

Stokes Nature Center
History & Lore of Logan Canyon Podcast Series
Road to Recreation

When the Mormon pioneers were first settling in Cache Valley, recreation was very limited. Not only did the pioneers have little time to devote to recreation, they had fewer options. The canyon road at this time was not in the best shape, and recreating far up the canyon was difficult. Logan Canyon was used primarily for the resources it provided. Most of the people who ventured into the canyon were loggers, herders, hunters, or explorers.

On July 4, 1873, an LDS stake led by Apostle Brigham Young Jr. spent a day of rest and recreation in the canyon. This may have been the first purely recreational use of the canyon by the pioneers. The first published account of recreation in Logan Canyon showed up in the Ogden Standard on August 17, 1888. The article stated: “Rev. Samuel Unsworth, rector of the Church of the Good Shepherd in this city, returned yesterday, in company with his brother, from a pleasure trip to Logan Canyon. Their appearance proves that the few days resticating have been of great physical benefit to them.”

After this, the canyon began to receive increasing mention in the local press as a place for recreation. It is likely at this time a group of Logan’s leading citizens began to make frequent trips to a spot about six miles up Tony Grove Creek. The flowery meadow sprinkled with trees made an idyllic setting for fishing and camping.

To those who used the canyon for work only, the sight of people camping just for fun invoked envy. They began referring the area condescendingly as “Tony Grove.” The word “tony” was slang for cultured or high-brow. This name was repeated so often, that it stuck...and grew to include the creek and eventually, the lake that feeds the creek. Today, Tony Grove is one of the most popular hiking and camping locations in Logan Canyon.

Sources:

Simmonds, A. J. “A Mountain Grove for the 'Tony Set.'” *In God’s Lap: Cache Valley history as told in the newspaper columns of A. J. Simmonds, A Herald Journal Book*. Herald Journal, 2004.

Sweeney, Michael S. *Last Unspoiled Place: Utah’s Logan Canyon*. National Geographic Society, 2008.