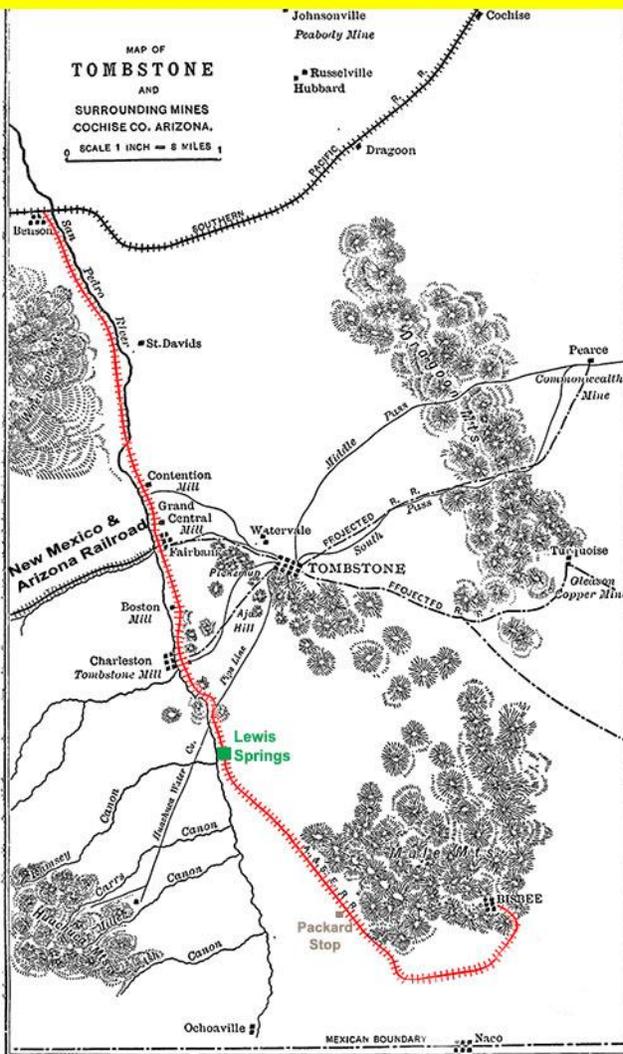


## Lewis Springs—The Once Highly Popular Regional Resort

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Lewis Springs, situated just a few miles from the San Pedro House, was for more than 10 years a highly popular resort where thousands of people gathered at a time. At the height of its development during the late 19th and early 20th centuries the resort provided people with shade, a spring fed pool, music, dancing in a large pavilion, a natatorium, a bathhouse, entertainment, midway concessions, good food and drinks, athletic contests, and convenient railroad transportation with special excursion rates.

Phelps Dodge Railroads (shown in red, adapted from Church, 1903).  
(Track positions changed over time as Phelps Dodge RR found & constructed better grades. Eastward tracks to Douglas, New Mexico, Texas & Mexico not shown.)



People living near the San Pedro River especially prized shade. The Upper San Pedro River was in a stage of a naturally occurring alluvial cycle during which most of the river was not yet within an arroyo and large trees were scarce. (See Noonan, 2011, 2013 for details).

The Lewis Springs area had a spring fed pool and a grove of large cottonwood trees that provided open shade suitable for crowds. Moreover, it was conveniently close to a railroad that was eager to earn revenue by transporting people to and from the area.

Fritz Hoffman had initially located springs that were termed (Barnes, 1988, p. 246) "Fritz springs." In January 1879 Colonel Alpheus Lewis purchased the old Fritz Hoffman Springs, which was recorded under the name of his son, Robert A. Lewis. The water source was thereafter called "Lewis Springs" in honor of the senior Lewis (Bailey and Chaput, 2000b, p. 8; Thrapp, 1988, p. 853).

Tax records for 1885 showed that R. A. Lewis owned 160 acres on the east side of the San Pedro River at Lewis Springs (TE, 1886a). The property included an adobe house and wire fence and was valued at

\$2000. The \$70 annual taxes were \$76.79 in arrears. Ownership of the ranch apparently passed in September 1886 to George Gunnison Berry, a Tombstone lawyer active in land speculation

(Bailey, and Chaput, 2000a, p. 24; DT, 1886). The ownership change may have been related to the resignation of Colonel Alpheus Lewis and his son Robert from the local management of the Prompter Mine and a sale of Lewis' mining interests to Berry (DTE, 1886).

The desirability of Lewis Springs for relaxation because of its pond and shade producing cottonwood trees was known to the public by 1889. The Tombstone Daily Prospector on February 11, 1889 described (TDP, 1889a) the Lewis ranch as "one of the finest ranches in Cochise County. The bubbling spring bursting out from the side of a hill, never failing, makes this a most desirable location for a home." The Tombstone Daily Prospector reported on August 14, 1890 that several people had enjoyed a Sunday at Lewis Springs (TDP, 1890) fishing and sleeping beneath the cottonwood trees on the bank of the "carp pond."

Charles Granville Johnston, a prominent Tombstone attorney, decided to monetize the rest and relaxation potential of shade and water. He purchased a half interest in the Lewis Springs ranch in February 1889 by giving a mortgage to Berry for the half interest (Bailey and Chaput, 2000a, p. 203; TDP, 1889a). Johnson and Berry made plans in February 1889 for 10 acres of grapevines, 25 acres of alfalfa, and a large orchard (TDP, 1889b).

Johnson however envisioned revenues significantly greater than those from farming. In March 1891 he went to San Francisco to seek capital to make a sanatorium at Lewis Springs (TE, 1890a). He proposed to build a large hotel and "beautify the premises in many ways." The Tombstone Epitaph opined that "the spring is a magnificent one and if the scheme can be worked Tombstone will have a pleasure resort at a short distance from it, with good roads for driving and a railroad running through it, if one prefers going that way. It is also easy of access from Bisbee, Fairbank, and Benson."

The Arizona Weekly Citizen reported (AWC, 1891) on July 4, 1891 that a company under the leadership of Johnston would soon be incorporated in San Francisco "and establish a health and pleasure resort in the vicinity of what is known as Lewis Springs . . ." Analysis showed that the water had "absolute purity." There was a natural fish pond 300 feet in diameter, stocked with five to six-pound carp.

The sanitarium was not built and the sharing of the Lewis ranch between Berry and Johnston did not work out (TE, 1891b). On August 8, 1891 Berry secured a decree of foreclosure and an order of sale by Sheriff C. B. Kelton against Johnston and Starks Surdan for failing to pay on a mortgage of \$1453.96 and interest amounting to \$108.92. George Berry passed away on February 12, 1892 (Bailey and Chaput, 2000a, p. 24), and Surdan arranged with the widow to grow vegetables for Bisbee, Fairbank and Tombstone (TE, 1892c; TE, 1892b).

Margaret F. Berry obtained what was locally believed to be full title to the Lewis Springs ranch on January 15, 1893 when Sheriff Scott White served a writ of restitution in her favor (TE, 1893). She received the title because of a foreclosure of the mortgage held by the late G. G. Berry to secure the Johnston debt.

Land deeds and mortgages for Lewis Springs were irrelevant as to actual ownership. The spring was within the San Rafael del Valle land grant and owned by people in Mexico (AR, 1899; Bowden, 2004-2015; Mattison, 1946, p. 317-318, 375-376 abs.; SRV, 1902; TE, 1899; Wagoner, 1989, p. 194-197). The Packard Cattle Company purchased all of the land grant from the Camou family, and in 1902 sold the entire grant to William Greene who made it part of his Greene Cattle Company (BDR, 1906j). On April 20, 1912 the widow of Colonel Greene sold the Greene Cattle Company to the Boquillas Land and Cattle Company (BDR, 1912b). Investors financed

some of the facilities built at Lewis Springs over the years, but ownership of the land itself apparently remained with the Greene Cattle Company until sold to the Boquillas interests.

By 1894 local recognition of Lewis Springs was such that the Tombstone Epitaph on April 1, 1894 referred to it as "the famous Lewis Springs." The development of the area as an important local recreational center was made possible by expansion of the Phelps Dodge controlled railroad into an important regional transportation network (manuscript in preparation). The railroad by 1900 extended southward from Benson up the San Pedro River Valley and southeastward around the Mule Mountains to the Bisbee area. On July 26, 1901 the railroad became part of a larger enterprise called the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad Company that soon had an extension eastward into Texas and New Mexico.

The Copper Queen band organized on August 12, 1900 what was probably the first large-scale railroad excursion to Lewis Springs, with approximately 500 people enjoying a picnic there (AR, 1900; TE, 1900a). A train left Bisbee at 9 AM with six cars containing approximately 250 people and stopped at various stations along the way to board additional passengers. People brought their own food with them and once at the picnic grounds dispersed into different areas according to their own inclinations. Some relaxed in the shade from the cottonwoods, many youths played in the San Pedro River, and numerous people danced on a platform to the accompaniment of music played by the Copper Queen band.

The Copper Queen band arranged another picnic on Sunday, September 16, 1900 (TE, 1900b; TE, 1900c). Approximately 35 people from Tombstone arrived at Lewis Springs but were disappointed to learn that the expected picnickers from Bisbee were unable to reach there because of washouts along the railroad below Bisbee the day before.

Jimmie Nichols, steward at the Copper Queen hotel, had an idea in August 1903 that led to Lewis Springs becoming an important regional resort (BDR, 1903). He noticed the big grove of trees near Lewis Springs and decided to arrange a series of picnics under the auspices of the Bisbee fire department. Nichols talked with V. R. Stiles, General Passenger Agent of the railroad, about railroad transportation. The latter wanted to boost passenger traffic by offering low excursion rates and had the railroad secure the picnic grounds for the 1904 summer season and arranged for special excursion trains (BDR, 1904a; Myrick, 1981, p. 211-212).

Stiles and other railroad officials were impressed by the shade offered by the grove of trees. Many ads and newspaper articles about Lewis Springs that appeared over a span of several years in the Bisbee Daily Review mentioned that visitors could relax in the shade of trees there and enjoy being near the springs. As the Bisbee Daily Review put it on May 18, 1909 (BDR, 1909g), picnickers spent time "enjoying the shade of the trees, always so welcome to a Bisbeeite."

For the first excursion event in 1904, the railroad arranged a catered basket picnic on May 22 where the Fifth US Cavalry Band played popular music. Approximately 600 people boarded a train that left Douglas, took on additional cars from Bisbee and more people at Naco and then delivered approximately 1000 picnickers to the grounds. The round-trip excursion fare of \$1 (half fare for children) between Bisbee and Lewis Springs was thereafter afforded most groups. Round-trip excursion fares between Douglas and Lewis Springs varied but usually were \$1.50 for adults and half fare for children.

On Saturday June 18, 1904, the railroad provided a special car that transported a gym class of approximately 75 children from Bisbee to Lewis Springs and was switched onto a siding

so that the youngsters could spend the day in the area (BDR, 1904b,c,d). The very successful excursion was repeated on July 9, 1904 with approximately 150 children and parents picnicking (BDR, 1904e) in the shade of the trees.

The railroad arranged in early July 1904 for the installation of swings, seesaws, and other items before a July 16 picnic. In the words of the Bisbee Daily Review (BDR, 1904f), the picnic was “a howling success.” Approximately 400 people, mostly youngsters, from Douglas and Bisbee fished, swam, played games, and used the new playground equipment. Miss Magnes, a professional balloonist, provided entertainment by ascending in a balloon that landed in a mesquite bush.

In early April 1905, the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad distributed circulars announcing Sunday excursions to Lewis Springs from Bisbee, Douglas, and Tombstone during April through August (BDR, 1905a). It also provided several Saturday trips. For example, on May 13 approximately 125 picnickers enjoyed lunch at noon and various entertainments, including a baseball game between Bisbee and Tombstone residents (BDR, 1905b,c,d).

Social groups began organizing railroad excursions to Lewis Springs in 1905 (BDR, 1905e,f,g,i). Black residents of Douglas and Bisbee celebrated Emancipation Day on June 19 with a picnic, baseball game, and music from Rhee’s Orchestra. On Sunday, July 16 the You and I Club traveled to Lewis Springs. The Local Lodge of United Grass Widows of Bisbee held an annual reunion on August 20. Approximately 100 people enjoyed the Christian Church picnic at Lewis Springs on Sunday, October 21.

A flood on September 23, 1905 failed to stop festivities the next day at Lewis Springs (BDR, 1905h). The Order of Railroad Conductors had organized an excursion to the popular area for conductors and their families and friends from throughout the extent of the Phelps Dodge railroads in the United States. The railroad provided transportation from Bisbee, Douglas, Naco, Tombstone, Benson, and from the eastern end of the railroad system. When the crowd of people arrived at Lewis Springs via nine passenger coaches, they found that a flood the previous night had washed away the dance platform, bandstand, and all refreshments. However, the picnickers improvised a band stand and danced to the music of Concha’s band. One band member sprained a leg when the stand collapsed, but otherwise the day was joyful for the participants. In the afternoon the crowd watched a baseball game between teams from Bisbee and Tombstone.

The spring of 1906 saw more social groups organizing railroad excursions to Lewis Springs. The Odd Fellows of Bisbee, Douglas, and Tombstone held a picnic on Sunday, April 29 with music from a Bisbee band and a ballgame and other sports (BDR, 1906a). Children from Catholic Sunday schools in Bisbee and Tombstone and several teachers held picnics on Thursday, June 7 and Monday, June 11 (BDR, 1906b; TE, 1906a).

The Eagles Lodge provided an exceptionally event filled day of festivities on Sunday June 17, 1906 (BDR, 1906c,d,dd,e,f,g; TE, 1906b). Eight men beforehand constructed a “monster dancing pavilion” that provided 2400 square feet of shaded dancing, billed as the “largest open-air dancing floor in the southwest.” Festivities included a wrestling match, a baseball game between Bisbee and Douglas teams, sack races, potato races, three-legged races, egg races, girls’ races, boys’ races, women’s races, and fat men’s races. The Eagles awarded “big purses” for each racing event, swings for the children, and provided refreshments and lunches.

A 1906 article in the Tucson Citizen (TE, 1906c) called Lewis Springs “one of the finest picnic grounds in Arizona” and concluded “the place could be made into a fine resort” that would draw from Bisbee, Douglas, Tombstone, and Tucson.

Approximately 100 black residents of Bisbee, Douglas, and Tombstone celebrated Emancipation Day on June 19 with a picnic and dance (BDR, 1906h). About 75 members of the Christian Church of Bisbee picnicked on Wednesday, June 27, 1906 (BDR, 1906i). They traveled on two special cars, that attached to the regular morning train departing from Bisbee, and then relaxed in the shade of the Lewis Springs cottonwood trees.

The El Paso and Southwestern Railroad placed a ½ page ad in the Bisbee Daily Review on April 28, 1907 (BDR, 1907a). The ad solicited customers for trips to the East and mentioned Lewis Springs, suggesting that a good lunch “under those beautiful trees beside the spring is very pleasant and restful.”

The burgeoning popularity of the picnic grounds resulted in the expenditure of approximately \$5000 to develop the area as a resort (BDR, 1907b,c; TE, 1907a). Work crews in June 1907 removed underbrush and began constructing a 30 by 60 feet long natatorium, a bathhouse, baseball field, and other amenities. The place already had a 60 by 70 feet dancing pavilion.

Excursions to Lewis Springs continued during the construction (BDR, 1907d). Approximately 250 people from Bisbee enjoyed a Sunday school picnic on Tuesday, June 25, 1907. Because of the extra number of coaches required to handle the crowd, the railroad attached another engine onto the 5:30 PM train back to Bisbee to provide sufficient power for going up the grade back to town.

SPECIAL TRAIN LEAVES  
BISBEE AT 10:35 A. M.

EL PASO & SOUTHWESTERN RAILROAD

RETURN TRAIN LEAVES  
THE SPRINGS AT 6:00 P. M.

Good old-fashioned basket picnic  
AT  
**Lewis Springs** SUNDAY, JULY 14th

\$1.00 FOR THE ROUND TRIP FOR ADULTS AND 50c FOR CHILDREN

Brass Band Concert during the afternoon by the Douglas Cornet Band. Plenty of refreshments on the ground for those who do not care to take lunches with them.

Take your family and enjoy a pleasant afternoon under the big trees at Lewis Springs.

LOW RATES from all stations on our line in Arizona on this date. Arrange to meet your friends in Douglas, Tombstone and other towns at the Springs.

V. R. STILES, General Passenger Agent, El Paso Texas.

Half page advertisement placed by the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad Railroad in the Bisbee Daily Review on July 7, 1907 to announce excursion trains to the opening of the improved Lewis Springs resort.

Trains from Bisbee, Douglas, and Tombstone transported an estimated 1200 people to the Eagles’ picnic at Lewis Springs on July 28, 1907 (BDR, 1907h,i). Events included foot races, sack races, peanut races, fat men’s races, girls’ races, and dancing. The dancing began shortly after noon and continued until 7 PM when the crowd began preparing to return home. The natatorium, despite projections of been finished earlier, was still under construction.

The El Paso and Southwestern Railroad provided a moonlight excursion from Bisbee to Lewis Springs on Friday, August 23, 1907 (BDR, 1907j,k,l). Approximately 200 people enjoyed an

The El Paso and Southwestern Railroad advertised the July 14 opening of the resort in the July 7, 1907 issue of the Bisbee Daily Review (BDR, 1907e). The opening of the resort was a resounding success even though the natatorium and some other improvements had not yet been completed (BDR, 1907f,b,g; TE, 1907b). Three special trains delivered an estimated more than 1000 people to the site from towns such as Benson, Tombstone, Bisbee, and Douglas.

evening at the new resort. They had slightly more of an adventure than anticipated. A rain began falling on the merry makers who paid no attention to it and continued dancing. However, when the time came to return to the train stop for a scheduled 1 AM departure, people had to cross what had become a good size creek, with several persons falling in without any injury. Everyone safely boarded the return train which arrived in Bisbee at 2 AM.

The Copper Queen sponsored festivities at Lewis Springs on Sunday September 8, 1907 for employees of its stores at Bisbee, Douglas, Lowell, and Naco (BDR, 1907m,n). The stores had more than 300 employees, and the staff and families participating in the festivities numbered more than 500. The excursion train, containing eight comfortably crowded coaches, left Bisbee at 9 AM and reached the resort area about an hour and a half later. Immediately after the arrival, dancing began accompanied by music from a five-piece orchestra. A series of athletic events also occurred, and employees of the Lowell store were overjoyed to win most of the prizes for these events.

The El Paso and Southwestern Railroad organized a picnic at Lewis Springs on Sunday, September 22, 1907 for miners and their families (BDR, 1907o,p; TE, 1907c). The event was not restricted to Copper Queen miners, and a train transported picnickers from Tombstone.

On Saturday October 12, 1907, the new natatorium opened to the delight of several hundred schoolchildren and many of their parents who traveled from Bisbee to Lewis Springs for the last group picnic of the year (BDR, 1907q).

The 1908 season at Lewis Springs started on Easter Sunday, April 19, with people arriving on trains from Douglas, Tombstone, Bisbee, and intermediate places (BDR, 1908a).

**MINERS'  PICNIC**

—AT—

**LEWIS SPRINGS**

**Sunday, Sept. 22.**

SPECIAL TRAIN WILL LEAVE BISBEE 9:30 AND RETURNING WILL LEAVE LEWIS SPRINGS AT 6 p . m.

First Class Music in attendance. Sack Races, Boys and Girls Races, and other sports. Come and spend a pleasant day under the shade trees beside clear waters.

**From Bisbee Daily Review, September 18, 1907..**

**Greater Grander Than Ever**  
**EAGLES REUNION AND PICNIC**

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**LEWIS SPRINGS**  
**SUNDAY, JUNE 14th.**

Special train leaves 9 a. m. \$1.00 Round Trip.

This picnic will exceed all previous efforts. Bisbee Brass Band will play on the ground. There will be Dancing, Music and Juggling by Prof. A. C. Tobin, in Four Acts. Base Ball, Bisbee Rulers vs. Tombstone Stars. Races of all kinds. Swimming contests and many other attractions. All kinds of lunches and refreshments served on the grounds.

See Programme

From Bisbee Daily Review, June 7, 1908.

The Bisbee Eagles Lodge announced a June 14, 1908 picnic at Lewis Springs by stringing a large banner across Brewery Gulch in May and posting photos of the 1907 picnic (BDR, 1908b,c,d,e). Approximately 1000 people from Benson, Bisbee, Douglas, Naco, and Tombstone enjoyed a variety of entertainments and “ample shade in which to seek protection from the sun.”

The Warren District Democratic Club organized a barbecue at Lewis Springs on Sunday, August 30, 1908 at

Lewis Springs (BDR, 1908f,g,h,i,j). Preparations for the barbecue were extensive. Two barbecue experts and approximately six men traveled to Lewis Springs to dig a pit three feet wide, three feet deep, and more than 100 feet long. Iron bars were placed across the pit, and a heavy wire netting was spread across the bars to hold the whole quarters of meat that were turned and basted with sauces until it was done after approximately three or four hours of barbecuing.

While the picnic was primarily intended for Cochise Democrats, it attracted wider attention, including the participation by Mark Smith, Arizona Territorial Delegate to Congress and prominent politician. The barbecue was more successful than expected and drew an estimated 2500 to 3000 people, including other prominent Democratic Arizona politicians. Trains brought people from Benson, Bisbee, Douglas, Naco, and elsewhere. The 11 coaches provided for the train from Bisbee were not enough, and approximately 100 people were left at the railroad platform there. People who made it to Lewis Springs listened to speeches, danced, swam, ate good food, and relaxed in the shade.

The year 1909 saw another successful excursion season for the Lewis Springs resort. The Bisbee Red Men and the Eagles gave the two largest picnics that year. The Red Men began advertising in April for a Sunday, May 16 outing. (BDR, 1909a,c,e,g; TE, 1909). The night before the event, more than 200 members dressed in costumes, paraded through Bisbee, and gave “tribal war-whoops.” A large crowd from Bisbee traveled in a special train that pulled 10 coaches, packed without hardly any standing room available. Another excursion train brought people from Tombstone. An orchestra began playing as soon as people arrived and continued throughout the day. The festivities included athletic events, a boxing exhibition, swimming, lunch, and dancing in the pavilion. Several picnickers stayed overnight in the Lewis Springs area, hunted the next day, and then returned to Bisbee on a regularly scheduled train.

The Bisbee Eagles held their picnic on Sunday, June 13, 1909 (BDR, 1909h,i,j,k). The evening before 50 Eagles and a band paraded around Bisbee dressed in white shirts, duck trousers, straw hats and ties and holding parasols of national colors. Festivities at the picnic

included races, a diving exhibition at the natatorium, and dancing to the accompaniment of music from a band.

Three smaller outings rounded out the 1909 Lewis Springs 1909 season. On Saturday May 15 approximately 40 members of Masonic orders and their friends traveled by train in a special passenger coach to Lewis Springs (BDR, 1909b,f). A June 17 picnic given by the Bisbee Sunday Schools attracted about 250 people (BDR, 1909m,n). Approximately 125 members of the Bisbee S. S. Sloga, a popular Slavonian society, enjoyed a Sunday picnic at Lewis Springs on August 15 (BDR, 1909a,p). The outing included athletic contests such as races, throwing heavy rocks, and jumping. Women drew straws for prizes.

The Bisbee Red Men and Eagles in 1910 again held the largest picnics at Lewis Springs. The Red Men began advertising in April for their annual picnic on Sunday, May 15 (BDR, 1910a,c,d,e). About 700 people went to Lewis Springs and when there rushed for the tables. Those who had brought lunches spread out their food. However, most visitors preferred eating at the Red Men's lunch counter. Other activities included races, a baseball game, and swimming. Dancing at the pavilion to the accompaniment of the 12-piece Royal orchestra was very popular, with participants enjoying themselves there right up until train departure time.

The Bisbee Eagles picnic was on June 12 (BDR, 1910b,h,i,j,k,l). Approximately 125 Eagles, headed by Alden's band, paraded through Bisbee on the night of June 11. The men wore a costume of white duck trousers, white shirts, red white and blue neckties, sailors' straw hats, and a small cane to which was attached a small pennant bearing on a red background the initials F. O. E. in white and a white image of a flying eagle on a blue background. The excursion train from Bisbee had nine passenger coaches.

About 600 people enjoyed the picnic whose menu included turkey, spring chicken, fresh boiled ox tongue, fresh boiled ham, coffee, bread and butter, cold cantaloupes, oranges, and ice cream. Cigars, tobacco, and cigarettes were also available. The Southwestern Ice Company donated 2000 pounds of ice for use during the picnic. Participants had their choice of swimming, relaxing in the shade, dancing, and watching or competing in races.

Smaller organizations also held outings at Lewis Springs. Bisbee Sunday schools gave their annual picnic on Tuesday, June 7 (BDR, 1910f,g). Individuals sometimes organized picnics. For example, George Pattullo of Hereford held a picnic and barbecue on Sunday July 31, 1910

## Special Excursion

### Lewis Springs, Sunday, June 12

Account EAGLES picnic the EL PASO & SOUTHWESTERN, will sell round trip tickets to Lewis Springs and return on June 12th as follows:-

Benson	\$1.00	Hereford	.65
Douglas	\$1.50	Naco	\$1.00
Don Luis	\$1.00	O-born	\$1.00
Fairbanks	50	Tombstone	\$1.00
	Bisbee		\$1.00

Children 5 to 12, one half of above rate. No baggage will be checked on these tickets. Tickets on sale and good for return only on above date.

**SPECIAL TRAIN.**

Leaves, Bisbee, 8:30, a. m.; returning leaves, Lewis Springs 6, p. m.

**J. E. GRAVES,**  
Agent  
Bisbee, Arizona

**EUGENE FOX,**  
Gen. Passenger Agt.  
El Paso, Texas

From Bisbee Daily Review, May 8, 1910.

for ranch men of the O R outfit and other of his friends (BDR, 1910m). After the approximately 100 visitors had enjoyed the barbecue, they danced until early Monday morning to the accompaniment of a five-piece orchestra from Fort Huachuca.

The largest event at Lewis Springs in 1911 was the combined annual picnic of the Bisbee Red Men and Eagles on May 14, 1911 (BDR, 1911a,b,g,gg,h,i,j; TE, 1911a). In preparation, the pool was cleaned, a new supply of bathing suits purchased, and concessions awarded. The Copper Queen provided drinks, I. C. E. Adams obtained the lunch and ice cream concession, and W. P. Martin received the franchise for operating a shooting gallery. Activities included a swimming match, a balloon ascension with a "dip of death from a parachute, and a high dive sensation transported from Los Angeles" and "all manner of booths." The picnic was very successful with approximately 2000 people. Bisbee alone sent 11 coach loads of passengers to the resort, and nearly 100 came from Tombstone. While many people came by railroad, a considerable number arrived by automobiles and carriages and wagons.

Other 1911 events at Lewis Springs consisted of smaller groups. Bisbee Sunday schools held a picnic on Saturday May 6, with free swimming at the natatorium which had been filled with clean spring water (BDR, 1911c,d,e). Nineteen members of the picnic consisted of YMCA Physical Director Kitchel and 18 scouts that Kitchel led on an approximately 30-mile hike from Bisbee to Lewis Springs the day before. Black residents of Cochise County celebrated Emancipation Day on June 19 and heard speeches (BDR, 1911k,m). Many African-Americans from Douglas attended, but there were only approximate 25-30 from Bisbee. The Irish Nationalists sponsored a picnic on Sunday, June 18, 1911 (BDR, 1911l). The society awarded prizes to contest winners, with the "most popular girl" taking away a "beautiful diamond ring."

Not every 1911 event was successful. Heavy rainstorm washed out the June 12 picnic of the Bisbee S. S. Sloga, a popular Slavian society, soaking participants along with other smaller groups of picnickers who had come to the area for a day of rest (TE, 1911b).

The Douglas Eagles kicked off the 1912 season with a picnic on May 19, 1912 (BDR, 1912c,d,e). A special train carried Douglas Eagles to Lewis Springs and on the way picked up a

**Remember To Save Enough  
To Attend**

**== FIRST ==**

**PICNIC OF SEASON**

**AT**

**LEWIS SPRINGS**  
**SUNDAY, MAY 19th**

---

**Round Trip From Bisbee \$1.00**  
**Children Half Fare.**

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***FIRST, BIGGEST, BEST***

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**Come with the Douglas Eagles on their Special Train**  
**DANCING, ATHLETIC SPORTS**  
**Music by Prof. Smith's Band and Orchestra.**

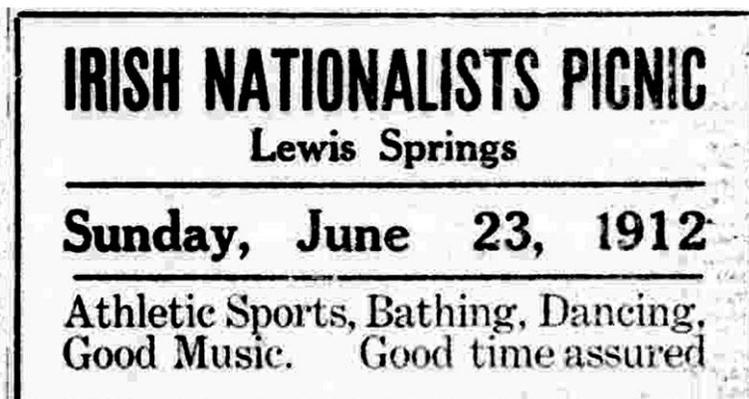
**From Bisbee Daily Review, May 10, 1912.**

large crowd from Bisbee. The Bisbee Daily Review on May 11 predicted that, "While dancing will be one of the main features of the day, the cool shade of the Lewis Springs Grove will prove a great attraction to prospective patrons. That grove has become famous throughout the Southwest." Shade and dancing were not the only attractions. There were also athletic sports with prizes for the winners, and concessions for soft drinks and lunches.

On the same day that the Douglas Eagles held their picnic, the Bisbee Eagles and Red Men advertised in the Bisbee Daily Review about their annual joint outing for Sunday, June 16 (BDR, 1912g). The joint picnic had been publicly announced the week before, and that announcement and the newspaper advertisement and distribution of placards was earlier than normal (BDR, 1912f). The early advertising was because the Douglas Eagles had advertised their excursion as an "Eagles Picnic," creating confusion among Bisbee residents.

The Eagles and Red Men spent a month arranging for the picnic (BDR, 1912j). The grounds were thoroughly cleaned, seats put beneath the shade trees, and the swimming pool cleaned. Sport contests included, a fat man's race (first prize, 50 cigars, 2nd prize, quart of whiskey); 110-yard dash (first prize, pair of Regal shoes, 2nd prize, 50 cigars); sack race for boys under 16 (first prize, catcher's mitt, 2nd prize, jar of preservatives); married women's race (first prize, 100 pounds sack of flour, 2nd prize, 3 pounds of coffee; young ladies' race (first prize, violet holder, 2nd prize, a parasol); and girls' race (first prize, No. 2 Brownie Kodak, 2nd prize, box of candy). A special excursion train left Bisbee at 8 AM and departed Lewis Springs at 5:45 PM (BDR, 1912g). Approximately 800 people traveled from the Bisbee area to the picnic by train, and many more by automobiles, carriages, or wagons (BDR, 1912k).

Three other organizations provided smaller outings in 1912. The Bisbee Order of Owls held a picnic on Sunday May 5, (BDR, 1912a). Bisbee's Sunday schools held another picnic on Thursday, June 20, 1912 (BDR, 1912l). Sunday school children from Tombstone also participated



From Bisbee Daily Review, June 9, 1912.

in the picnic, leaving the mining town via a special train at 5:20 AM and returning home by a train leaving the picnic at 6 PM (BDR, 1912o). The Irish Nationalists provided a picnic on June 23 (BDR, 1912i,j,m,n). The approximately 180 participants could enjoy a lunch, ice cream, lemonade, a shooting gallery, a game in which people threw balls at a target to dunk a person into a tank of water, athletic sports, swimming, dancing, and music.

In preparation for the 1913 season, the Boquillas Cattle and Land Company improved the recreational facilities in the spring (BDR, 1913c). Laborers graded much of the area, sowed grass to provide lawns beneath the trees, erected additional tables and benches, repaired the swimming pool, and constructed an artificial lake equipped with pleasure boats.

The Bisbee Eagles and the Red Men in 1913 decided to again have the largest outing of the year and began planning in April for their June 8 joint picnic (BDR, 1913a,b,e,f,g,i,k; EPH,

1913). The natatorium and picnic grounds were cleaned. A joint committee organized advertising in Bisbee, Douglas, El Paso, Tombstone, and Tucson. The outing included automobile and motorcycle races from Bisbee to Lewis Springs that were scheduled to conclude at the picnic grounds shortly after arrival of the excursion train from Bisbee. A train with up to 12 passenger coaches was scheduled to leave Bisbee at 7:45 AM and depart from the picnic grounds at 5:30 PM, arriving in Bisbee in time for “the evening shows.”

An estimated 5000 or more people watched a parade in Bisbee by the Bisbee and Douglas Eagles and the Red Men on the evening of June 7, 1913. A prancing steed and several other horses headed the parade. An advance guard of mounted Red Men dressed as Indians rode in front of the C. & A. Band, followed by more than 150 Eagles marching in their white uniforms. A large contingent of men, women, and children followed on foot.

A crowd that the Bisbee Daily Review estimated as upwards of 3000, and the El Paso Herald reported as 6000, attended the festivities on Sunday, June 8, 1913. The Bisbee Daily Review opined that this was the largest crowd that ever left the city for any event, and the greatest crowd that ever assembled at the picnic grounds in a single day. The railroad sold 1807 tickets at the Bisbee depot before the picnic joint committee halted sales because the railroad could provide only 12 cars for the outgoing trip. The railroad managed to find another two cars for the return trip but even with those many people stood all the way back to Bisbee. Hundreds of the people turned away from the train found other transportation, and practically all automobiles and other vehicles in Bisbee were in use.

People who did manage to reach Lewis Springs consumed more than 1200 barbecued meals, more than 1600 bottles of soda, and several hundred gallons of ice cream, plus many gallons of coffee. The beer supply however ran out at 2 PM, and the train started home half an hour earlier than scheduled. The crowd included several Eagles from Douglas who were in uniform and came by a train from Douglas. People at the picnic area were able to watch the conclusion of the automobile and motorcycle races, participate in or view foot races, enjoy good meals, relax, dance, and swim.

Smaller societies also scheduled picnics. The Douglas Eagles held a picnic on Sunday, May 25 that included music from a 30-piece band, refreshments, races, ballgames, and dancing (BDR, 1913d). A week later on June 1 the United Slav societies of Bisbee sponsored a picnic (BDR, 1913h). On June 18, 305 people at the Bisbee’s Sunday school picnic did their best to consume the 140 gallons of lemonade provided, ate lunch, and watched a baseball game between ministers and YMCA staff (BDR, 1913j,l).

In 1914 the Bisbee Eagles and Red Men again held the largest event of the year with a picnic on June 7 (BDR, 1914g,h,i,j; TE, 1914a,b). An estimated more than 1400 people traveled from Bisbee to Lewis Springs and back in 14 passenger coaches. Wind and dust somewhat marred the celebrations, but Bisbee residents were happy with the events and after their 7:30 PM return to town “kept the streets alive until a late hour.” Tombstone residents attended but had to do so by horse drawn carriage or automobile because the railroad needed all its equipment for use on the mainline. The Tombstone Epitaph reported that the town “was practically deserted” and that “Every available rig and auto was engaged to make the trip . . .” Politicians who were candidates for reelection were especially well represented at the picnic.

Smaller organizations also enjoyed the resort in 1914. The Douglas Eagles held a picnic on Sunday May 10 with many concessions, a 10-round boxing fight, and a high dive of 110 feet

into the artificial lake. (BDR, 1914c,d,e). Students of the Bisbee Loretto school picnicked on Wednesday, May 20 (BDR, 1914f). African-Americans from Bisbee and Douglas celebrated Emancipation Day on Friday June 19 and enjoyed hearing a Douglas orchestra, eating refreshments brought from Bisbee, consuming basket dinners, dancing, and listening to speeches (BDR, 1914k,p). The Copper Queen band on June 21 led a parade of Slavonians to the depot where members took a special train to the resort (BDR, 1914l,o). Bisbee's Sunday school children, parents, and friends picnicked at Lewis Springs on Wednesday, June 24 (BDR, 1914m,n).

The year 1915 was the last with large events at Lewis Springs. The Bisbee Eagles, Red Men, and Knights of Pythias sponsored the largest outing on Sunday, June 13 (BDR, 1915c,d,e,f,g). The night before the picnic the three societies paraded through Bisbee accompanied by the Copper Queen musicians. Boys and girl dressed in Indian costumes joined the ranks of the Red Men. The picnic differed from previous ones by being the first dry picnic held by a Bisbee Lodge. Bisbee Mayor Adams secured the concession for handling ice cream and lunches at the picnic. Funds raised by the festivities went to a building project for a Bisbee auditorium. A special train with 11 passenger coaches left Bisbee at 8 AM and departed the picnic area at 5 PM.

Two other organizations sponsored notable events in 1915. The Loretta Academy held a picnic on Wednesday, May 19 (BDR, 1915b). African-Americans celebrated Emancipation Day on Saturday, June 19 (BDR, 1915h).

The only organized outing to Lewis Springs from Bisbee in 1916 apparently was that of the children of Loretto Academy and their parents on Thursday, May 25 (BDR, 1916b). The participants left early in the morning in special passenger cars and returned to Bisbee at 7:30 PM.

During 1916 the Bisbee Eagles instead of organizing a picnic at Lewis Springs promoted a carnival within Bisbee from March 6 to March 12 to raise funds for building a lodge on Main Street (BDR, 1916a,c). In June members were not preparing for an excursion to Lewis Springs but instead looking forward to the completion of the new Bisbee lodge and preparing for a Fourth of July parade. The Red Men also did not organize an outing but rather kept busy in Bisbee with activities such as meetings on the first and 3rd Thursdays of each month in Medigovich Hall (BDR, 1916d).

Events engendered by World War I, economic problems, and then labor troubles probably played a role in ending large-scale picnics at Lewis Springs. The outbreak of war in Europe resulted in Great Britain placing copper on a conditional contraband list unless it could be clearly demonstrated that shipments were destined for neutral countries. Copper prices plunged in late 1914, and hundreds of Bisbee miners lost their jobs. Refugees streamed north from civil war-torn Mexico to seek shelter with relatives in the Bisbee area. By late December 1914 an estimated 800 to 1000 people were destitute in the area, mostly Mexican but also including many from other ethnic groups (Bailey, 2002, p. 222-234; BDR, 1914s).

Copper prices rebounded in 1915, and by the summer of 1916 copper mines were running at capacity. However, labor troubles ensued in 1917, and by June 27 nearly half the workforce of the three major mining companies in Bisbee were on strike. The United States entered the war on April 6, 1917. The federal government operated the nation's railroads from

December 28, 1917 until March 1, 1920, presumably making impossible excursion trains to Lewis Springs.

Other factors also probably decreased interest in large-scale outings at Lewis Springs after 1915. The scheduling on June 1913 of the train back to Bisbee from the Eagles' and Red Men's picnic to allow for attendance at the "evening shows" foreshadowed the increasing popularity of theatrical events. The Bisbee Daily Review had ever-increasing advertisements for theaters that offered vaudeville shows and movies. Newspaper articles about outings to Lewis Springs became shorter and less frequent. A family of two adults and two children between the ages of five and 12 had to pay three dollars for round-trip excursion fare between Bisbee and Lewis Springs. There were no doubt expenses to use the natatorium, partake of the games at the midway, and enjoy food offered at the site. Theaters in 1912 had admission prices ranging from five to 50 cents. Train trips between Bisbee and Lewis Springs took several hours versus quick access to entertainment within Bisbee. The railroad sometimes could not supply enough coaches for the picnics, resulting in some people not being able to attend and in others having to stand during the more than hour long trips each way.



Pond at Lewis Springs. Courtesy of Ron Stewart.

Bisbee business interests may have been happy to see large excursions to Lewis Springs stop. G. K. Reynolds, one of the investors in the resort, wrote to the Bisbee Daily Review on June 16, 1909 (BDR, 1909). Reynolds stated that he did not view such outings as detrimental to Bisbee business interests because an opportunity to enjoy the scenery and surroundings at Lewis Springs "once in a while" was "always beneficial to any working or business person."

The development of Frick's Park in the Upper Tombstone Canyon in 1914 provided Bisbee residents with a nearby place that had trees, good scenery, and room for small groups of people (BDR, 1914a,b,q,r).

The Lewis Springs area that once hosted thousands of people at a time gradually became forgotten. Abandoned buildings collapsed or were scavenged for building supplies. Little remains at the Lewis Springs area to indicate that it was once a very popular regional resort.

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