

David Walley's – not the first hot springs in Nevada

By Guy Rocha

“David Walley built the place as a health resort, the first in Nevada and one of the first in the West,” wrote Basil Woon in the Aug. 30, 1953, edition of Reno's *Nevada State Journal*.

A long-standing belief is that Walley's Hot Springs was Nevada's first geothermal health resort. According to Walley's obituary published in the Carson Valley News on March 13, 1875, the spa opened a couple of miles south of Genoa in 1862. A survey was made on Nov. 20 and filed with the Douglas County Recorder on Dec. 1.

With just a tent for shelter, baths sold for 50 cents each. Walley erected the first bathhouse the following year, and in 1864, Walley's wife, Harriet, arrived from the East to help run Genoa Hot Springs resort.

“From a mere rock pile has risen a magnificent hotel, bath-houses, stabling and ball room,” the weekly News proclaimed after Walley's unexpected death at age 56.

A massive geothermal belt interspersed with hot springs, runs north and south along the eastern slope of the Carson Range.

The truth is that Abe Curry's Warm Springs and Steamboat Hot Springs operated as health resorts before David Walley purchased the hot springs in Carson Valley.

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