

2014 Nevada Day Treasure Hunt Clues

CLUE NO. 1

Though missing a pen

We'll be abundantly clear

The hunt is on

In this sesquicentennial year

The 2014 hunt is dedicated to Joyce Samsel who passed away last December at the age of 89. She was a member of the Nevada Day Treasure Hunt Committee, president of the parent organization Where in Nevada, and traditionally wrote the first clue each year. This clue also pays tribute to the theme of Nevada Day: "Happy 150th Birthday, Nevada." The word abundant is used purposely. 150 is an Abundant Number because the sum of its proper divisors (222) is greater than the number itself. 150 may factor in some of this year's clues.

CLUE NO. 2

Divide it by 30

At this stone altar

Subtract a pair

To win, don't falter

Divide this year's abundant number by 30. The result is the number of counties a hunter might see while standing at the Mt. Rose Scenic Highway Overlook where there is a stone structure mounted with plaques that point out various landmarks in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Three of the counties that surround the lake are in Nevada – Carson, Washoe and Douglas. Hunters may rule out the other two – Placer and El Dorado in California.

CLUE NO. 3

Merope and her sisters

By the hunter pursued

From here a large cluster

Among the trees can be viewed

In Greek mythology, Merope was one of the seven daughters of Atlas and Pleione. Some say they were transformed into the star cluster known as the Pleiades and are forever pursued by the constellation Orion (the hunter). Hunters who are hot on the trail of the medallion will notice a cluster of seven boulders along the treeline near its hiding place.

CLUE NO. 4

Though often misquoted

Geologically speaking

Amid a caterpillar army

Is where you are seeking

Clarence Dutton, a geologist and officer in the U.S. Army, once compared the topography that makes up the Great Basin Ranges to an “army of caterpillars.” The oldest known reference to his quote has the caterpillars crawling northward from Mexico but many subsequent misquotes reference them as marching toward Mexico. The word “amid” in this clue hints that the treasure is hidden in one of the basins between the mountains.

CLUE NO. 5

Bertha’s second stanza

Is a secret there concealed?

Could it help a hunter recognize

This year’s playing field?

The Nevada state song, “Home Means Nevada,” was written in 1932 by Bertha Raffetto. The second stanza in the first verse reads: “If you follow the old Kit Carson trail, Until desert meets the hills, Oh you certainly will agree with me, It’s the place of a thousand thrills.” The Kit Carson trail in Carson City lies in the shadow of the Sierra Nevada Mountains where the treasure is hidden.

CLUE NO. 6

While on the hunt

To new places you’re led

This clue holds the tools

When entering the shed

In August of this year, three new signs were installed alerting visitors that they are entering the Lake Tahoe Watershed. They are near Daggett Summit on Nevada State Route 207, Spooner Summit on U.S. Highway 50 and on Nevada State Route 431 the Mount Rose Highway. The treasure is located somewhere in the watershed.

CLUE NO. 7

Oh God lead us to the promised land

Through the powder and the sand

Fly along the Milky Way

Touring up and down all day

Promised Land and Milky Way are the names of ski runs at Heavenly Ski Resort just south of the Nevada State Line at Lake Tahoe. Powder and O. God are runs at Diamond Peak at the north end of the Lake. The highway that runs between is a scenic auto tour. This sets the search area between these two points of reference.

CLUE NO. 8

He steered the course

For Blaisdell, it's true

But his brother's legacy

Will be of more interest to you

Henry Blaisdell was inaugurated as the first Governor of Nevada 150 years ago this December. The first steamer at Lake Tahoe was named for him and was piloted by Captain Joseph Pomin. His brother, Ernest, also piloted steamers on the lake, most notably the S.S. Tahoe. Captain Pomin Rock, in the general area of the hunt, was named for him.

CLUE NO. 9

An elephant, a dog

And a lion figure in

Search 25

According to him

George Whittell, whose enduring legacy is the Thunderbird Lodge at Lake Tahoe, owned both domestic and exotic pets including an elephant named Mingo, a dog named Toots and a lion named Bill. His colorful life was highlighted by the purchase and sale of land along the eastern shore of the lake. By some accounts he owned 20 miles of shoreline, but by his own account it was 25. The treasure is hidden somewhere along that 25-mile stretch.

CLUE NO. 10

Kind of a misfit

He jumped on something grand

Despite what they said

He didn't let it stand

Bill Anderson owned the land in Dayton where rodeo grandstands were built for scenes from the movie "The Misfits." According to his autobiography, "Bill's Big Bonanza," preservationists tried to dissuade him from tearing down the stands but he did anyway because they were of no value to him. The "something grand" in the clue is a reference to the Ponderosa Ranch on the outskirts of Incline Village, which he built without the blessing of the television studio. The ranch is in the general area of the hunt.

CLUE NO. 11

In search of wealth came

Les hommes d'affaires

The great outdoors

Is a surviving heir

"Les homes d'affaires" is the French phrase for businessmen. During Nevada's gold rush, French-Canadian entrepreneur Michele E. Spooner played a significant role in building the lumber industry. The Spooner Summit Recreation Area near the junction of U.S. Highway 50 and State Route 28 is named after him. This clue reconfirms that the treasure is hidden at Lake Tahoe.

CLUE NO. 12

Adam's Dad

Will lead you right

If you watch 150

For an hour tonight

Adam Cartwright was a character on the television series "Bonanza." In the final scenes of Episode 150, "My Son, My Son," Adam leads authorities on a wild goose chase to "the river" while his father, Ben, heads to "the lake" to help a young fugitive. This clue again directs hunters to the general area around the Ponderosa Ranch.

CLUE NO. 13

He's the man with a plan

His vision is keen

From his point of view

The treasure is seen

On the Capitol Grounds in Carson City is a statue of founding father Abraham Curry. He is depicted holding a rolled up blueprint that represents the plans for the city. The statue is dubbed "Man With a Vision." On a map, a straight line drawn from his line of sight to the mountains cuts through Incline Village where the treasure is hidden.