

# Grapevine News



COLORADO RIVER HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY MUSEUM

## Chief Iretaba: The Legendary Mojave Leader

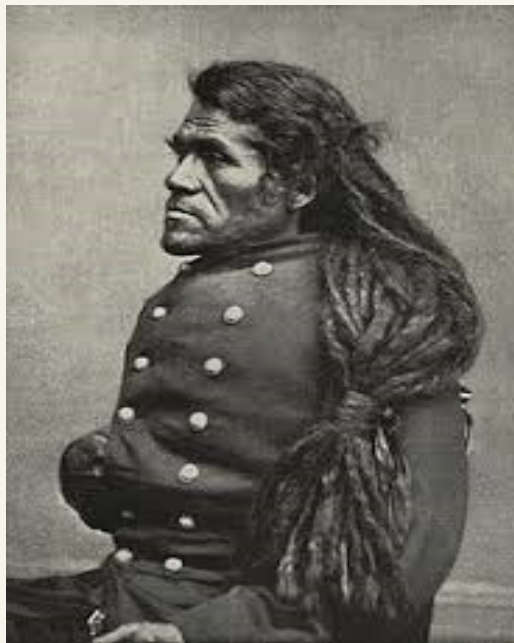
Brought to you by our Archivist—Pat Herzig

Chief Iretaba was a renowned leader of the Mojave (Aha Macav) people during the mid-19th century, a time of immense change and hardship for his people. As a respected chief and diplomat, he played a crucial role in navigating the complexities of European-American expansion into the Mojave homeland, which spanned parts of present-day California, Nevada, and Arizona. His efforts to ensure peace, protect Mojave sovereignty, and adapt to an evolving political landscape make him one of the most significant Indigenous leaders of his time.

While little is documented about Iretaba's early life, he was born into the Mojave tribe, a people known for their resilience, strong warrior traditions, and deep spiritual connection to the Colorado River. By the 1850s, he had risen to prominence within the tribe as a capable leader, recognized for his wisdom, diplomatic skills, and military strategy.

The Mojave were traditionally agriculturalists, thriving along the Colorado River, where they cultivated crops such as corn, beans, and melons. However, their way of life was increasingly threatened by the arrival of Euro-American settlers and military forces seeking to claim land and resources. As tensions grew, Iretaba found himself at the forefront of interactions between his people and the expanding United States.

In the early 1850s, the Mojave people clashed with American settlers traveling through their territory, particularly along the Beale Wagon Road, a key passage for westward migration. The Mojave saw these



intrusions as a direct threat to their land and resources, leading to several skirmishes. One of the most notable conflicts occurred in 1859 when U.S. military forces, responding to attacks on settlers, launched a punitive expedition against the Mojave. This campaign, known as the Mojave War, resulted in heavy casualties for the Mojave and the establishment of Fort Mojave, a military post that further cemented U.S. control in the region.

Iretaba played a critical role in these conflicts, advocating for the defense of Mojave lands while also recognizing the need for negotiation. He eventually emerged as a key diplomat, working to

prevent further bloodshed and ensure the survival of his people in the face of overwhelming American expansion.

One of the most significant moments in Iretaba's leadership was his visit to Washington, D.C., in 1863. Accompanied by other Mojave representatives and facilitated by Indian Affairs agents, Iretaba traveled across the country to meet with U.S. government officials, including President Abraham Lincoln. The visit was part of an effort to negotiate peaceful relations and establish clearer boundaries for Mojave lands.

While in Washington, Iretaba was struck by the technological advancements and military strength of the United States. He recognized that resistance against American expansion would likely lead to further devastation for the Mojave. This realization led him to

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advocate for peaceful relations with the U.S. government, believing that cooperation and diplomacy were the best paths forward for his people.

Upon returning home, Iretaba was formally recognized as the paramount chief of the Mojave, marking a shift in the tribe's leadership toward a more diplomatic approach to dealing with U.S. authorities.

Following his diplomatic mission, Iretaba worked to maintain peace between the Mojave and the U.S. government. He encouraged cooperation with American officials, understanding that adaptation was necessary for the Mojave to survive in a rapidly changing world. However, his stance was not universally accepted within the tribe, as some Mojave leaders and warriors continued to resist U.S. encroachment.

Iretaba passed away in 1874, leaving behind a complex legacy. While some viewed his decision to seek peace with the U.S. as a necessary compromise, others saw it as a painful concession to American expansionism. Regardless of differing perspectives, his efforts helped shape the Mojave's response to colonization and ensured that his people had a voice in negotiations with the U.S. government.

Chief Iretaba remains an important historical figure in Indigenous history, symbolizing both the resilience and adaptability of the Mojave people. His leadership during a period of profound upheaval showcased his commitment to protecting his people, whether through warfare or diplomacy. Today, the Mojave people continue to honor his legacy as they work to preserve their culture, language, and traditions. His story serves as a powerful reminder of the struggles Indigenous communities faced during American expansion and the difficult choices their leaders had to make in the pursuit of survival and sovereignty.

NOTE: The information from this article was obtained through CHAT GBT.

## FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

### See's Candies Fundraiser:

**March 14th—April 4th 2025**

Our virtual candy store is officially open! Click on link below or use the QR code to stock up on See's springtime sweets and support the museum.

Every purchase makes a difference.

<https://www.yumraising.com/secure/>

[coloradorhm\\_colorado\\_river\\_museum58/GalGra5325/candy](https://coloradorhm_colorado_river_museum58/GalGra5325/candy)



### Honey Baked Hams for Easter:

**Order by April 17th 2025 11:am(AZ time)**



**Sold Out!**

**LAUGHLIN & BULLHEAD CITY HISTORIC BUS TOUR**

**APRIL 27, 2025**

**PRICE \$25**

Please join us for this unique opportunity to explore historical sites in Laughlin and Old Bullhead. See where the towns first citizens lived and thrived in this desert landscape. This bus tour will be narrated by local historian, Mary Ragusa, and will last for 3-4 hours with educational stops and restroom breaks along the way.

**APRIL 27, 2025**

- TOUR LEAVES FROM THE MUSEUM
- 1239 HWY 90 BULLHEAD CITY
- DEPARTS AT 9:00 AM (AZ TIME)
- SNACKS WILL BE PROVIDED
- NO CASH TIPS TO PLEASE
- BRANDED ACCESSORY

**PRICE \$25**

**DO NOT MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT. PREPAYMENT IS REQUIRED. TICKETS WILL BE HELD AS WILL CALL AT THE MUSEUM.**

**WANT THANKS TO SILVER RIDER FOR THEIR SUPPORT IN PROVIDING THE BUS FOR THIS TRIP**



## PRESIDENTS CORNER

Happy March! Hope everyone is doing well. Many things are happening at the museum.

We had John West back for a second time, speaking of Wings and Wildlife and showing his beautiful pictures. He is an amazing photographer.

We have a sold out bus tour is coming up at the end of March about the history of the area. Mary Ragusa will be leading the tour. Another one was scheduled for the end of April but also sold out quickly. We are looking into scheduling more of these tours in the Fall.

Anybody that would like to become a member, please call Ellen Brown, our membership chairman or call the museum at 928 754-3399. Also, if you are interested in becoming a volunteer please call the museum.

We were also so happy to go to the Goffs museum on Saturday March 8<sup>th</sup> with approximately 60 people showing up. We all had an informative tour, and they made a barbecue for us which was delicious. Thank you Laura for a wonderful experience!

Hope everyone is getting ready for Easter honey baked hams. Call Susana at 928 234-4807. Pick up for the hams will be on April 17th from 3:00 to 6:30

Sincerely  
Karole Finkelstein  
President

## WORD PUZZLE

Chief Irebaba

C	S	F	H	H	V	E	C	B	P	V	D	A	P	S
A	Q	F	E	Z	O	N	C	O	A	E	Y	I	C	K
L	U	S	H	I	S	M	L	A	H	F	H	A	S	I
I	L	D	U	W	H	I	E	S	E	S	T	B	T	R
F	A	A	A	V	T	C	A	L	D	P	Y	A	L	M
O	Y	R	U	I	D	L	M	R	A	O	Z	T	U	I
R	H	O	C	T	C	N	A	N	K	N	X	E	F	S
N	U	A	V	M	I	H	U	I	S	D	D	R	N	H
I	L	R	O	I	R	R	A	W	V	O	Q	I	I	E
A	M	I	G	R	A	T	I	O	N	R	B	O	A	S
L	E	G	A	C	Y	K	G	P	C	E	R	H	P	K
X	L	C	U	V	G	A	K	T	S	D	B	Q	R	I
S	E	I	T	L	A	U	S	A	C	A	D	T	S	R
X	B	B	S	S	V	E	J	A	F	E	E	B	O	E
D	I	P	L	O	M	A	T	C	T	L	I	E	Z	Y

CALIFORNIA

CASUALTIES

CHIEF

CLASHED

DIPLOMAT

HARDSHIP

HOMELAND

IRETABA

LEADER

LEGACY

MIGRATION

PAINFUL

PEACE

POLITICAL

SKIRMISHES

SPIRITUAL

WAR

WARRIOR

## CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Colorado River Historical Society Museum is seeking volunteers. If you enjoy history and want to learn more about the area, the society needs you. This is a chance to meet area visitors from all over the world and form friendships with a wonderful group of volunteers. Many of our volunteers are part-time residents and retirees. Hours are flexible and duties are as easy or challenging as you would like.

Examples of the types of volunteer we need:

Docent	Handyman
Gardener	Data Entry
Teachers	Marketing
Fundraising & Event Coordinators	

## February 2025 Crossword Puzzle answers: Mohave—Milltown Railroad

V	U	T	Q	V	L	Y	C	X	X	E	D	I	R	A
H	A	R	S	H	A	M	L	F	E	G	J	R	U	R
F	E	U	D	W	W	I	T	U	I	U	W	D	H	E
P	L	Q	L	M	C	L	V	V	X	A	Q	M	M	M
V	B	I	A	Z	K	L	I	N	O	G	Z	R	C	N
Y	A	D	W	Q	R	S	C	V	I	D	Z	E	E	A
R	T	R	A	N	S	P	O	R	T	A	T	I	O	N
C	I	U	R	E	R	R	O	S	T	M	R	E	O	T
W	F	H	R	P	E	U	E	C	D	A	A	R	T	S
M	O	A	B	F	G	I	Y	X	P	G	C	E	E	M
X	R	R	L	H	L	Q	C	X	T	E	R	W	N	T
H	P	W	R	P	W	Z	Y	J	R	R	W	E	G	
X	N	C	P	A	R	S	S	E	G	Z	E	I	C	W
K	J	U	F	I	N	A	N	C	I	A	L	M	F	Z
J	S	N	W	O	T	L	L	I	M	L	O	T	E	G

## ~ FIELD TRIP TO GOFF'S CALIFORNIA ~





# Educational Gardens



Early Spring in the Educational Gardens, things are starting to wake up after a long cold winter. The desert willows are starting to pop out little green leaves, and we have a few flowering shrubs. And of course, our overachieving prickly pear, who started out a month ago with flowers, is still flowering.



Our little Grahams Nipple -*Mammillaria grahamii*, has got its little halos of flowers.



Our other early spring flowering plants, the brittlebush that self seeded and our newest edition, the globemallow are showing off their colors.

We are keeping a vigilant watch on a few of our natives that might not have made it through last summer. With the promise of more rain this month maybe they will revive and we may also see more flowers on the cactus hill. Hopefully we will see the cane chollas magenta bloom, as well as some pink flowers from the beaver tails. And don't forget the ocotillo, these are 3-year-old propagations from my large 20 year old plant. Let's see if they bloom this year, they're all leafed out right now. Fingers crossed.

Come by the museum and visit the Educational Gardens

Laurie





## COLORADO RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM

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Web: [coloradoriverhistoricalsociety.org/](http://coloradoriverhistoricalsociety.org/)  
Hours of Operations:  
Tuesday—Saturday 10:00am - 4:00pm  
(last admittance 3:00pm)

Grapevine News Editor - Laurie Thompson

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Karole Finkelstein – President  
Barbra Brandt – Vice-President  
Ellen Brown – Secretary  
Carla Lucas – Treasurer  
Robbie Adams – Director  
Jim Lucas - Director  
Denise Vallon – Director  
Mary Wall – Director  
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### Mission Statement

*The mission of The Colorado River Historical Society shall be to operate a museum to promote interest and knowledge concerning the history of the Lower Colorado River area, most specifically the Tri-state area.*

## MEMERSHIP INFORMATION

"Now is the time to renew your membership if you haven't already done so! Memberships will be canceled on March 31 if not renewed. Huge thanks to all of you who have renewed for 2025! We appreciate your continued support!"

Remember, we are staffed entirely by volunteers, so all your contribution dollars are used for the ongoing operation of the museum, the Lil' Red Schoolhouse, and the Educational Gardens. Please note, membership dues have increased to \$20 for individuals and \$30 for families

If you have questions about membership, or you're interested in becoming a member, please reach out to Ellen Brown at 928-542-1160 or see one of the docents when you visit the museum.

Membership Chair - Ellen Brown

## CURATOR CORNER

This picture shows one of the new archive boxes that was purchased last fall with a grant the museum received from the state of Arizona Historical Society. Work is being done to place different archives into protective sleeves and boxes for preservation purposes. We thank the Arizona Historical Society for this grant.

Pat Herzig  
Archivist

