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Sunday, May 7, 1944

Kangaroo Court Jail Has a Great History

The old jail which is one of the traditions of the Helldorado celebration is a real relic of the early west. It is kept at the Helldorado Village and is hauled to the corner of First street and Fremont every spring for the "kangaroo court" annual which is a part of the pre-Helldorado entertainment in the city of Las Vegas.

The old iron jail was presented early west. to the Elks in 1940 by C. Halsell, who purchased the old Rock Springs Land and Cattle com- Establishments of pany at Barnwell, California. It has been used in the "kangaroo" court every since

war days by a blacksmith in In the early years of the an-San Bernardino, California, according to Frank Gusewelle, who nual Helldorado celebration. has traced its history. merchants of the city of Las Its first duty was in the rip-roaring mining camp at Vanderbilt, near Ivanpah. Many of the men incarcerated in this bleak noon, which traditionally was caliboose made a one-stop trip the opening of the first rodeo from jail to the boot-hill ceme- events.

When the mining boom at Van- Almost unanimously the mertery nearby. derbilt died out, the jail was chants and gambling club and moved to Barnwell. California, bar operators responded to this and was used in the boom there. civic enterprise, and it was not two-gun cowhands at Lanfair, uncommon on Friday afternoon where a dry farming area was to find Fremont street almost developed. Later it was used deserted by people and autoin the cattle rustling era of that mobiles.

vicinity. Merchants, their employes and There is a legend that during the use of the old jail at Barn-

well that two men were found shot to death in opposite corners att potential customers all grounds and sat through the ex- Rex Bell Aided of a cabin occupied by a belle of the district. When a perfunctory investigation of the case was made, the belle disclaimed any features of the show.

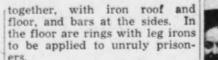
knowledge of the shooting, and With the advent of the war, the knowledge of the shooting, and officers determined that the policy of asking merchants to close was abandoned by the spon-had backed into opposite corners "to shoot it out," and had backed into opposite corners is simultaneously with the everyone, defense workers, with the last several days "rounding fallen almost simultaneously with based of the veryone, defense workers, with the last several days "rounding of their new home was solemn." with bullets in their hearts. So military personnel, merchants up" atmosphere for the coming of their new home was solemn- of the early-day Pony Express on one occasion at least the jail and employes all might attend Helldorado which is being given ized, will hand over the gavel of riders. was freed of blame in the double enjoy the fun of the show. Success of previous night shows Strays. shooting.

When the jail first was brought led the Elks to schedule three Rex Bell, moving picture actor to Las Vegas, it was covered in evening events this year. Rodeos and southern Nevada rancher nual installation of officers. spots by several layers of white- will be held on the nights of May has allowed the Boulder organiwash which had been applied 18, 19, and 20, and on the after- zation to borrow four long- horn post of Leading Knight, Joe Ronover a period of years. noon of May 21.

Message Written The first rodeo is scheduled ises that they will be four of the lecturing knight, Charles Bush as 1893. Written in pencil on one of the for 8 o'clock on the night of May largest "critters" from his ranch Tiler. Walter R. Bracken conwritten in pencil on one of the for 8 o'clock on the night of May largest "critters" from his ranch Tiler. Walter R. Bracken con-whitewashed bars, was this terse 18 and will follow the annual which is located near the old tinues as treasurer, O. K. Ad-back from Moapa to Vanderbilt, message: "I spent five days of old-timers' parade. On May 19 mining town of Searchlight. hell here, July 4, 1878." old-timers' parade of May 19 mining town of Searchlight. and 20, the rodeos will start at Bell in addition to the steers Cashman as trustee.

In the blazing sun of the desert 7:30 o'clock, and on the after-in the middle of the summer, noon of May 21, the final events horses, which have been used the circumstances of those five will begin at 1:15 o'clock, accord- during recent months in mov- rangement were made for apdays are not hard for one to ing to the committee in charge, ing pictures, for the occasion. pearance of the animals through the roughest terrain in the west. of which Mayor E. W. Cragin The four steers and four horses the courtesy of Earl Simpson, imagine.

The jail is of solid iron, riveted is chairman.



The grim purpose of the jail now has been eliminated. Its use in the Helldorado celebration is strictly for fun and for a few minutes of imprisonment for 'kangaroo court" victims. However, the jail stands as a

monument to the rugged boisterous, rip-roaring history of the

City Once Closed The jail was built in Civil On First Fete Day

RODEO QUEENS—This bevy of beauties vied for the rodeo queen honors of the 1937 Helldorado fete. From left to right are Berniece Monhollen, Evelyn Jones, Alice Richardson, Mishie Stewart, "Buff" George, and in the rear, to the right, is shown Bonnie Crone. The other girl in the picture is not identified.

Boulder Elk Strays In First Big Fete

steers, three-year-olds, and prom- now, Loyal Knight, Bob Boyer, harness at the Chicago fair in

will be at the Helldorado. Ar- Bell's manager.

Tourists Pay Fee For Visit to Dam

Las Vegas Review-Journal, April 1, 1937—Today tournists started paying a 25 cent fee to see the inside of the Boulder dam and power houses.

Herman Classen, of Strayton, Oregon, was the first tourist to pay the fee for the guide service, according to Ranger David M. Laughery who was on duty at the dam this morning.

Nevadans Always "Crap Shooters" **History Reveals**

Nevadans have been "crap shooters" practically always, according to information contained in the archives of the Southwest museum at Los Angeles, it was learned here a few years ago. The gambling spirit of the west

was born early in history of this area. Concrete evidence of this _____Miss Jeanne Godshall, of Vicentist, who spent many years in this area unearthing artifacts of a "lost civilization" of early In-dian tribes. fact has been discovered by M. dian tribes. until the war.

Beard-growing, a feature of the annual Helldorado celebration, also was a fetish with those early Lake Storage Is tribes, the archaeologist reports. Dice, sometimes elliptical in shape and otherwise conforming in design to those rolled in presin design to those rolled in present day gambling houses, were

Las Vegas Review-Journal, known to native tribes or aborigines who dwelt along the muddy Colorado river 1,000 and water in Boulder lake reached ute entry in the city attorney

even 15,000 years ago. Today samples of that form of "culture" are on exhibit at the made by Otto J. Littler, assistant Roland Wiley. Southwest museum, Highland engineer for the bureau of In the race for city judge T. M.

reclamation. Many specimens of dice were unearthed at the Pueblo Grande reservoir is 30,500,000 acre feet, Wagner were entered. de Nevada or Lost City in the Moapa Valley area. which indicates that the lake now is almost one-third full.

Medicine Men of Old "Voodoos"

Medicine men of the early Piute tribes in the Las Vegas area mystified their fellow tribesmen with a dialect all their own which was handed down from one generation to another.

With this dialect and weird motions and dances, the medicine men were supposed to drive disease from the sick person's body. The sick were laid on the ground, and the medicine man would dance in circles around him administering a kick every now and then. The kick was to drive the evil spirits or the devil from the sick man.

A medicine man was given three chances by the tribe. He had to predict the fate of the sick man, whether he was to die or live. If he misjudged, it was counted against him. Three failures meant death for the medicine man at the hands of the tribe.

-Miss Jeanne Godshall, of Vic-torville, California, who presided Offices of City **To Have Contests**

Las Vegas Review - Journal, April 3, 1937—Contests developed for all city offices becoming vacant this year, with the exce tion of city clerk. Surprise filings for the com-

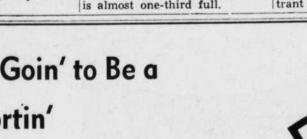
missioner posts included those of Joe Ronnow, who will oppose James H. Down, Sr., and Jim Powers, who entered the race

with Herb Krause.

Carroll, William Gore, Joe Huf-Maximum storage of the huge ford, Jack Lewis and John P.

> Vioila Burns was the only entrant for city clerk.

D



O'Donnell Takes Elks Ruler Post

chieftain of the lodge at the an- romantic life. His life might be

John Graglia steps into the Bill Cody. He won the world champion-

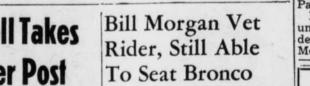
cock as secretary and James a point on the Santa Fe railroad, in 1905, but when the railroad was extended to Moapa, his job was done. However, for several vears he traveled over some of

Buffalo Bill Cody hired Morgan

to work as a horse wrangler in his wild west show which toured the United States. Morgan, in the absence of Cody, acted the part of the famous frontiersman and thrilled crowds with his deadly shooting and his skilled riding. In 1901 Morgan started a tour of the middle west with 50 Piute Indians and named his company tronco Bill's Wild West Show



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---AND CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ELKS FOR

10 YEARS OF GOOD WORK!

Southern Nevada Power Co.

He still carries the name of Bronco Bill.

He first came to this area in 1895 to work for Mrs. Bill Stewart of the old Stewart ranch as foreman. There were then 4,000 cattle on the ranch. He worked off and on for 10 years at the ranch. During the big boom at Tono-pah, Morgan drove 16-horse team freighters with supplies for that district district.

He returned to Las Vegas in 1907 after spending two years in California, where he sold horses. In 1926 he handed mail pouches to the first Western Air Express pilot to carry mail by plane through here. For 12 years Morgan operated

a 120-acre ranch in Red Rock canyon.

Arriving in Las Vegas a decade before the establishment of the town in 1905, Morgan has viewed the progress from a big ranch to the modern thriving community of today.

He always is a featured entry in the old-timers' parade and will be in the lineup again this year for Helldorado, opening May 18.

"The Drunkard" Is Casualty of War This Helldorado

Military service and war work have combined to deplete the ranks of the Las Vegas Community Players, so the "gay '90" melodrama which had become an outstanding feature of the annual Helldorado celebration is listed as a casualty of the war. Not enough members of the cast remain in the city to permit the production this year, according to the Elks Helldorado commit-

For the past several years "The Drunkard" had been featured as one of the outstanding entertainments at the Helldorado Village. A tent housed the show, and provided one of the greatest difficulties for the Players. One year the tent was late in arriving, and the first performance had to be cancelled. Another time a huge gust of wind took the tent down just before the crowds down just before the crowds started assembling. The show was about two hours late in starting that night, but the show went on to the end despite the difficulties encountered. Many Les Vegas residents have been featured in the show over

a course of years. Their per-formances provided much enter-tainment for the Helldorado fans.



CONGRATULATIONS, ELKS!

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