

“The Lost City”

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The Lost City was founded in 1924 to promote tourism in the Southern Nevada area. It was originally called Pueblo Grande de Nevada. Archaeological excavations began in 1925 and then were accelerated prior to the opening of Hoover Dam after which Lake Mead covered much of the Lost City. The archaeology continued to 1941. The Lost City Museum opened in 1953 to store and exhibit the artifacts unearthed during the various archaeological investigations.

The Lost City area of southern Nevada has been occupied since paleo / archaic times when the area was used mostly as hunting and gathering areas. Basketmaker II period (300BC – 400AD) saw evidence of habitation sites – pithouses and domestic corn in the Moapa valley area. Habitation continued to increase into the Basketmaker III (400 – 800AD) and Pueblo I (800 – 1000 AD) time period, where pithouses, adobe construction, joined surface room and increased agriculture were initiated.

The peak period was in the Pueblo II (1000 – 1150 AD) period. There was increased settlement size, increased storage capacity, intensified agriculture and a greater variety of pottery.

The Lost City area was abandoned during the Pueblo III (1150 – 1300 AD) period due to a variety of possible reasons including increased population, over use of resources, draught, pressure from outside groups and the general breakdown of trade and social contacts.

One of the largest sites was Mesa House, a pueblo containing 84 rooms that could have housed about 90 people. This was thought to be a walled, defensive site located about 120 ft above the valley floor.

There have identified 289 burial sites. These sites generally contain various amounts of grave goods including arrowheads, turquoise pendants, shell pendants and food offerings.

There is only limited rock art at the lost city.

To learn more about the Lost City go to the following websites:

http://museums.nevadaculture.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=397&Itemid=125

<http://www.sunsetcities.com/lost-city-museum.html>

