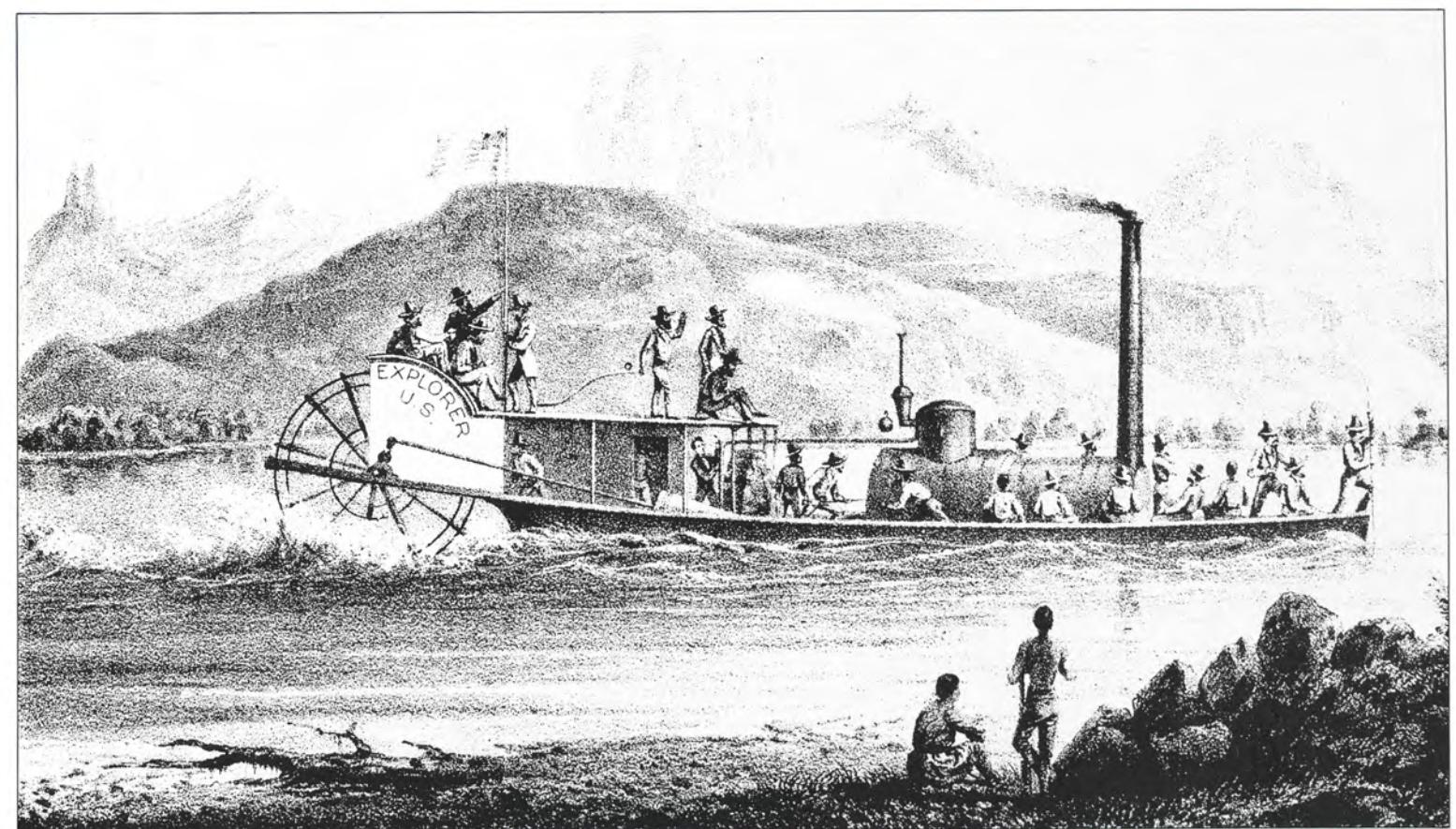
about the Coyote's war with the Gila Monster and his ally, the Turtle, told in a mystically vague way, allowing characters to change from animals to people and back. Another tale, that of how Dove's son escaped the lustful possessive Wind Woman, is a story rivaling the ribaldry of Chaucer's saucier tales.

Tiring of her advances, he makes good his escape. She's fast as the wind, though, so he makes himself tiny and hides inside arrows shot by warriors. One warrior traps Wind Woman in a cave and renders her into an Echo.

Then there's Horned Toad's visit to the Giants, who ate anyone who laughed at them — and did their best to provoke laughter. But Horned Toad's friend, Small Bird, outfitted him with a collar of arrowheads. The Giants coughed up the reptile — and to this day, horned toads wear pointy collars and wide grins.

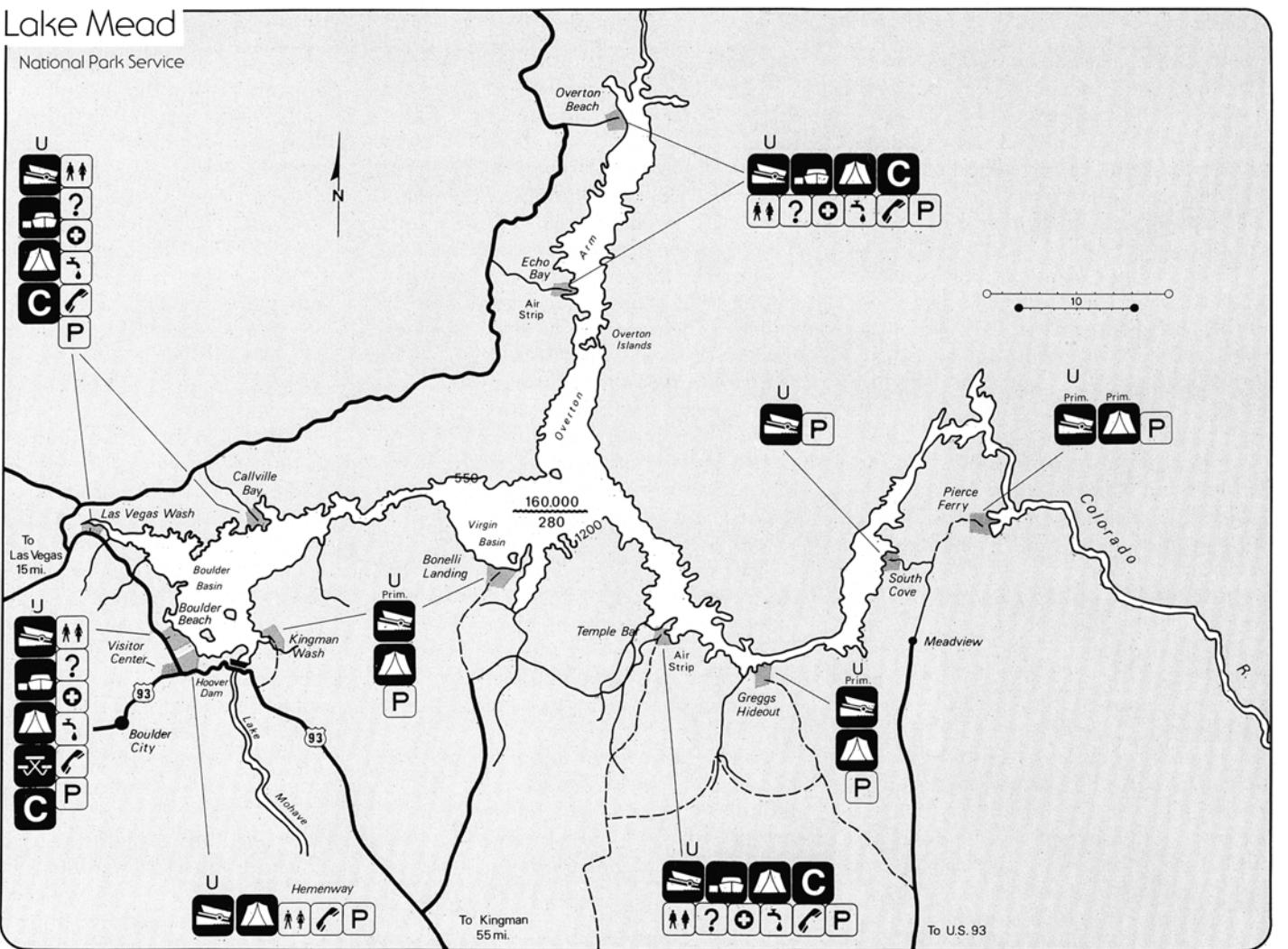
There were cults of animal worship, and there was a cult with whom thousands of modern-day Arizona fitness buffs might well identify: the cult of the runner. Probably a spin-off from the times when runners would carry messages of knotted string between one village and another, they remained as high-spirited athletes by the time American explorers came across them.

The Indians of this far-flung desert river area didn't fall under Spanish rule. Not



Lake Mead

National Park Service



(Above and right) Clearly defined symbols show what's available to visitors in the areas surrounding lakes Mead and Mohave, including phone locations and first-aid stations. From the soon-to-be-published Arizona Lake Guide, © 1983, Arizona Outdoor Recreation Coordinating Commission.

until the wake of the Mexican War—and the midst of Manifest Destiny—did their culture collide with one which soon would dominate from sea to shining sea.

The Indians got hints of what would come, however, when they heard tales of big, noisy, smoky vessels chugging about the Colorado's lower reaches.

At Yuma, Captain George Alonzo Johnson was ferrying 49ers across the Colorado. He was curious about the land upstream, and he tried to get government backing for an expedition north. No luck.

The guy who got the grant was Lieutenant Joseph Christmas Ives, a well-connected West Pointer.

Ives saw the Colorado as the way to supply Army forces trying to pacify the Mormons of Utah. Overland from the east would be tough, especially in winter. A warm-water route from the south would be more than just a supply line. It would squeeze Brigham Young between pincers.

Ives co-opted Johnson's notion and ordered up a special boat for exploring the Colorado, a 54-footer he called the *Explorer*.

It was built—then taken apart—in Philadelphia, then shipped in pieces to Panama.

There, it was a pain in the neck for the folks who shipped it across the Isthmus by train. Aboard another ship, the *Explorer* and its party went all the way to San Francisco. From there, it was crammed and lashed aboard the schooner *Monterey* for a month-long trip around Baja California to the mouth of the Colorado.

Ives was in the shallow-draft *Explorer*. Johnson had his 105-foot *General Jessup*—plus plenty of river savvy. He got all the way up to Eldorado Canyon, not far from Cottonwood Cove—320 miles above the mouth of the Gila, according to the figures of Lieutenant J. L. White, the man in charge of Johnson's not-so-official Army escort. From there, Johnson's party went on foot a few miles farther, past Roaring Rapids.

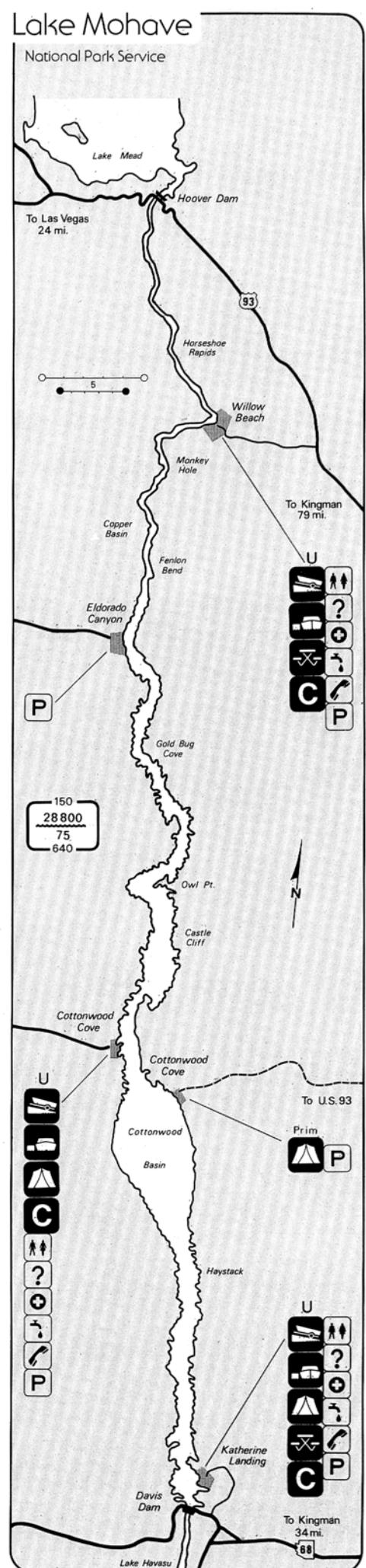
At midnight, as 1858 began, the *Explorer*, gussied up with the supports to keep its shaky steam engine from rattling the vessel apart, chugged upstream atop a high tide. Destination: Fort Yuma and points beyond.

Once out of tidal water, the *Explorer*'s pace was pitifully slow. But it kept the Indians entertained. They'd laugh as they walked upriver faster than the laboriously assembled, smoke-puffing, gangly looking *Explorer* could go.

And even though Lieutenant White filed a report full of navigation guides and solid information on the expedition, it went ignored by the War Department, which made Ives' report the official one—confirming suspicions that the ambitious Ives owed his Colorado-exploration orders to the fact that he was married to the Secre-

Lake Mohave

National Park Service



LEGEND

PRIMARY SYMBOLS

Primary symbols are designed to assist the user in locating public recreational use areas at the lakes shown in this guide and to indicate primary recreation facilities available at each area. Additional information for primary symbols can be found in the table at left.

BOAT LAUNCHING

U — Unrestricted motor size.
8 — 8 H.P. motors or less.
E — Electric motors only.

MARINA

CONCESSION

PICNIC AREA

CAMPING

Primitive campgrounds indicated by "Prim."

LAKE FACTS

Each lake has its shoreline length, surface area, depth and elevation noted as shown in the diagram below.

SHORELINE LENGTH

In miles at normal lake capacity.

SURFACE AREA

In acres at normal lake capacity.

DEPTH

In feet at normal lake capacity.

ELEVATION

In feet above sea level.

WINTER FREEZE

A snowflake means the lake freezes in winter. Use of the lake is seasonal and is usually from May to October. Ice fishing is possible at some lakes.

The Arizona Lakes Guide was designed by Desert Charts, Glendale, Arizona for the Arizona Outdoor Recreation Coordinating Commission as a part of the State Lake Improvement Fund Plan. January 1983

SECONDARY SYMBOLS

Secondary symbols provide the user with additional information about support services and facilities available at each recreational use area.

TOILETS

RANGER/INFORMATION

FIRST AID

DRINKING WATER

TELEPHONE

PARKING

Other than campsites at developed campgrounds.

ROADS

INTERSTATE HIGHWAY

ACCESS ROADS

Paved or improved
Dirt or unpaved

CIRCULATION ROADS

Paved or improved
Dirt or unpaved

TRAILS

DISTANCE SCALE

Distance between circles in miles
(ex: ½ mile)

Distance between dots in kilometers
(ex: ½ kilometer)

1/2

tary of War's niece. That connection would lead Ives, a Northerner, into the Confederate Army three years later—where a play presented at his home in Richmond was the social highlight of 1864. Never mind that a war was going on; Ives was Jefferson Davis' aide-de-camp, and he was making a career of social connections.

At any rate, Ives' report, F.W. Egloffstein's fine-lined drawings of the *Explorer* and the territory it helped open up, fanned the flames of Western expansion.

Nowhere does it acknowledge crossing paths with the *General Jessup*, nor does it mention the redoubtable Captain Johnson. Yet Johnson, Lieutenant White, and their big boatload of soldiers and mountain men, came up only 35 miles short of Ives—and did it without that specially built iron-bottomed boat sent at such great cost to its launching point.

Ives wasn't expecting it, but he did make "contact" with the "enemy."

Mormon missionaries were hard at work baptizing river Indians—and scouting out movements of the government, which was trying to enforce federal law on Utah, which not that long before had been part of Mexico.

Three who found themselves together along the Colorado were Thales Haskell, Dudley Leavitt—and Jacob Hamblin, hero of Mormondom's southern frontier and fearless ambassador for Brigham Young to tribe after Arizona tribe.

Hamblin's journeys would take him across the Colorado at many points, as he pushed the Mormon frontier ever southward. But here he was in the spring of 1858, hiding in the bushes with Haskell and Leavitt watching the *Explorer* at anchor off Cottonwood Island.

Haskell had a way with Indians. They had been full of talk about "Americats" on the river. He had to check it out.

"Government expedition, all right," he told Haskell and Leavitt.

"Don't expect to take Utah with that army!" cracked Leavitt.

"Looks like the navy to me," added Haskell.

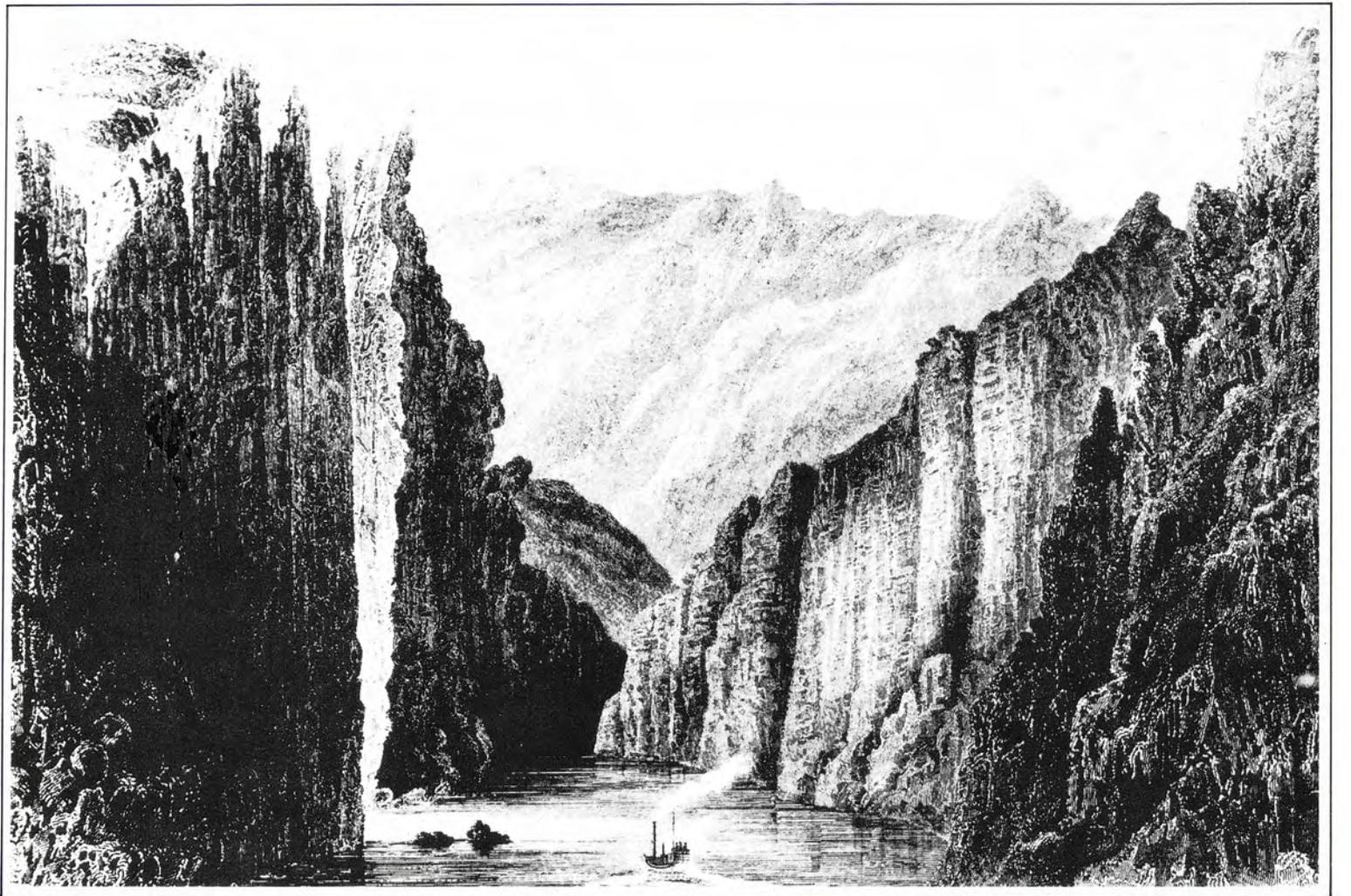
"This may only be the first boat," Hamblin warned.

"How'll we find out?" Haskell asked.

"You're going aboard."

"They'll hang me!"

They didn't, of course—this wasn't a war. But Haskell fooled no one.



(Above) The steamboat Explorer, of the 1858 Ives expedition, is dwarfed by the towering walls of Mohave Canyon in this drawing by expedition artist Balduin Molhausen. From Steamboats on the Colorado River, 1852-1916, Richard E. Lingenfelter, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, copyright 1978. By permission.

(Right) A far cry from the dangerous raging river of the days of steamboat travel, today much of the Colorado is a serene watery playground for millions of recreation enthusiasts. Jerry Sieve photo

"As soon as the visitor made his appearance," went Ives' account, "we perceived that he was a Mormon...but we gave him a night's lodging—that is a pair of blankets to sleep upon—and entertained him as well as corn and beans would permit....The bishop departed with early dawn to join his companions, first extracting all the information he could concerning our expedition and the practicability of navigating the river."

Johnson, too, crossed paths with fellow Americans—in what must have been the most bizarre *rendezvous* in the annals of the American West. Some 300 miles up the Colorado River, so far from civilization most must have forgotten there *was* such a thing, Johnson's ship ran smack-dab into other ships—ships of the desert.

They were the first of the camel trains.

Twelve of the animals were part of the Beale Expedition.

Congress was intrigued by America's newly won territory of the Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty. Among several surveys it

commissioned was one headed by Navy Lieutenant Edward Fitzgerald Beale.

Today, the route is the basis of Interstate 40 and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad. In 1857 and 1858, though, he surveyed it as Beale's Road.

Beale was a swashbuckler. He went to sea at 14, and from then on, it was one adventure after another.

In the Mexican War, he fought in the battle of San Pasqual, where Mexicans surrounded the Yankee troops. Beale and two others slipped through the Mexican lines. Beale then ran—barefoot—for 40 miles to get help.

After that, he spent two years crossing the rugged West from California, carrying military messages and, on one trip, gold nuggets and the first official accounts of the California gold strikes.

To get that gold to Washington, he rode through Mexico dressed as a vaquero. He fought off banditos time and time again, then took a ship from Veracruz to New Orleans before riding overland over 900

miles, as crows fly, to the Potomac.

He was Commissioner of Indian Affairs for California and Nevada when he was called to build a wagon road to California.

On his first trip, Beale came into Arizona by way of Fort Defiance with a survey crew—and camels.

Their noise, their size, and their smell stamped horses and kept the party's mules on edge—but they were at home in the American Desert, and each could carry 700 pounds of gear. That's a good 500 pounds more than the mules could pack.

Still, it was a real circus for those who saw the ungainly creatures working their way west—and the circus included a couple of clowns who claimed they knew the best route to the Colorado. Hired as guides in Albuquerque, they said they'd been slave-trading all the way to California.

They weren't funny. Beale's party nearly died of thirst as the two, known as Leco and Saavedra, guessed one way, then another, through some dangerously dry country.





Warm desert sunshine, cool blue waters, hundreds of miles of scenic shoreline to explore, and the company of family and good friends all combine to create a perfect boating vacation in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area.

Alan Benoit photos



(Left) Setting out for a day's fishing on Lake Mohave. Both lakes Mead and Mohave are known for terrific year-round trout, catfish, largemouth and striped bass fishing. (Left, below) Although most visitors to the Lake Mead National Recreation Area spend their time on the water, the scenic desert and canyon country surrounding the lakes also deserves investigating. Alan Benoit photos

"We unfortunately have no guide," the lieutenant wrote of Saavedra in his diary, "the wretch I employed at the urgent request and advice of everyone in Albuquerque, and at enormous wages, being the most ignorant and irresolute old ass extant."

Leco was no better. He got the group turned around then turned around again as water ran low. Beale sent two camels back with barrels to the last water he'd crossed, telling himself all the time, "I ought to have killed him there, but I did not."

At last, in mid-October, 1857, the survey crew reached the Colorado. Its path along the 35th Parallel was blazed. Beale and Company would be back the next year to make a real road out of it.

"A year in the wilderness has ended," he wrote in his report on travels that took him from the Gulf of Mexico to the shores of the Pacific and back again, "through a country for a great part entirely unknown, and inhabited by hostile Indians, without the loss of a man."

"I have tested the value of the camels, marked a new road to the Pacific, and traveled 4,000 miles without an accident."

His road linked today's Holbrook, Winslow, Flagstaff, and Kingman. It crossed the Colorado not far from Oatman, that prize among (near) ghost towns.

Beale's Crossing, in years to come, would be the riverboat terminus—and jumping-off spot for folks headed into Arizona's wildest parts.

Back in Washington, word of heavy traffic on Beale's Road—westward bound as well as eastward-retreating—led to the establishment of Fort Mojave on the Colorado. Through the end of the 19th century, it was the Army's chief supply point to Arizona's northern and eastern outposts—and those outposts became more and more vital to travelers as more and more traffic drove off the Indians' supply of wildlife and turned generally peaceable people into ever-more-violent defenders of what had been theirs alone.

Captain Edward Carlson had this to say about the early days of Fort Mojave:

"Here a fort was nothing more than a few miserable shanties, built by placing cottonwood logs upright in a trench, then filled in between with pieces of wood and

mud, a roof composed of brush, tules and mud. Openings were left for door and windows, but no door or windows to put in. The floor was also mud, and when it rained or blew, it was more pleasant to go into open air than to stay in the house, for we escaped the mud-bath that came from the roof through the holes."

It was also considered one of the hottest places on the American continent. But there was gold and silver. So, in their off-duty hours, the soldiers took to prospecting. Some even made small fortunes, and Fort Mojave became less of a terrible posting and more of an attraction for the adventurous.

Few fit that mold better than Captain John Moss.

"Moss was a hero for a novelist," said a fellow soldier, "broad of shoulder and small of waist, lithe of limb, small hands, active as a cat, rough as a backwoodsman on the trail, but a Lord Chesterfield on occasion. He was evidently well educated, but of an intelligence that would make him learned without it."

Moss made good friends of the Indians—mainly through fair dealing with them, same as Jacob Hamblin.

The peak of his diplomacy came in 1864 when Moss overcame the Mojaves' fear and distrust of the white man and talked their chief, Irataba, into going with him to Washington. There, the chief was received by President Lincoln, with special honors from the president.

Moss was the interpreter, and he guided Irataba about the wartime capital, showing the chief how well-armed the government was. The subtle message: Make peace with the government, and keep it.

Moss and the chief were the toast of Washington, New York, and Philadelphia during nearly three months Back East. When he came home to the Colorado, decked out in a brass-buttoned suit and cocked hat and wearing a colonel's sword, his people, who'd feared he was a captive, swarmed about him.

The 50,000 troops he'd reviewed in Washington had made an impression. When Irataba had their attention, he gathered up a handful of sand. He held it out to his people and said, "Mojaves." Then he swept his arms about the river sandbar on which he stood, and said, "Americans."

While soldiers made peace and scabbled for gold along the Colorado, merchants kept seeking upriver ports. Mormons especially wanted access to navigation.

In 1864, the Deseret Mercantile Association sent Anson Call to the Colorado to set up warehouses as far upriver as it seemed steamers could make it.

Not far from the meeting of the Virgin River and the Colorado, he built what was called Call's Landing—later Callville.

Merchants in St. George, Utah, pinned high hopes on Callville as the main route into Mormondom for passengers and cargo alike, for east-west traffic went best by sea to Panama or Tehuantepec, across the isthmuses by land, then once again aboard ship.

The goods and people might just as well stay on the water as long as possible, went the Utah merchants' reasoning—and per-pound costs of shipping through Callville bore them out.

Callville thrived. In fact, for a while—a short while—it was an Arizona county seat! That was owing to the silver tongue of a territorial legislator named Octavius Decatur Gass.

Gass came to the Territorial Legislature from what was then known as Las Vegas Ranch. He pushed through a bill splitting off Pah-Ute County from Mohave amid bombastic predictions that Pah-Ute's Callville would become the biggest city in Arizona. He was to be disappointed on a number of counts.

A year earlier, mineral-rich Nevada became a state, and it wanted that corner of Arizona. To the surprise of many, the Congress of the United States gave it to them in 1866, turning a deaf ear to the hue and cry from Gass and other Arizonans. Pah-Ute is now Nevada's neon-lit southern corner.

As for Gass, he insisted on representing Pah-Ute County in the Arizona Legislature for two more years, despite the switch—taking a rowboat to Yuma and a stagecoach to what was then the capital, Tucson.

But by this time other changes were afoot. Steamers were having trouble negotiating the rapids between Callville and Hardyville, farther downriver, which wound up as the practical head of navigation. And Anson Call, the energetic pioneer founder of Callville, went back to northern Utah.

Toward century's end, with the Indian problem well in hand, Fort Mojave was turned over to the Interior Department to serve as a reservation school. And before Callville was covered by the waters of Lake Mead, the railroads had already ended the transportation career of rival Hardyville.

With the passing of the desert wilderness went the struggle for survival. The Indian and the cavalryman, the teamster and the steamboatman, the gold-hunter and the missionary who sought for riches of a different sort, are all now part of that rich tapestry of the past. Today, this sun-drenched country has a different set of characters who flock to this water wonderland to do nothing more than swim, boat, fish, or just relax. For them, Mead's the name when recreation's the game! □

Welcome to Lake Mead Country

by Bill Sizer

It's a vast, sprawling playground that includes two very large lakes and miles of clear-flowing river among rugged, towering mountains that provide spectacular scenery wherever you look. It has a startling variety of wildlife, a wide range of accommodations and, most of all, recreational opportunities ranging from simple sight-seeing through sailing and power-boating to fishing for some of the largest freshwater lunkers in the nation.

It's the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, administered by the U.S. National Park Service and located along the Colorado River, near the northwestern corner of Arizona.

There are secluded sandy beaches where you can sunbathe in privacy, crystal waters where you can swim or snorkel among awesome rock formations, and personal accommodations ranging from simple throw-down camps to plush resorts offering every comfort you might want.

The area starts about halfway between Davis Dam, the long concrete structure that forms Lake Mohave, and Bullhead City, a thriving community spread along the shores of the Colorado River. From there the area stretches northward to include all of Lake Mohave's 67-mile length and 240 square miles of deep blue water, plus Hoover Dam and another 105 miles of Lake Mead, clear to the lower end of the Grand Canyon. The recreation area is centered on the river and its lakes, and ranges from about 3 to 20 miles in width.

In, among, between, and throughout the area's broad desert reaches and the woodland communities in the higher elevations are places where major drainages bisect the general terrain and provide habitat for plants and animals that thrive on the moisture available in wash bottoms. These are the places where birders will likely find the greatest varieties to capture their interest. Here the cactus wrens, thrashers, and Gambel's quail of the desert areas will congregate and find their total numbers swollen by occasional scrub jays and other wanderers from higher elevations. During the spring and fall months, migrants on their journeys to or from homes to the north or south also will stop to feed.

Four-legged denizens of the desert and mountains visit these areas, too. So the chances are good that a quiet, patient observer may spot coyotes, foxes, mule deer, and perhaps even bighorn sheep.

While Lake Mead Country offers enchanting vistas at any time of the year, spring months following wet winters—much like the one just past—can turn entire expanses of landscape into giant mosaics of form and color. The road into Temple Bar Resort—a favorite with Arizonans!—from U.S. Highway 93 passes through what is often one of the most striking areas. Here the orange of the poppies that sometimes decorate the entire Detrital Valley, along both sides of U.S. 93 from Kingman to Hoover Dam, gives way to even more brilliant displays of color, as thousands of smaller plants of every hue respond to the warmth and moisture.

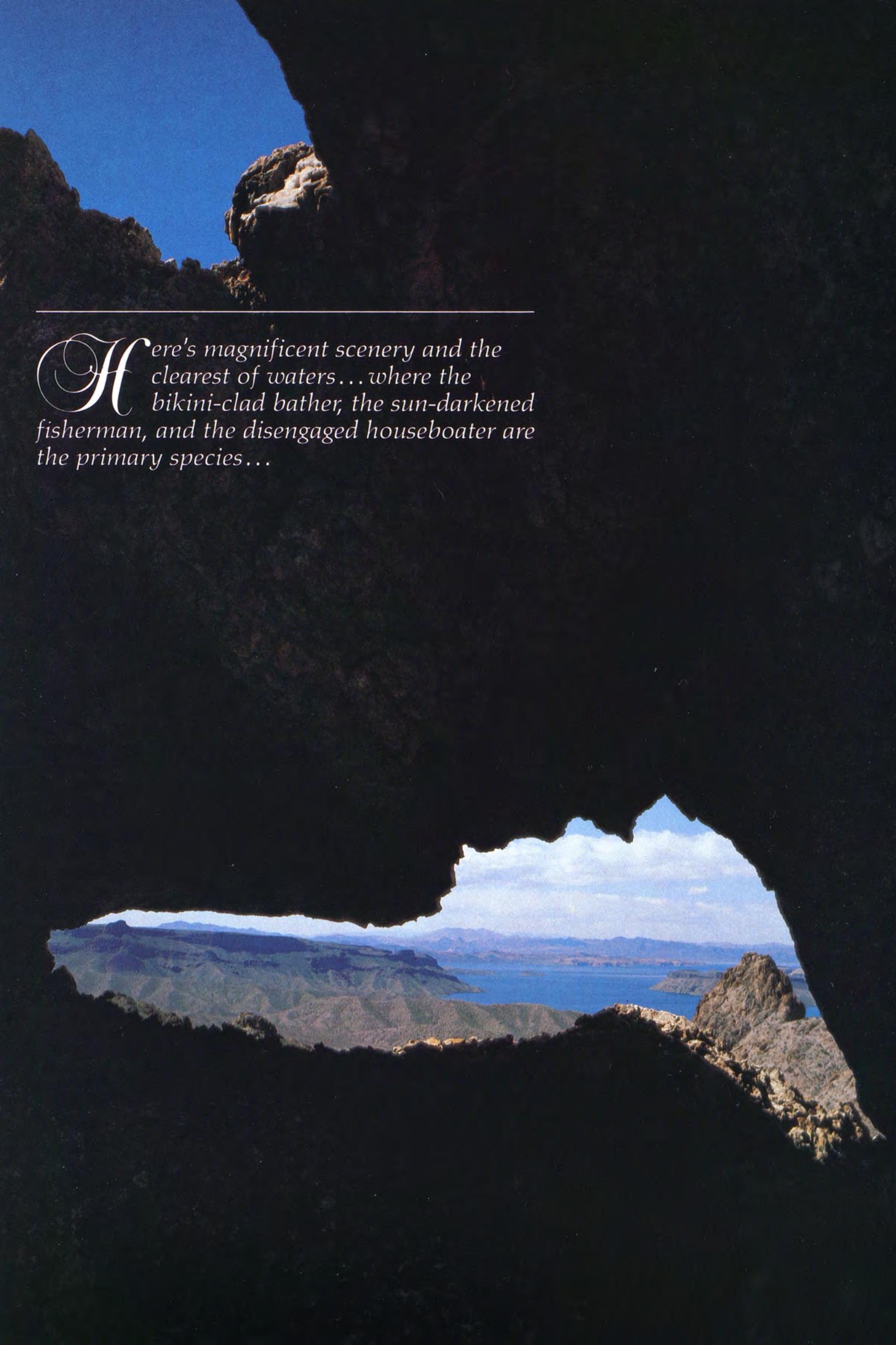
Such spectacles, though, are just fringe benefits. It's the water that draws people by the millions to Lake Mead Country, making it one of the most heavily visited tourist areas in the nation.

And water there is; more than anyplace else in the Southwest...or all of the inland West, for that matter. Only the Pacific Northwest can boast so many continuous acres of water surface. Lake Mead, by itself, offers some 550 miles of shoreline, and Lake Mohave, below it, tallies close to another 200. Arizona's Mohave County claims over 1000 miles of shoreline.

Except for mountains all around, there are places where being on Lake Mead or Mohave is almost like being on an ocean. In many of the shallow areas the water is a deep greenish hue, but out where it's 50, 100, or even 300 feet down to the bottom, it's a deep, deep blue.

To tour the Lake Mead National Recreation Area from its southernmost boundary, start at Bullhead City. This thriving

The multicolored canyon country of Lake Mead's east end, from Greggs Hideout. David Muench photo (Following panel, pages 18 and 19) Day's end at Overton Beach, Lake Mead. Jerry Sieve photo





community began as housing for workers during the construction of Davis Dam, just one mile upriver from the center of town today. When the dam was completed in 1953, the federal housing development there began to grow as people discovered the area and moved in to settle down. Bullhead has grown steadily since then, and today some 20,000 people make their homes there and in the other residential areas that stretch southward along the river.

Most people, especially fishermen, naturally assume the town got its name from

the bullhead catfish common in the Colorado River waters, but that's not the case. Before Lake Mohave's rising waters covered it, there was a distinctive rock formation north of town that resembled the head of a bull, and the early settlers decided that would be a dandy name for their new town.

A visit to Bullhead City should include time to hop aboard the free ferry boats that for 24 hours each day scuttle back and forth across the Colorado River to the seven casinos on the Nevada side.

To begin your tour of Mead-Mohave,

you can either launch your own boat at the public ramp south of town or at one of the private facilities scattered along the river. If you don't have a boat, you can rent one from one of those same resorts. Before leaving Bullhead City proper, though, you might want to swing by Hugo's Lobster Trap, tie up your boat at the dock, and go inside for cocktails or a meal, while you gaze out over the river.

The water here is cold and swift as it flows out from Davis Dam. Trout fishermen hold the area in high esteem, so, as you move upstream through the current,

you'll pass fishermen along the way. It's also noted for channel catfish, but, during the late spring and early summer, the huge striped bass that move upriver from Lake Havasu to spawn in the wild water just below the dam draw the most attention from anglers.

Stripers up to 20 pounds and even more, rainbow trout that often run five or six pounds, and chunky channel cats of varying sizes make this stretch of river one of the most popular areas in the Southwest for people who like a small but active community with plenty to do in the

incredibly beautiful outdoors.

Once you've driven your boat to the boundary stretched across the river by the Bureau of Reclamation — it's to keep enthusiastic people out of the dangerously turbulent water just below the dam — you'll have to head back to Bullhead before resuming your tour.

The run by car back up Highway 95 to Davis Dam takes only a couple of minutes, then a five-mile drive on a paved Park Service road brings you to Lake Mohave Resort. Located in Katherine Wash — irreverently nicknamed "Katy Gulch" by some fishermen — this resort offers everything you might want. There's a fine motel, a recreational vehicle park, an excellent campground with paved parking and shade trees, a public beach and boat ramp, a marina where you can rent a variety of boats from simple fishing rigs to house-boats, a coffee shop, cocktail lounge, restaurant and general store... all that plus a great view of Lake Mohave across the basin that shelters the resort area.

It's pleasant to roam through the marina and watch the huge carp that hang around looking for handouts, but the lake itself will beckon you to come on out and see the real wonders of Lake Mohave.

As you pull away from the resort, in your own boat or a rented one, you'll soon be impressed by the clarity of the water. Seeing down 10 feet is easy, and, when the light is just right, underwater formations considerably deeper than that are easily seen.

Mohave, like Mead above it, is a fine lake for those who like to don mask and snorkel for a cruise along the shoreline to view the underwater spectacles first-hand.

Lake Mohave is spoken of in reverent tones by bass fishermen, who tend to regard it as the top bass lake on the river. More reliable than Mead as a bass fishery, an average angler can usually take a decent string in a half-day or so, with bass ranging from marginal keepers of 10 to 12 inches to an occasional three or four-pounder. And, of course, there's always the possibility of hooking a true lunker of five, six or even 10 pounds!

North from Katherine Wash, the lake broadens into the sprawling Big Basin, which makes up the widest part of Mohave. Gently sloping shores dominate the eastern side of the lake, although there are a few coves that offer seclusion and shelter from the occasional winds that sweep viciously across the basin. The west side of the lake is more scenic in this area, characterized by rugged cliffs that tumble into the clear waters in a jumble of steep, irregular coves full of the rock piles and drop-offs so dear to bass anglers.

But bass aren't Mohave's only fish, by any means. Channel catfishing there is very good, and, in the spring, some coves provide excellent catches of black crappies. Mohave also has a good population of rainbow trout — big ones for anglers who troll the deep channels and more modest catches for those who choose to take their

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Crystal clear waters and secluded sandy beaches lure boaters by the thousands to lakes Mead and Mohave. David Muench photo

J. Peter Mortimer photo



(Below and right) Whether cloaked in the mystical beauty of a desert storm or baked by brilliant sunlight, the bizarre wind-and-water sculpted red rock of the Valley of Fire forms a surreal, back of beyond landscape near Lake Mead. David Muench photo/Jerry Sieve photo







Whether it's a tranquil cruise uplake or exploring a desert island, the stunning beauty and vast size of the lakes on the Colorado River provide limitless opportunities for adventure. Alan Benoit photo/J. Peter Mortimer photo





(Left) Above Willow Beach, a glimpse of the Colorado River as it may have looked in its heyday.
(Below) The water-sculpted ridges of the Black Mountains, Lake Mead National Recreation Area.
David Muench photos





(Above) Sailing on Lake Mohave is part of the great family oriented recreation available in this one-of-a-kind land of fun and games in the Southwest.

Alan Benoit photo

(Right) Lake Mohave with the Newberry Mountains in the background. As part of the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, it is the place to experience for millions of visitors each year. And the fishing! Bass, catfish, crappies, and cutthroat trout are all available to anglers who come from everywhere to try their luck. Lake Mohave is the reservoir behind Davis Dam. An earth and rockfill structure straddling the Colorado River, it is just 34 miles from Kingman, Arizona, and excellent motels and restaurants. Jeff Gnass photo

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sport leisurely off one of the many small sandy beaches that separate the otherwise rugged west-side coves. Cutthroat trout have also been stocked there, and more recently striped bass have shown up in the lake.

Mohave narrows a bit as you head north, then again opens up into Little Basin, the second widest part of the lake. On the west, just before entering this second basin, you'll see Cottonwood Landing, reached by car over a road that heads directly east to it from Searchlight, Nevada. Cottonwood Landing is Nevada's counterpart of Lake Mohave Resort, and offers much the same facilities. Also like the resort on the Arizona side, it's located at the back of a broad cove that shelters it from westerly winds.

As you continue north and find the lake getting gradually narrower, you'll come to El Dorado Canyon. Also on the Nevada side and accessible by road from Highway 95, it's generally considered the point where the lake becomes a river. There's no resort there, so the spot is used primarily for access from the Nevada side.

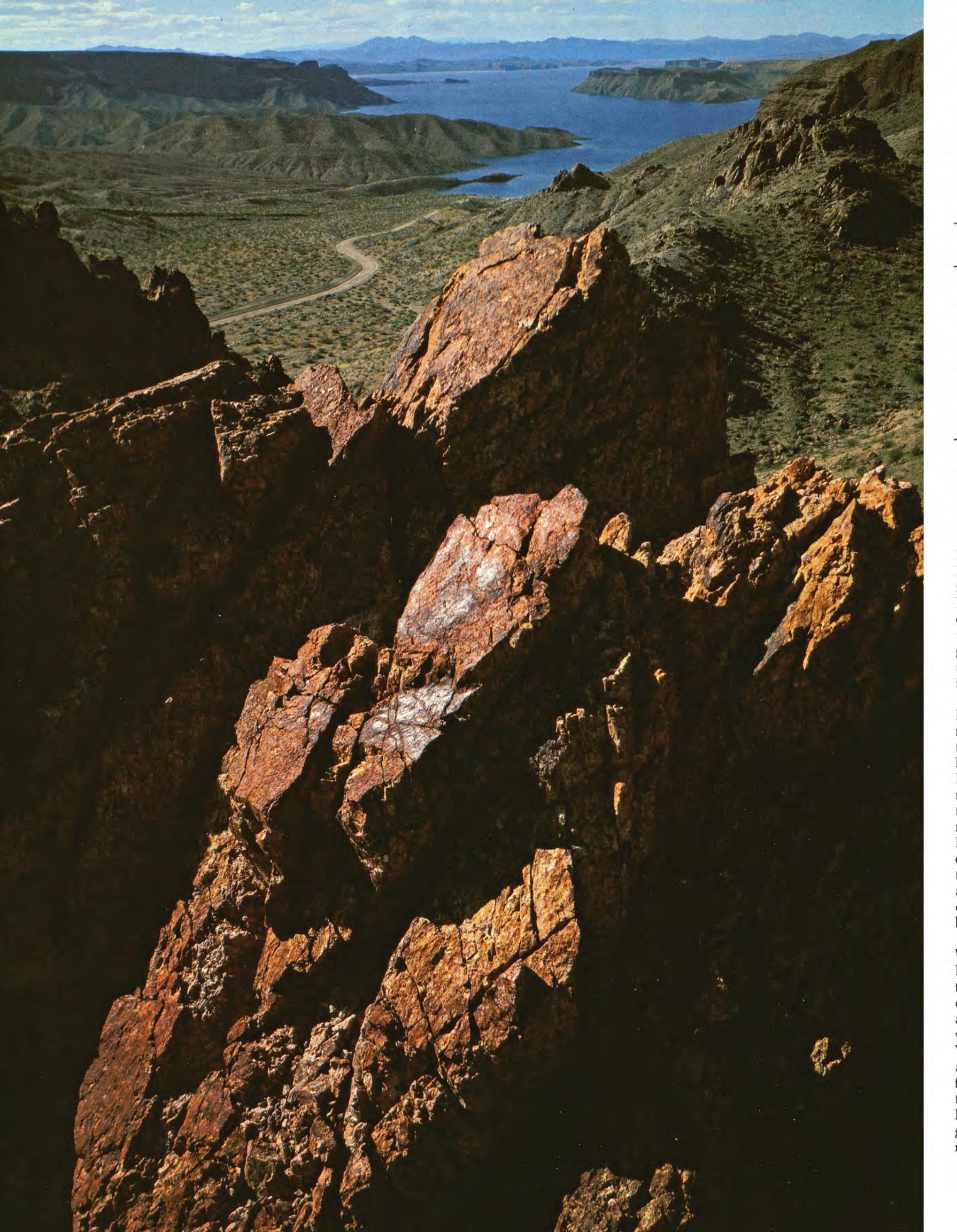
From there north, you gradually realize you're moving through running water, and this is where Mohave begins to turn into trout country. If you dip your hand over the side, you may notice the water is much cooler than it was back in the main lake, and the farther north you go the more this difference becomes apparent.

As you continue heading upstream, approaching Arizona's Willow Beach area, keep an eye on the towering cliffs along the river. In this area, especially on the Arizona side, bighorn sheep often come down to water or may decide to stand on some lofty bluff and idly watch you pass.

Located about a dozen miles below Hoover Dam is Willow Beach Resort. If you haven't come up lake by boat you can reach it over a winding four-mile drive from Highway 93, just a few miles east of the dam. Willow Beach is often visited by sightseers who want to cruise the clear Colorado and perhaps move upstream for a look at Hoover Dam from below, but for the most part it's a trout fisherman's spot. The resort has no room for a campground, but it offers lodging, a restaurant, groceries, a marina, trailer and rv hookups, and just about everything else a visitor could want, including a full line of boat rentals up to family-style pontoon boats for leisurely cruising.

While boating on the upper reaches of the Colorado River, around Willow Beach, is protected by mountains on either side, a word of caution is in order for anyone venturing out on either Lake Mohave or Lake Mead. Winds spring up very quickly in these areas, and it's possible to have a quiet day of boating suddenly interrupted by a gale-force wind that turns on in a





Greggs Hideout, Lake Mead. Two hundred twenty-five square miles big, Mead also has a shoreline of 550 miles dotted with modern marinas, providing the boater, the fisherman, and the casual visitor with all the necessities for great fun in the sun. The Lake Mead National Recreation Area is testimony to the soundness of a Depression reclamation project engineered by men who were keen on challenge and lived by a simple code: "How do we know it can't be done? We haven't tried it yet!" Jeff Gnass photo

matter of minutes. The National Park Service posts storm warnings at the major resorts, and it's a good idea to check them before heading out.

Hoover Dam, once known as "Boulder Dam" but renamed for former President Herbert Hoover, forms Lake Mead and is in itself a fascinating place to visit. Regular tours start with a rather frightening elevator ride from the top of the dam to the river, some 723 feet below. As the guide says, while he points out the giant turbines, Hoover Dam isn't complicated; it's just big!

Immediately above Hoover Dam, Lake Mead opens into Boulder Basin. There is no access from the Arizona side, but, about three miles west of the dam, Lakeshore Road turns north off route 93 and leads to Boulder Beach Resort. It offers a sheltered marina and mooring area, along with all the facilities listed for the Lake Mohave resorts. Boulder Beach, like Las Vegas Wash Resort above it, has been around long enough to offer plenty of mature shade trees where summertime visitors can relax as they gaze out over Boulder Basin and decide whether to fish, swim, go for a boat ride, or just sit and enjoy.

Lakeshore Road also leads to Las Vegas Wash, the westernmost point on either Lake Mead or Lake Mohave. The wash that gives the resort its name drains the country just east of Las Vegas, and adds an ample supply of nutrients to the lake water in the immediate area. This makes Vegas Wash one of the more productive areas of Mead, in terms of fishing. Located far back in a long cove, this spot is sheltered from most of the prevailing winds. It has no lodging available, but there's a good campground, store, restaurant, and marina.

Near the upper end of Boulder Basin is Callville Bay, named for an early townsite flooded out once the gates of Hoover Dam were closed. Callville is the newest resort on the Nevada side, and while it does not offer lodging — except in a rented houseboat — it's fast becoming one of the most popular resorts in the area. This is where most of the fishing tournaments and other organized water-sport events make their headquarters. Except for lodging, Callville has all the other amenities to make visitors happy, including the usual excellent Park Service campground and a full range of marina facilities.

Boulder Basin's terrain is the opposite from that of Lake Mohave in that the rugged mountains are all on the Arizona side. At its upper end, it pinches down into Boulder Canyon, then winds along through towering bluffs for a half-dozen miles before opening up into Virgin Basin.

While the boat ride uplake this far is spectacularly beautiful, Lake Mead's real charms become more dramatic once you emerge into Virgin Basin. This area not only offers the greatest expanse of open water on Mead, with the giant Overton Arm stretching northward more than 40 miles, it also breaks up along its great expanse of shoreline into some of the most exciting places on the lake.

Here is where the gypsum or "Gyp Beds" offer a wildly jumbled area of rock formations, both above and below the clearest water on the lake. Anyone who has ever been exposed to scuba diving or snorkeling will want to slip into the water here, and fishermen, who may have become a bit blasé after seeing so many likely spots, will fling their lures with renewed enthusiasm.

This area of Mead also features more winding coves which snake back into the mountains and offer an almost unlimited number of delightful spots to tie up a boat and camp or just picnic. Bonelli Bay, long a favorite spot of catfishermen, heads off to the south of Virgin Basin, and the East Point beacon light marks the narrowing of the lake once again.

Just a mile or two wide after it leaves Virgin Basin, this portion of Mead offers more of the same secluded hideaways that characterize the upper end of the basin. Most spectacular of these, although not as scenic as many other areas, is the Haystack region. Here are coves that wind for what seems miles, with many of them so deep you may run out of line before your bait reaches the bottom.

Across from the Haystacks are such outstanding rock formations as Napoleon's Tomb, the Campanile, and Monkey Cove, all favorite spots of fishermen and sightseers alike.

And just uplake from these areas is Temple Bar Resort, Arizona's major access

point to Lake Mead. Located across the lake from the majestic formation that gives Temple Bar its name, this resort also can be reached by land via a 28-mile paved road which heads north of Highway 93, about 20 miles southeast of Hoover Dam. Through the years since Lake Mead was building its reputation as one of the world's greatest fishin' holes, Temple Bar Resort — "Landing" in the old days — has grown into one of the grandest spas in the entire area. If you don't bring your own boat and use the paved ramp just downhill from the motel and restaurant, you can rent a simple fishing boat, a pontoon boat, a ski boat, or even a fully equipped houseboat. The trees in the campground are mature now, and each campsite is isolated from the others by tall hedges of oleanders. Many people, who choose neither to camp or stay in the motel, park their mobile homes there, and come up for weekends by car or fly their own planes to the Temple Bar landing strip.

Beyond Temple Bar there is one more long boat ride through a narrow canyon — this one called "Virgin Canyon" — before reaching the last major open-water area of the lake at South Cove, also known as Gregg Basin. There's an excellent launching ramp there, but no camping is allowed.

When Glen Canyon Dam was built, it caused the abundant flow of nutrient material that used to end up in Mead to settle out in Lake Powell, and this caused the famed largemouth bass and crappie fishing in Mead to decline. To supplement this, rainbow trout were planted by the State of Nevada, and both Nevada and Arizona introduced striped bass.

The effect today is that while Mead still offers some very good largemouth fishing, it's better known as a striper lake. So abundant are these huge fish — many, many fish of 20 pounds and even larger have been taken there — that the bag limit on Mead was raised to five fish per day several years ago. Mead is now a yearlong striper fishery, and during the spring, summer, and fall the stripers, bass, and occasional crappies are amply supplemented by chunky channel catfish, which seem to be abundant all over the lake.

So this is the Lake Mead National Recreation Area. It's a land of magnificent scenery and the clearest of waters. It's a place where you can cruise past towering buttes and perhaps spot a desert bighorn sheep staring down at you, where you can watch the ubiquitous grebes wait until the last moment before diving before your boat, where you can water-ski for as many uninterrupted miles as your arms and legs can stand, where you can cruise remote canyons and seek out secluded coves, and maybe catch a fish as long as your leg.

It's a place where you can lose... or — just maybe find — yourself. □

BY DON DEDERA

HOOVER DAM



Alan Benoit

*For Half a century
Steve Chubbs has
visited Hoover Dam,
and he's not tired of
it yet.*

If you happen to pilot an F-15 jet fighter, and you're in the neighborhood, you can do Hoover Dam in one second flat. Or if you're Steve Chubbs, you might stick around for 50 years.

Between those two extremes, about 22 million proud Americans and impressed foreigners have spent some time at Hoover Dam, hiking its stunning overlooks, exploring its concrete galleries, absorbing its mystical technology. On an average of a half-million a year, tourists have poured through Hoover Dam as predictably as water runs downhill. By now they've exposed an acre of Kodachrome, sent home an archive of postcards, and repeated every possible cornball joke, including the perennial favorite:

"Will it ever fall down?"

Steve Chubbs himself asks that question of a band of tourists huddled at the base of the dam downstream. They crane their necks up some 700 feet of concrete wall. Chubbs laughs to reassure them:

"Don't worry. It won't collapse. I guarantee it. Double your money back if it does."

Chubbs is the only party qualified to issue such an ironclad warranty. As a 22 year old, he hired on as a laborer at 50 cents an hour on Labor Day, 1931. Work on the dam had just begun. Now, into the 52nd year, Chubbs still punches the clock, as a hydrographer and tour guide. Such long service sometimes prompts Chubbs to josh first-time visitors by extending his hand flat from his waist and exclaiming, "Why, I remember when this dam was just a little fellow, about this tall!"

Truth to tell, few pioneer eyewitnesses survive of the days before the dam. Wild and free, 1450 miles from the tops of the Rockies to its delta on the Gulf of Cali-

tract was signed with a consortium called Six Companies, Inc.

The damsite, on the border between Nevada and Arizona, scarcely could be more challenging. The nearest railhead was the village of Las Vegas, 40 miles away. High voltage electricity was no closer than 222 miles. A whole new model town (Boulder City) had to be built. Everything—including a labor force of over 5000—had to be imported. There wasn't even a decent road.

But one by one, the connective links were completed. Six messhalls capable of feeding over a thousand workers at a sitting were erected. To a once-remote desert wilderness came dormitories, mammoth shovels, people-movers to carry 150 workers at a time, two huge concrete mixing plants, and the largest sand-and-gravel screening and washing facility of its kind on Earth.

Daredevils stitched together the walls of the canyon with work bridges, and rock scalers swung like spikers on webs of cables. With rock pick and dynamite, they cleansed the damsite of rubble. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, the bustle intensified; dusty, hot, noisy. Into this beehive dropped the boy/man, Chubbs.

The country was in the grip of the Great Depression. Out of work in Philadelphia, he wrote his uncle, Gus Ayers, chief

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From the first blast to last pour, Hoover Dam construction required a total period of three years and 10 months to complete. Every state participated, sending supplies to complete the job, from near weightless tin cups to steel gates weighing 3 million pounds apiece. Josef Muench photo

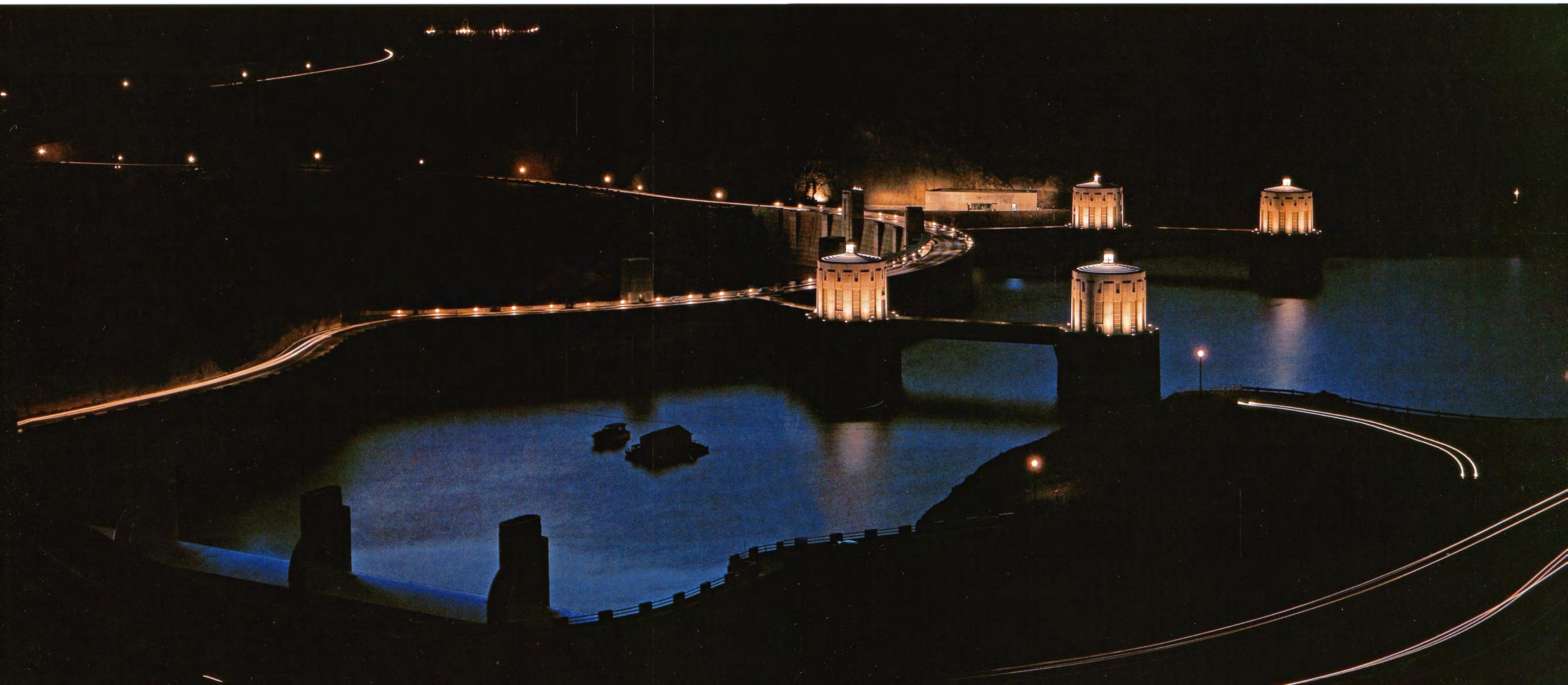
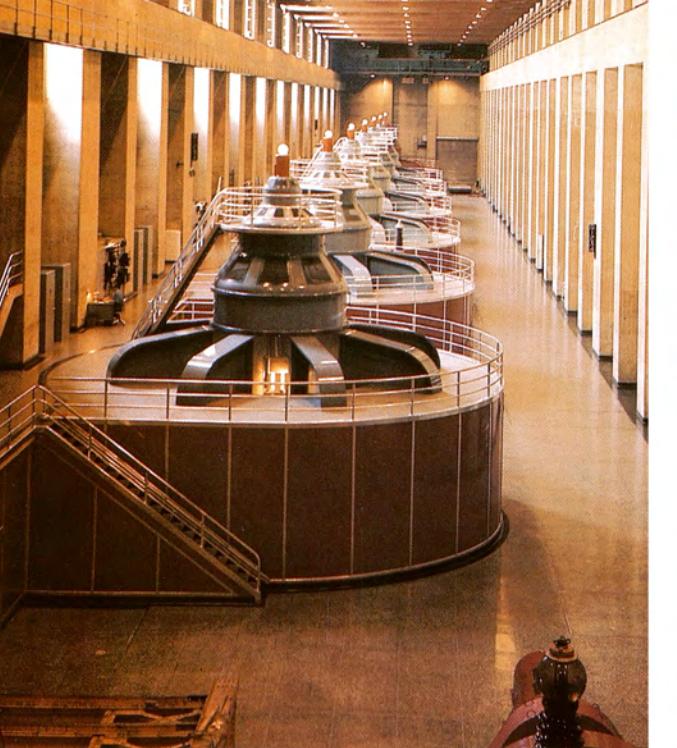


HOOVER DAM

(Right) Hoover Dam's power plant is composed of two wings divided equally on the Arizona and Nevada sides of the Colorado River. Combined, the plants' generating units produce upwards of 1.8 million horsepower. **Josef Muench photo**

(Far right) The upriver side of Hoover Dam, from the air. Rugged, surreal, breathtaking, a desolate land of volcanics and, in summer, parching heat. In this uninhabited wilderness, Bureau of Reclamation engineers began work on the Hoover Dam project which, in 1955, was named one of the seven modern civil engineering wonders of the United States. **Alan Benoit photo**

(Bottom) A time exposure photograph of Hoover Dam at night, taken from the Arizona side of the river. The long, curving streaks are automobile headlight beams. **Josef Muench photo**





(Left) Guarding the entrance to Hoover Dam, and commemorating the victory of the dam's completion, Oskar J. Hansen's *Winged Figures of the Republic* represent the Greek mythological figure Nike, the winged goddess of victory. Josef Muench photo · Art Deco moldings, terrazzos, and bas-relief embellishments also ornament other areas throughout the Dam. Alan Benoit photos

"No longer can turbines, tunnels, galleries, cranes, generators, and control boards be assembled with the sole consideration of service and efficiency when, without in any way interfering with function or adding much to cost, these same items can be built into a magnificent and inspiring thing of beauty."

So wrote Allen Tupper True, a consulting artist, during the construction of Hoover Dam. Visitors to the dam are often so awed by its dimensions and statistics that they ignore the grace and strength of the artwork which was incorporated into the project. From the color-coded generator parts to the broad, godlike torsos in Oskar J. Hansen's five-part concrete bas-reliefs (found on two of the elevator towers) the touch of the artist's hand offers a pleasant foil to the rough contours of the Colorado Gorge.

At the entrance to the dam, one's eye is immediately drawn to Hansen's *Winged Figures of the Republic*. The statues' uplifted

wings stand as the artist's symbol to "the immutable calm of intellectual resolution and the enormous power of trained physical strength—equally enthroned in placid triumph of scientific accomplishment." From every angle, the statues fill the heart with a feeling of inspiration and wonder, often reminding the viewer of mythical gods who possessed untold strength and magical powers.

Within the dam, a selection of color schemes and decorative motifs of the Southwestern Indians was chosen as the basis for all decoration. Protective coatings of paint for machinery were carefully planned according to a basic color scheme often used in Indian pottery and basketwork. The bold patterns used by the Indians were the inspiration for the terrazzo floor designs created for the dam by Joseph Martina. Each design is different and represents one of the Indian tribes in the Western states. One design (an adaptation of two Pima basket patterns) bears a

striking similarity to the engineer's basic designs of generators and turbines, with its suggestion of centrifugal motion.

Since the dam went into operation in 1935, about 22 million tourists have traversed the inner tunnels, daily trodding over Martina's terrazzo designs. Some never look down at the floor as they pass by. In their eagerness to reach the huge generators, people ignore the handsome bronze elevator doors with inlaid eagles and the immaculately preserved art deco lighting fixtures and fail to notice the graceful sweep of the huge spillways as they disappear into the earth.

It takes but a moment to look past Hansen's inlaid terrazzo star map and universal clock (which rest in front of *The Winged-Figures of the Republic*) and gear one's mind toward the artistic touches which grace Hoover Dam. The rewards to be reaped are astonishingly rich. □

A THING OF BEAUTY

The Art Deco of Hoover Dam

BY GEORGE HEYMONT

HOOVER DAM

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engineer. The uncle wrote back, "They're a tough bunch of men. Come on out. We'll find you something."

Something. Very nearly, Chubbs' tombstone. He blundered into fused, lighted blasting areas. He hugged stone walls to duck buckets of concrete. More than once rocky chunks bounced off his hard hat. But Chubbs was lithe and lucky, on a job that claimed 96 lives from 1931 to 1937, and as many as 1500 injuries a month. Some bad days 100 men would quit.

"Seeing men killed was quite a shock," Chubbs says. "I was working near one man when a piece of 8 x 10 dropped on him and caved in his head. I watched the life go out of him."

Chubbs hung on, advancing to stock clerk and inspector. Half a buck an hour may not seem much today, but in 1931 bread was a dime a loaf, steak 35 cents a pound, eggs 38 cents a dozen. And one-fourth of the nation's workers were unemployed.

When Chubbs first reported for work, Black Canyon was rumbling underfoot as if torn by earthquake. Four tunnels, each 56 feet in diameter, were being punched through canyon walls around the damsite. Simultaneously, earthen cofferdams above

and below the damsite were rushed to completion. Quickly the riverbed was pumped dry and scooped to bedrock so that placement of concrete could begin.

Nothing of this scale and design had been attempted—ever. Into wooden frames were poured Bunyan-esque building blocks ranging from 25- to 60-feet square and 30-feet high. From the initial pour June 6, 1933, to the last, May 29, 1935, as many as 36 carloads of cement daily accumulated into the 230 gigantic interlocking blocks.

To cool the curing concrete and prevent shrinking and cracking, engineers devised an ingenious system. Hundreds of miles of cold-water pipes were embedded into each pour. The dam cooled in months, instead of centuries.

Every aspect of Hoover dwarfed the builders. Four intake towers, tall as skyscrapers. Spillways with draft to float battleships. A fleet of 200 trucks. A cable-way rated at 150 tons. Needle valves wider than a man is tall. At 726.4 feet above bedrock, world's highest (at the time). Enough power eventually to energize 13 million 100-watt light bulbs. Or supply all the electrical needs of a city of a million people.

But the dam also drastically altered a free-spirited river, in retrospect a stiff environmental price. But Chubbs and other

old-timers tick off benefits which nowadays are taken for granted:

—Hoover, by regulating the Colorado, assures water for West Coast residents and industry. A billion gallons a day flows along the Colorado River Aqueduct, itself an engineering marvel, 242 miles in length. Through the Central Arizona Project, Phoenix and Tucson soon will tap water supplies guarded by Hoover.

—Since Hoover was emplaced, the Colorado's floods are under control. Benefiting downstream from flood control and irrigation are three-quarters of a million year around acres of some of America's most productive farms, and a half-million acres in Mexico.

—Child of the dam is Lake Mead, which now fills three basins with combined shorelines of 550 miles. Fishing, swimming, boating, camping, waterskiing, and photography are so popular, the National Park Service administers waters above and below the dam as a national recreation area.

—With a full complement of 17 large turbines, Hoover's power plant hums along, producing its power at .7 cents per kilowatt hour, in a day when thermal plants put out electricity priced at six and seven times as much. Low-cost power from Hoover saves the United States about 10 mil-

lion barrels of oil per year.

—So crucial was Hoover Dam considered, on the day Pearl Harbor was struck armed soldiers occupied the approaches, and throughout World War II travelers were escorted by sabotage-wary troops. Much of America's industrial war effort in the West drew power from Hoover.

Among the 174 current employees, Steve Chubbs is most senior and visible, although such tour leaders as Dan Sullivan and James Sweeny have been there a long time, too. Chubbs wears a railroad engineer's cap as he makes his rounds to every tunnel and catwalk. He checks stress gauges, takes the dam's temperature, measures uplift pressure, retrieves water samples, and charts accumulations of silt. He operates off boats and records data in his powerhouse laboratory.

When Chubbs and company lead their tours, they "try to make every visitor feel like they're on an adventure." Polite and professional, the guide corps assumes an attitude of showcasing the best of the United States. And that message goes to a large percentage of foreign tourists, many from developing nations adapting the lessons of Hoover Dam to their own needs of flood control and hydroelectric power.

Hoover guides rattle off statistics to boggle minds from Bohemia to Burma. Two miles of inspection tunnels. Tours are conducted *every day of the year*. The crest of the dam is 1244 feet, the base 660-feet thick. Today, in addition to Hoover, there are six major dams on the Colorado. The flagpole is 142-feet tall. Lake Mead can hold two years of Colorado River runoff. Hoover Dam was completed in just five years, two years ahead of schedule. Concrete in the dam amounts to 3.2 million cubic yards, a larger volume than the Pyramid of Cheops. That much concrete would make a 16-foot-wide highway between San Francisco and New York. If stacked solid on a city block the concrete would exceed the Empire State Building in height. All of Hoover Dam's materials, if loaded on railroad cars, would make a train reaching all the way to Kansas City, Missouri.

And more. Actually, Hoover's world-class superlatives have been lost to other, grander projects in America and abroad. Lake Nasser behind Aswan High Dam in Egypt is 300-miles long. In 1949, the Grand Coulee Dam, in the state of Washington, overtook Hoover in power capacity, and today there are some five-dozen dams making more power than Hoover. There are taller dams in Russia, Columbia, Switzerland, Canada, California. Even Hoover's enormous mass would make but a pebble in the super earth-filled dikes such as Don

HOOVER DAM

Pedro on the Tuolumne, or the Kiev on the Dnieper. Hoover's storage capacity—30 million acre-feet—is a teacup to a bucket compared to the 166 million capacity of the Owen Falls Dam in Uganda, at the headwaters of the Nile. Even so, Lake Mead remains the largest artificial body of water in the United States and Hoover, the highest concrete dam in the western hemisphere.

Dams attract controversy like driftwood. Hoover is not the exception. Disputes persist regarding Hoover's cheap power; both Nevada and Arizona covet greater shares for burgeoning populations. And decades after completion, half the people call it "Hoover," the other half, "Boulder." This dispute bristles with partisan politics. The original name honored Herbert C. Hoover, President at the time the project started. Certain powerful Democrats tried to change the name to Boulder when President Hoover emerged as scapegoat for the Great Depression. During the administration of Harry S. Truman, the name Hoover was reaffirmed. Yet...

"I call it Boulder Dam," says Steve Chubbs to a reporter for the *Los Angeles Times*. "Do you know why? I was getting 50 cents an hour when I started, and old Hoover cut everybody's pay. Mine dropped to 43 cents an hour. I never did like the man after that."

Ironically, too, some experts speculate that Hoover Dam (not to mention Panama Canal, the Transcontinental Railroad, or the Golden Gate Bridge) couldn't be funded and approved under an environmental ethic embraced by a nation different from that of "know-how, can-do, let's-go" America. For better or poorer, the United States marches to another drum-beat. Photography of the bunting, the plaques, the pageantry, the statuary of the dam's dedication day now seem oddly chauvinist and single-minded.

That day, September 30, 1935, Chubbs was seated "in a box with a bunch of big shots" when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signaled for silence.

"I'm speechless," he had told his hosts earlier, upon first seeing the completed dam. He wasn't of course. He addressed the Hoover builders:

"This is an engineering victory of the first order—another great achievement of American resourcefulness, skill, and determination. This is why I congratulate you who have created Boulder (sic) Dam and on behalf of the nation say to you, well done!"

Chubbs took that speech to heart, and stayed on. He is active in the 31 Club of original Hoover workers.

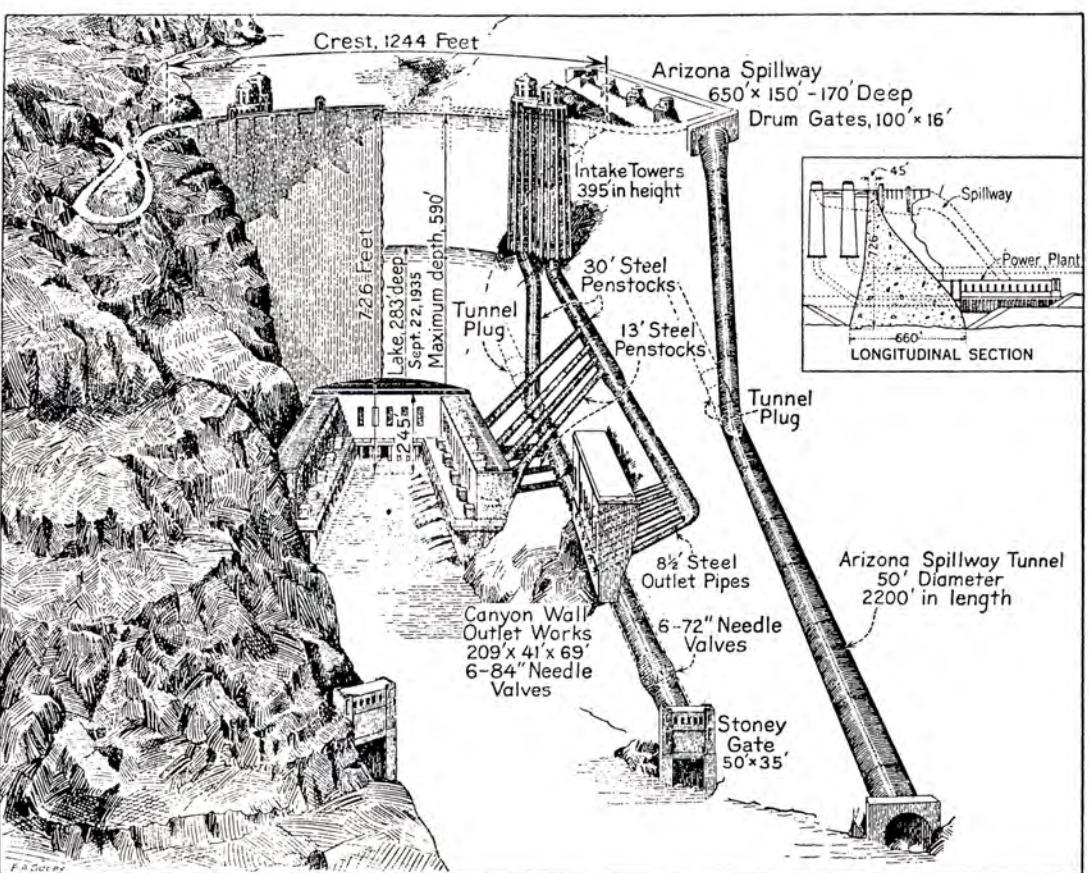


Steve Chubbs of Hoover Dam. On the way to becoming a legend in his own time, Chubbs has been on the scene since the early stages of construction. He blundered into blasting areas, ducked buckets of concrete and falling rock, and watched helplessly as co-workers died. Today, at an age when many men feel the heavy hand of time, Chubbs says he'll not retire, "as long as I can pull my weight...they'll have to carry me out."

Alan Benoit photo

Other visitors come and go, by boat, by bus, by helicopter, by car, by jet. Last year, as a Fourth of July stunt, a patriotic mountaineer rappelled down the face of the dam. Chubbs, who in 1937 spent weeks in a boatswain's chair inspecting every inch of the face of the dam for cracks (finding none), was not much impressed. Hoover Dam's eternal tourist has done it all.

"And as long as I can pull my weight, I'll not retire," he asserts. "I guess they'll have to carry me out." □



The Joshua tree, the bighorn sheep, the burro, and the inimitable kangaroo rat are also big attractions in this recreation area's natural scene—often just yards from the water's edge.

Life in Lake Mead Country

BY JAMES TALLON



Sonoran Desert V, woodcut by Boyd Hanna.

The Lake Mead National Recreation Area claims fame as a leisureland of boating, camping, fishing, waterskiing, and other water-oriented fun and games. Few of its annual 5 million-plus patrons probe more than a few hundred yards beyond the water's edge, which helps preserve the recreation area's natural scene—dividend domains that send botanists, zoologists, naturalists, and like scientists into fits of Latin rhetoric.

And fewer yet ponder the irony involved in this world's largest inland collection of man-made freshwater being set in two of the world's hottest, driest deserts, the Lower Sonoran and Mojave.

This, Lake Mead Country's natural world, spreads across five biotic communities: Woodland, Desert Shrub, Transzonal, Shoreline, and Aquatic. Woodland, with such flora as Utah junipers, pinyon pines, and Gambel oaks and fauna like mule deer, bobcats, coyotes, and rodents, is represented in high plateaus to the east and on a few mountaintops. Proportionately, it makes up but a small part of Lake Mead Country's 3000 square miles.

The other three communities are in the relative lowlands of two desert regions: Mojave and Lower Sonoran. With less than six inches of rainfall per year, it takes very specialized plants and animals to exist here. Roots of perennials probe deep and wide for moisture; annuals complete their life spans in a few weeks; some—the creosote bush and brittlebush specifically—secrete lethal chemicals that terminate other plants attempting to take root in "their" territories, infringing on meager water rations.

Although the Mojave and Lower Sonoran deserts rub shoulders in the recreation area, each shows marked differences from the other. Plants abundant on one may be sparse or nonexistent on the other. Shrubby vegetation, primarily creosote bush and bur sage, dominate Mojave; trees are largely limited to catclaw which seek out the arroyos and washes. On the Lower Sonoran, the same type of drainage supports a heavy growth of several kinds of mesquites and paloverdes. Common on both deserts are various and sundry species of cacti, including chollas.

Lake Mead Country's aerial and terres-

trial creatures prove less selective, many readily step back and forth across the boundaries of the two deserts. Sixty species of mammals have been observed here, among them mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes, gray and kit foxes, badgers, ring-tail cats, jackrabbits, and cottontails. On the shorter side, there are kangaroo rats, pocket mice, wood rats, white-footed mice, ground squirrels, and other rodents. Two hundred and fifty kinds of birds have been logged, including 60 types of waterfowl. These range from hummingbirds to both golden and bald eagles. To this list add 42 species of lizards and snakes, two examples of turtles, and six, of amphibians.

Of all the plant and animal options within the recreation area, three have become major attractions for nature lovers and the intermittently curious: The tame-gone-wild (feral) burro, the desert bighorn sheep, and the Joshua tree forests.

The Joshua tree, *Yucca brevifolia*, grows 15- to 30-feet high, one to three feet in diameter and is a member of the lily family. The blossoms are lily-like and open at night. Lay-folk, particularly Easterners, spot the bayonet leaves and generally mistake it for a cactus. Joshua trees are scattered broadly over the Mojave Desert, but one of the best stands in all of the Southwest can be found in the Lake Mead National Recreation area. The Pierce Ferry road bisects it, the turnoff being about 40 miles southeast of Hoover Dam, on U.S. 93.

Desert bighorn sheep are harder to find, though they have been known to stray into the city limits of Boulder City causing periodic evasive-driving maneuvers on U.S. 93, where it cuts through the Black Mountains. The bighorn ewe has no big horns and is somewhat similar to the domestic goat. The hunter rates the bighorn ram as the personification of challenge and reward. Just seeing it in the wild and watching it negotiate a habitat of dangling ledges and sheer cliffs, you have no less respect and admiration.

Bill Burke, resources management specialist for the National Park Service, at the recreation area, estimates there could be as many as 2000 bighorns in his area. July and August are the best time to find them, but the worst—the hottest—for humans. Then, most of the backcountry

(Right) The Lake Mead National Recreation Area hosts a huge variety of wildlife from water birds to large desert mammals. Herons can be found along the Colorado River, standing quietly in shallow water spearing or probing for animal life. Jack Dykinga photo

(Below) Feral burros roam the desert areas surrounding the lakes while the desert bighorn sheep, bottom, prefer the high rocky perches of the mountains. An abundance of browse and preference for different habitats allow these two species to coexist and thrive along the Colorado River. James Tallon photos





(Left) Joshua trees, *Yucca brevifolia*, are said to be named for Joshua of the Old Testament. Dick Dietrich photo

(Above) The mourning dove is but one of 250 species of birds in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area. James Tallon photo

(Right) A coyote, mischief and magic personified, pauses on the way to an evening's hunt. James Tallon photo



water holes have dried up, and the sheep come to the lakes to drink. Subsequently, they hang around until it cools off and scattered rains resupply their regular roosts.

"If you want to get a look at bighorns and perhaps take some pictures, then, rent a boat at Willow Beach, or bring your own, and cruise that general area of Black Canyon. It's not uncommon to see 40 to 60 of them," Burke said.

In the wildlife field, it is practically impossible to discuss desert bighorn sheep at the management level without bringing in the feral burro. The two compete for food and water and living space in certain environmental situations, and the bighorn is invariably the loser. But the problem is minimal at the recreation area. The burros prefer the bajadas, those rocky aprons that slope away from buttes and mesas; the sheep like higher, much more rugged territory. The only time the twain are likely to meet is enroute to Lake Mead and Lake Mohave for a drink.

Burke believes 1000 to 1200 burros use Lake Mead Country, and that is a twist

since, in a given piece of desert real estate, burros usually outnumber bighorns. With the layman, the burro often exceeds the bighorn sheep as an object of curiosity. There is something about this cocky animal that makes you like him even when you think you shouldn't be liking him. Burke said burro aficionados should be able to easily find the herds that hang out in the vicinity of Katherine Landing, on Lake Mohave, and across Lake Mead from Temple Bar. Others are scattered about the area, and, again, a boat may serve best to find them.

My prime interest in Lake Mead Country is neither bighorn, burro, or Joshua tree. It is the kangaroo rat. This little guy with the big eyes and the strange nose and the funny legs was structured to never require a bona fide drink. If it is capable of thought, I wonder if it ever considers the double irony of living in one of the nation's hottest, driest deserts with two of the biggest water holes around (Lake Mead and Lake Mohave) just a hop away and never needing to take so much as a sip. □

BOOKSHELF

by Mary Lu Moore



Four books from the University of Nevada Press, Reno, NV 89557, are important contributions to the Arizona-Nevada region and beyond.

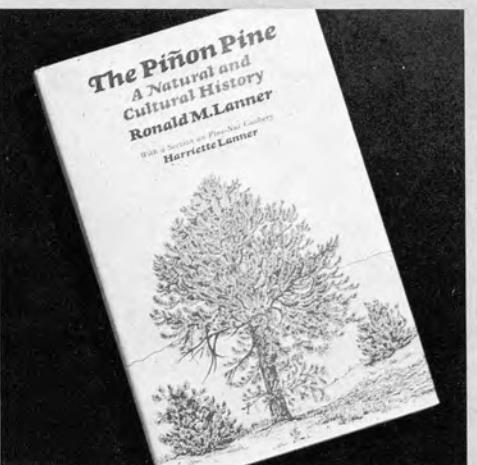
WILL JAMES: THE LAST COWBOY LEGEND. By Anthony Amaral. 1980 (reprint). 175 p. \$12.00, hardcover.

Few knew the other side of this lanky, affable cowboy artist, writer, and storyteller of the turn-of-the-century West. Most knew only of his memorable writings: *Smoky, Lone Cowboy, Horses I've Known*, and of his incomparable illustrations of horses and ranch life. A lonely anachronism, Will James drifted through Nevada, Arizona, and Montana, finally settling down for short periods on isolated ranches in Nevada, and later Montana, with his wife to work on his art and writing. Yet the burden of fame and fortune and the inability to cope with real life and people, alcoholism, and chronic fear of revelation of his true identity brought this major figure to an early death at 50. The author provides notes, black-and-white photos, illustrations, and some updating to this "Lancehead Series" edition of his 1967 work *Will James, The Gilt Edged Cowboy*.

SURVIVAL ARTS OF THE PRIMITIVE PAIUTES. By Margaret M. Wheat. 1981 (reprint). 119 p. \$7.50, softcover.

In the late 1940s the author became interested in the ethnology of the Northern Paiute. With tape recorder and camera, she recorded many all-but-vanished lifeways of a hardy people of northwestern Nevada. First published in 1967, Wheat's annotated work portrays in text and photos the relationship of the Paiute with their land through the yearly cycle as it had existed for generations before the advent of the white man, who wrought profound and lasting changes. Step by step we can follow several Paiute elders as they harvest piñon nuts; construct a boat and a cradleboard; make tools, utensils, and weapons; weave articles from fibers; and build a house. A deeply heartwarming and rewarding work.

(Left) An endless supply of wonders exists in Lake Mead, more than enough to engage the eager sightseer for several lifetimes. Kathleen Norris Cook photo



BELTRAN: BASQUE SHEEPMAN OF THE AMERICAN WEST. By Beltran Paris as told to William A. Douglass. 1979. 186 p. \$10.00, hardcover.

Barely twenty, Beltran Paris left his native French Basque village to earn a living in the western U.S. Knowing no English and having almost no education, the earnest young man began as a modest sheepherder. He learned quickly and rose to become a respected rancher and family man. In his own words, Paris tells ingeniously and with humor of his many rewarding experiences and of the hardships of the sheep business among the numerous Basque sheepmen in Nevada, Arizona, and elsewhere in the West. Candid black-and-white photos portray the character and moods of this old-country contributor to the American West.

THE PIÑON PINE: A NATURAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY. By Ronald M. Lanner. 1981. 208 p. \$13.50, hardcover; \$8.50, softcover.

Pine nut, pinyon, piñon—whatever one chooses to call it—the modest little nut and its parent tree found in Nevada, Arizona, and elsewhere in the Greater Southwest have played a major role in the existence of man in North America for several thousand years. No facet of the history of *Pinus edulis* (Colorado) or *Pinus monophylla* (singleleaf) piñon has been omitted: geographical distribution of species, multitude of uses by prehistoric and historic Indians, and present value. Surprisingly, exploration and ranching in the West and silver mining in 19th-century Nevada might not have achieved their success so readily without the gifts of piñon woodland. The author includes an impres-

sive bibliography, notes, black-and-white photos and illustrations, and an index. A real delight is Harriette Lanner's section on pine-nut cookery. Viva the incredible, edible piñon!

LAKE MEAD-HOOVER DAM: THE STORY BEHIND THE SCENERY. By James C. Maxon. KC Publications, Box 14883, Las Vegas, NV 89114. 1981, 2nd printing. 48 p. \$7.95, hardcover; \$3.00, softcover.

In this colorful, well-written, factual book the author summarizes the geologic and human history of the region of the Colorado River and lakes Mead and Mohave and presents a concise discussion of the construction of the engineering feat that was Hoover (Boulder) Dam. Subsequently he surveys the esthetic and recreational aspects of these two man-made lakes and the surrounding desert. At the end of each section are suggested readings. The whole Lake Mead Recreation Area comes alive in brilliant color and fine historical photographs—and you can't beat the price.

Reviewed by Judson Farquar.

BEYOND THE HUNDREDTH MERIDIAN: JOHN WESLEY POWELL AND THE SECOND OPENING OF THE WEST. By Wallace Stegner. University of Nebraska Press, 901 N. 17th St., Lincoln, NE 68588. 1982 (reprint). 430 p. \$50.00, hardcover; \$12.50, softcover.

From a modest rural background, a self-taught scientist with a passion for books, the one-armed Civil War veteran quickly earned respect for his expeditions into the uncharted West. A professor of geology, Powell later established the U.S. Geological Survey, the Bureau of American Ethnology, and the Bureau of Reclamation. He learned to cope with the bureaucracy in Washington and interacted with nearly all the scientific and political greats of his era. A complex, misunderstood man, he strove to interpret a complex, misunderstood region—that arid land beyond the hundredth meridian. Driven by the conviction that science under the auspices of the federal government could achieve brilliant results for the nation, Powell was several generations ahead of his time. Well researched, with maps, photographs, notes, and index, this monumental volume published in 1954 remains one of the most significant books written on the social and scientific history of the West.

Inquiries about any of these titles should be directed to the book publisher not ARIZONA HIGHWAYS.

YOURS SINCERELY

Comments and questions from around the state, the nation, and the world.

Dear Editor,

Sam Lowe's article in March *Arizona Highways* entitled "Baseball in the Cactus League" was very informative about the Spring Training Camps in the Phoenix area. So much that he almost forgot that Yuma is also in Arizona.

Mr. Lowe failed to do his homework, when he named all the Cactus League spring training sites, but missed the largest one in all of baseball. That one being Desert Sun Stadium in Yuma, the winter home of the San Diego Padres.

This showplace of winter baseball has four, yes four major league ball fields for the Padres to condition their players. Desert Sun Stadium also has the latest in lighting systems for night baseball.

This super manicured facility is also used by the Japanese Yakult Swallows Ballclub.

I feel that Yuma, Arizona, and the San Diego Padres deserve more than the one line mention in this article.

James H. Matheson III
Yuma, Arizona

Dear Mr. Matheson,

You're right. And we apologize. The Desert Sun Stadium in Yuma, winter home of the San Diego Padres, is indeed a showplace. And an Arizona attraction not to be missed.

—the Editor

Dear Editor,

Cancel my order to discontinue my subscription....

Arizona is part of my life and I find that I may well miss *Arizona Highways* too much.

Mildred Noble
Glen Ellen, CA

P.S. I crossed the desert in a touring car from New Mexico to Phoenix to Ajo in the early 1920's. You see?

Dear Editor,

I have a complaint to make—I'm sure you hardly ever hear those words from your readers.

My complaint is that my apartment is becoming buried under piles of *Arizona Highways* going back for years. I've just tried weeding out the less attractive ones, but only disposed of two or three this way.

Every issue has at least one article I want to read again, or a handful of pic-

tures that simply can't be tossed out. In all too many cases the entire issue is so beautiful that it has to be kept for savoring from time to time....

After ruthless selection, I have now donated a few more issues to friends, or clipped favorite articles or pictures, but the main stockpile remains. It's very space-consuming but on the other hand is a constant source of spiritual refreshment. Not a bad tradeoff!

My thanks to you and your staff.
Audrey Earl
San Francisco, CA

Dear Editor,

The March 1983 issue of *Arizona Highways* with the interesting articles on Ted DeGrazia, his pictures and the reproductions of his paintings is fabulous. They give a deep insight into the mind of Arizona's famous artist.

With a few strokes of his brush or pen, he could give the whole history of his beloved friends, the Indians.

Harriet Lee
Turlock, CA

Dear Editor,

May I congratulate you on your *Arizona Highways*, it is a magazine unparalleled for its contribution toward international understanding and for its wide range of subjects covering a vast field of interests. It is my belief that the humanistic spirit of the *Arizona Highways* will long continue to serve as a lighthouse for the world in this troubled time.

Each issue is filled with a beauty—whether it's breath-taking scenery, flowers, beautiful birds, horses, minerals, classic cars, or your history and agriculture, along with your people of all races and origins—all part of the backbone of your beautiful state.

Thank you for our much appreciated *Arizona Highways*.

Virginia Dodson
Denver, CO

Dear Editor,

Just when I got the yearning for Arizona under control after the marvelous pictures in your December issue, you go and stir it up again with pictures of the desert in bloom.

Lydia Hair
Ruston, LA

Dear Editor,

For a couple of years I have read your marvelous magazine. Visiting Arizona for years, I continually get new ideas for discovering your beautiful country from your magazine. Keep on reporting the most beautiful state in the USA.

Reiner Ibach
West Germany

Dear Editor,

For several years we purchased *Arizona Highways* at the newsstand. Then we subscribed for a couple of years. Last December our subscription ran out and we did not renew. Why? Because you've convinced us! We're moving to Arizona!

Anna and Dean Huber
Summerville, Pennsylvania

Dear Anna and Dean,

A hearty Arizona welcome to you, but we think you should consider renewing your subscription. Now that this is your new home, you'll need *Arizona Highways* more than ever as a guide to all the beautiful and interesting places in the state.

—the Editor

Dear Editor,

Your February issue on the Petrified Forest and the Painted Desert was magnificent. You dipped your pen in an autumn day and painted a beautiful picture.

For me the Petrified Forest will always be—

A tree—in all its majesty
Turned to stone and left alone.
Lying—where it once stood tall,
Glorified for one and all.

Thank you for reminding me of its "captured" beauty. I was only five when I saw it but one does not forget a rainbow.

Jean Pennington
San Jose, California

(Inside back cover) Temple Bar, one of the major landmarks on Lake Mead, was originally named the Mormon Temple by pioneer Daniel Bonelli, in the early 1870s.

David Muench photo

(Back cover) South Cove of Greggs Basin, on the far east end of Lake Mead. Miles of open water surrounded by rugged desert provide stunning scenic contrasts along the Colorado River. **Carlos Elmer photo**



