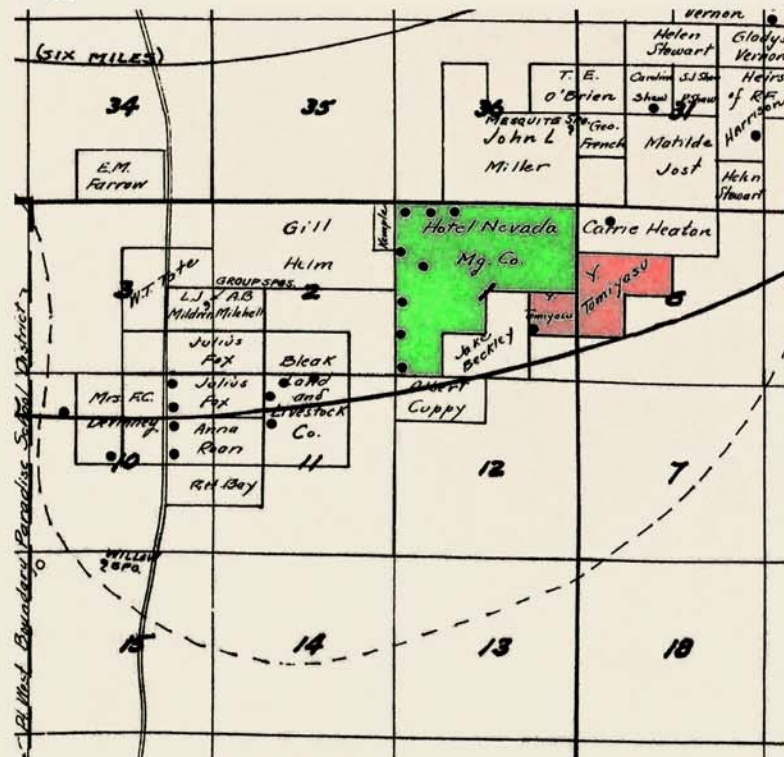


Sunset Regional Park

Yonema "Bill" Tomiyasu: Pioneer Horticulturist and Landscaper

Sunset Park neighbor Yonema Tomiyasu migrated from Japan to California in 1898. In 1914 he moved to Las Vegas and purchased the Passno property, east of today's Sunset Park. Duck Creek formed the southern boundary of his property.



The black dots on this 1929 C.D. Baker map show the location of wells. (Sunset Park is now located on the "Hotel Nevada Mining Company" property).
— Special Collections, Lied Library, UNLV

Tomiyasu was a skilled farmer, but despite his best efforts, his first gardens failed. After five years of trial and error, he learned what and when to plant, and was able to raise large crops of choice vegetables on his farm. During the building of Hoover Dam, Tomiyasu produced the vegetables for the Six Companies' Boulder City store.

When major grocery stores came to Las Vegas in the 1950s, truck farming became unprofitable, and Tomiyasu turned to landscaping.

Yonema Tomiyasu died in 1969. His most important legacies are his plant list and plant calendar, which are still used today by the Nevada Cooperative Extension Service. Tomiyasu Lane and Tomiyasu Elementary School are named in his memory.



"Bill" Tomiyasu pioneered the use of Chinese elms in Las Vegas Valley landscaping in the 1950s. Here are three-year old saplings on his farm.
— Special Collections, Lied Library, UNLV



Two of the Native Americans who worked as ranch hands on the Tomiyasu farm in the 1920s.
— Special Collections, Lied Library, UNLV



Yonema Tomiyasu in his lettuce field in the early 1920s with sons Kiyu (left) and Nanyu.
— Special Collections, Lied Library, UNLV



Tomiyasu Farm

Funding has been provided by the Bureau of Land Management through the sale of public lands as authorized by the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act.