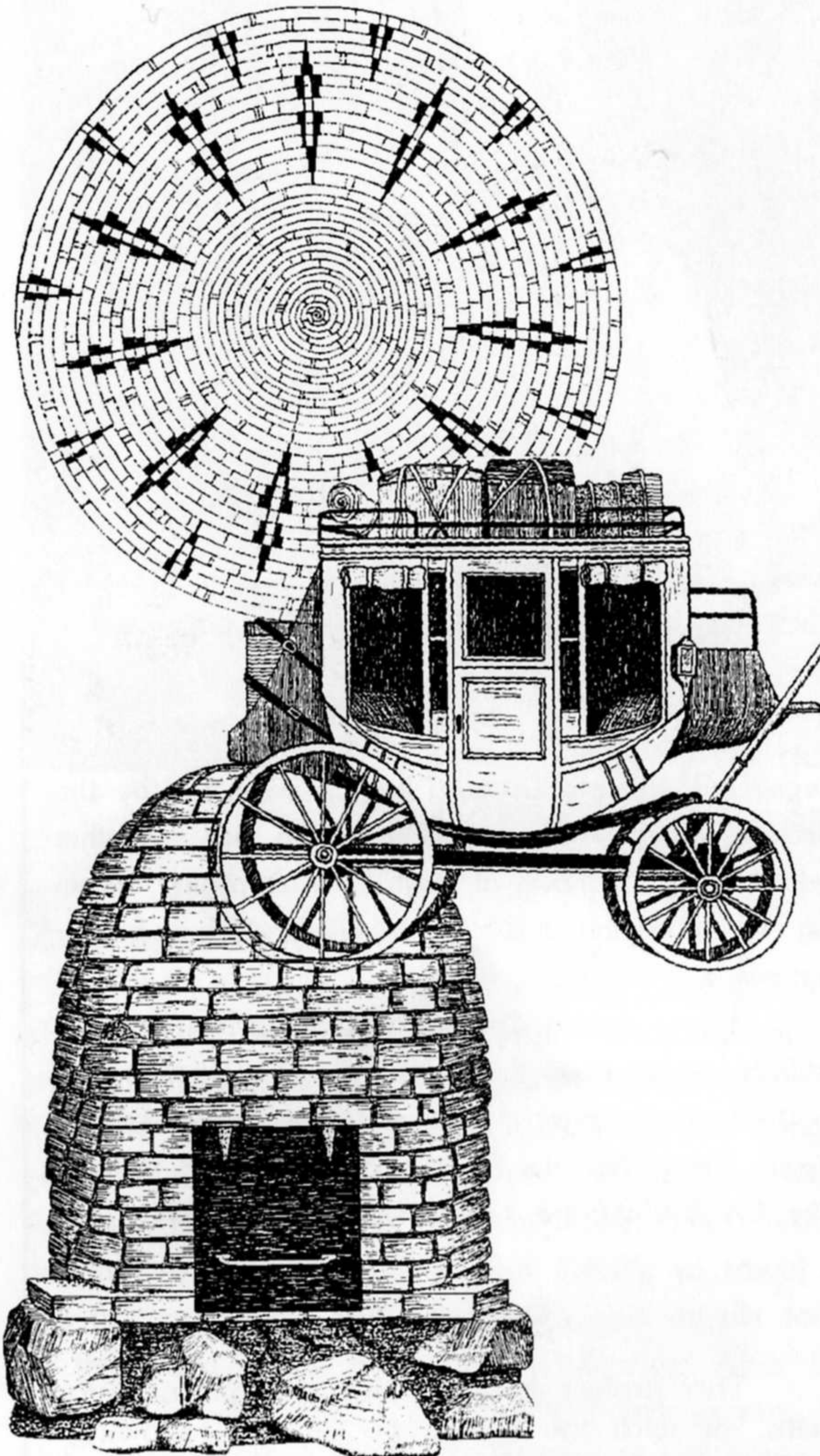


# Kyburz Flat

## 2000 Years of History



America's Great Outdoors

Tahoe National Forest • California • 1994



United States Department of Agriculture

**Welcome** to the Kyburz Flat Interpretive Area in the Sierraville Ranger District of the Tahoe National Forest. This brochure will guide you through 2,000 years of human history of Kyburz Flat, a small valley in the northern Sierra Nevada mountains.

The valley was inhabited by Washoe Indians who lived here perhaps as early as 2,000 years ago up to the 1850's, when emigrants began using the Hennes Pass route which runs right through the middle of the area. After that, the valley and the surrounding hills were used extensively for grazing and lumbering. Basques began arriving in the early 1900's, and have tended sheep in the valley since that time.

There are three stops on this driving and walking tour, each less than five minutes apart. Interpretive and directional signs at each stop, along with the information in this brochure, will help you understand who lived here, how each group used the environment in different ways, and the unique marks each left on the landscape. The whole tour should take less than an hour.

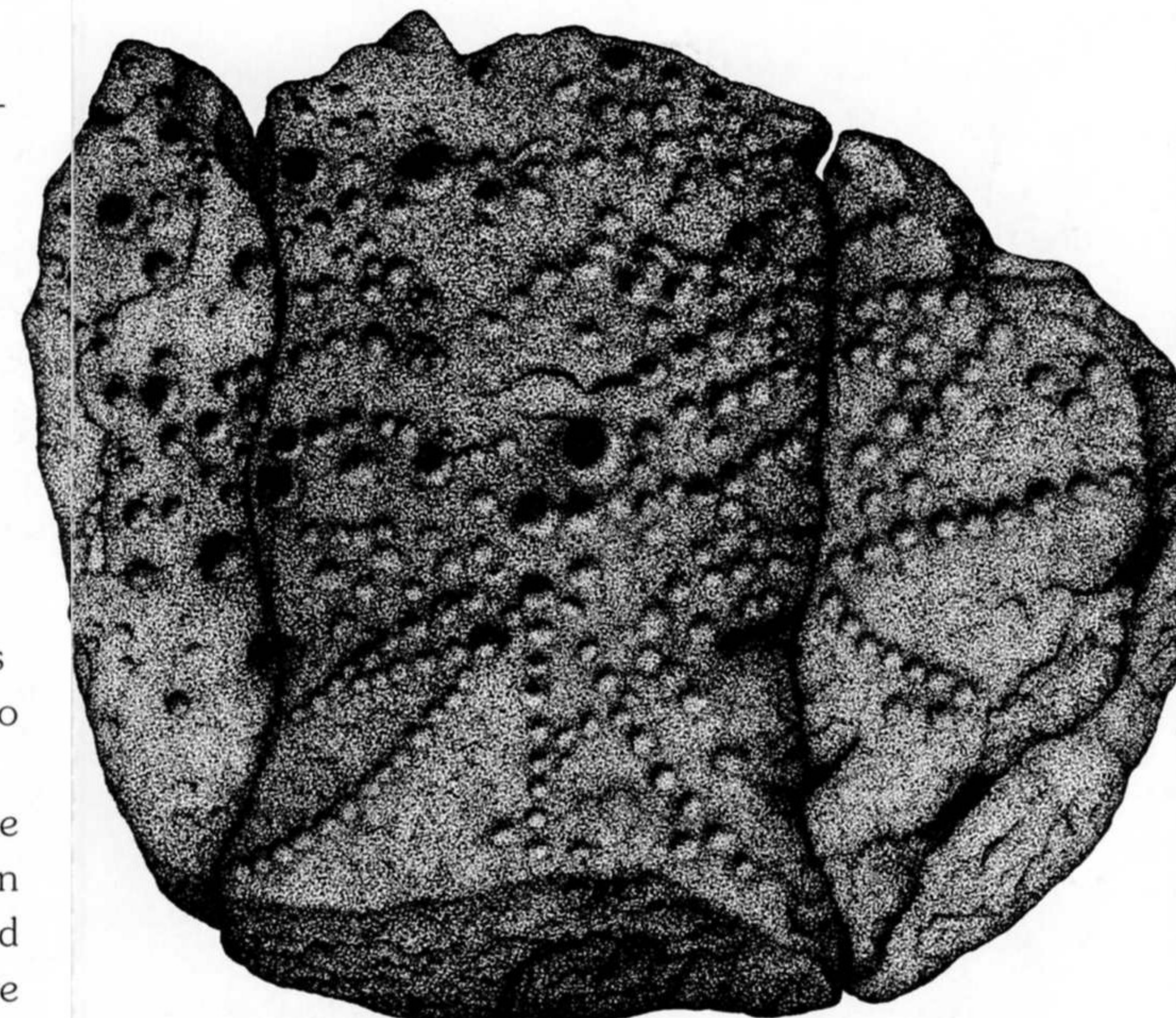
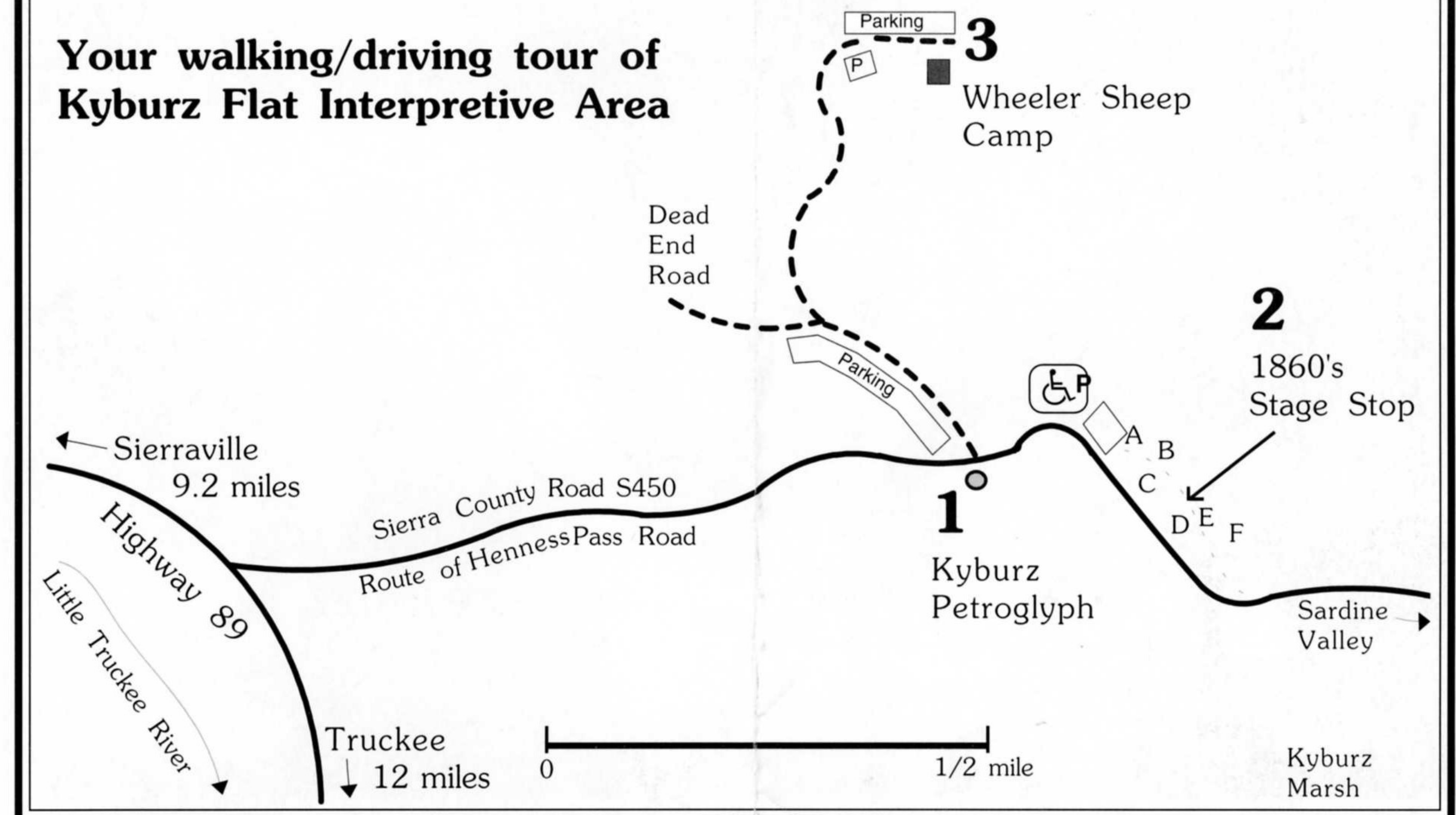
### 1: Kyburz Petroglyph

Scattered throughout the northern Sierra Nevada Mountains are many ancient symbols carved by Native Americans into the rocks. These images are called *petroglyphs*. This rock contains a type of petroglyph known as *cupules*. These are small round pits that have been ground into the rock surface. Cupule petroglyphs are found all over the world and are particularly common in certain parts of California.

Cupules have been linked with ceremonial activities performed by Native Americans such as fertility rituals, weather control, and as a place to leave special offerings.

This rock has cracked into three sections since the cupules were created. The illustration is an attempt to depict the rock as it may have appeared before this damage had taken place. The cupules are

### Your walking/driving tour of Kyburz Flat Interpretive Area



JOHN BETTS 1993

best viewed with low angle lighting in the late afternoon.

Some researchers believe that the petroglyphs in this area were made by people who lived in this area as early as 2,000 years ago and may be the ancestors of the Washoe. At the time emigrants began to travel through the Kyburz area in the 1850's the Washoe Tribe occupied an area from Coleville, north to Honey Lake and from Lake Tahoe east to Reno.

Today the Washoe Tribe considers this site and others like it an important part of their heritage. Please view it and treat it with respect.

Please do not make any castings or rubbings or put chalk on the petroglyphs. These procedures will damage the rock surface over time.

Your tour continues on the other side of this brochure.





*Typical 1860's Stage Stop (Nevada Historical Society photo)*

## 2: Stage Stop (1860's)

The California Gold Rush dramatically changed the history of overland transportation in the American West. Entrepreneurs built a vast network of new roads and started stage and freight companies to service the new mining localities. Among these was the Henness Pass Road, which overland emigrants used by the 1850's to travel to the mining camps along the north and middle forks of the Yuba River in northern California. After the Comstock silver strike in 1859, improvements to the Henness Pass Road facilitated travel between Virginia City and the California towns of Nevada City, Marysville, and the Sacramento Valley in the 1860's. After the completion of the railroad in 1868, however, the traffic dropped considerably.

Transportation companies using the Henness Pass Road built way stations or arranged with local ranches to service the passenger and freight traffic.

What you see before you are the archaeological remains of More's Station. It was run and occupied by Lysander More and his family. The Station was described as a ranch about 320 acres in size with a hotel, barn and stables. Signs mark the following features of the site:

- A.** The original alignment of the Henness Pass Road as it went through the stage stop;
- B.** The root cellar used for cold storage that was made out of dry-laid rocks and covered with logs and earth;
- C.** The spot where the hotel was located, a two-story white building 100 feet long by 50 feet wide;
- D.** A 40-foot-deep well which was a source of drinking water;
- E.** The location of the stable or barn;
- F.** The location of the corrals are marked with rocks where the fence line was.

## 3: Wheeler Sheep Camp (c.1913--1958)

Wheeler Sheep camp was one of the main sheep camps of the Wheeler Sheep Company. Sheep camps like this one were the summer bases of operation for sheep grazing in high Sierra meadows. This camp was built and managed by John Martin Gallues, an immigrant from the Basque homeland in Spain.

Martin and his brother Felix built several structures at the Wheeler Sheep Camp sometime before 1921. The camp consisted of a three-room cabin, an outdoor brick oven, an outdoor wood stove, a developed spring, a bath house, a chicken coop, a horse barn and corral, five tent platforms, sheep corrals, chutes, and livestock scales.

Today, the only remaining feature of the Wheeler Sheep Camp is the brick oven that was built around 1927. The oven was used to make bread and stews. Fresh bread was supplied to the herders every five days and considered one of the two important items delivered by the camp tender every week.

The oven lasted until the early 1980's, when the shed collapsed exposing the oven to the elements, eventually collapsing the oven. During the summer of 1992, Dr. Jose Mallea of the Basque Studies Program, University of Nevada, Reno volunteered his time to undertake the reconstruction of the oven in coordination with Sierraville Ranger District personnel.



*Martin, Marguerita, Hank and Albert Gallues  
(courtesy Gallues family)*

## Please Help Us Preserve Our Heritage

The Kyburz Flat Interpretive Area is a National Registered Historic District, and is protected by the **Archaeological Resources Protection Act** and other federal laws. Removal of artifacts or damaging, defacing, or destroying any parts of these sites and their features is a felony.

If you should discover any historical sites or artifacts, please leave them alone, and report your find to the nearest ranger station or to the Forest Archaeologist, Tahoe National Forest, P.O. Box 6003, Nevada City, CA 95959-6003, telephone (916) 265-4531.

## Sponsors

This project was completed in partnership with, or with the assistance of, the following groups:

Tahoe National Forest  
Sierra County Arts Council  
University of Nevada-Reno



*Ernest Giosi and  
Irene Gallues Giosi  
(courtesy Gallues family)*

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