

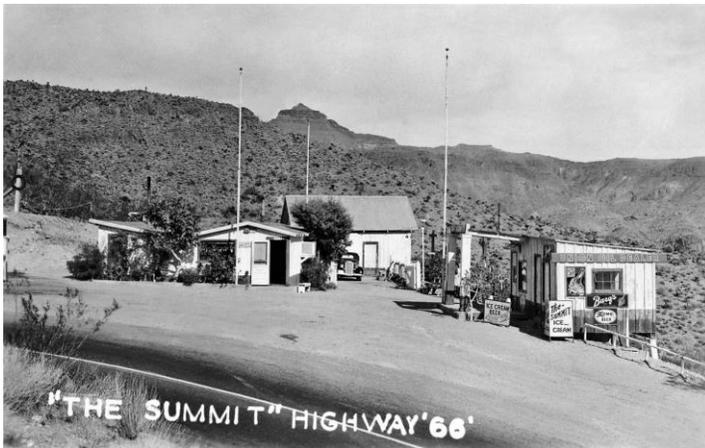


# COLORADO RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

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## TRAVELING ON ROUTE 66



Snell's Summit at Sitgreaves Pass

As it scales the foreboding Black Mountains, Rt. 66 rises to a peak of 3,550 feet above sea level between Kingman and Oatman, AZ. The pass through this mountain range was named for Captain Lorenzo Sitgreaves, who in 1851 was sent on a mission to assess the navigability of the Zuni and Colorado rivers for use in a possible confrontation with the Mormon settlement in Utah. Sitgreaves himself never passed over the pass named for him, as his travels took him north to Union Pass. When Lt. Edward F. Beale surveyed the pass in 1857 for a wagon road, he named the pass John Howells Pass. Lt. Joseph Christmas Ives of the Corp of Topographical Engineers mistakenly thought Sitgreaves had traversed the pass and renamed it after Sitgreaves in 1858. Later that same year Sitgreaves Pass was one of the sites

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Karole Finkelstein – President  
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Cheryl Mangin – Director

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Happy 2022 everyone! My wish for each one of you is a healthy and happy year. Attendance at the museum has been going up after the holiday slow-down. I personally work on Fridays, and we have been doing very well.

At our board meeting in January, the board appointed Cheryl Mangin to a one-year term on the board to serve out the remainder of Jeanette Miller's term. Welcome Cheryl!

Our next event, if all goes well, will be on February 10<sup>th</sup> for the Winter Expo at the Anderson Fieldhouse from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. where we will have a table to visit. I hope to see you all there!

Karole

that the Rose-Baley wagon train were attacked by hostile Native Americans.

Around 1912 the road became known as Old National Trails and by 1926 had been renamed Route 66.

In 1940 Osman Snell set up business at the summit of Sitgreaves Pass. It provided and sold gasoline, ice cream, sandwiches, soda, beer, and other conveniences that would be a sight for sore eyes as travelers reached the top of the difficult pass. Gas sold for around \$.19.

By 1966 only the old register pumps stood on the concrete slabs in the front of the property.

Today nothing remains of Snell's 'The Summit' as only a concrete slab remains after fire destroyed the property in 1967.



Ed's Camp

Lowell "Ed" Edgerton was a miner who first came to the area in 1917. In 1919 he opened a trading post and rest stop called Ed's Camp that catered to the auto traveler. Business boomed, in fact it was so good that he never got the chance to enclose the trading post and simply put a roof over the foundation to protect it from the desert sun and wire screens instead of walls saying, "The hell with the building, we will leave it open."

Ed's Camp had all the amenities needed for the Route 66 traveler of the day. In addition to the open air trading post there was the Kactus Cafe where you could get water for your radiator, a

## COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

Cheryl Mangin – Curator  
Laurie Thompson – Archivist  
Carla Lucas – Asst. Archivist  
Richard Dotson – Asst. to the Committee  
Jim Lucas – Asst. to the Committee

## DONATION GUIDELINES

What we are looking for is any artifact that is pertinent to our Tri-state area. This includes, but is not limited to, photographs, family histories, military activity, Davis Dam, Native Americans, steamboats, ranching, fossils, explorers, highways, historical maps, churches and service clubs, businesses, and mining.

Please keep in mind, these are the guidelines we use if you choose to donate an artifact in your possession:

- Is it of museum quality?
- Is it pertinent to our area of interest?
- Do we already have as good or a better prime example of the artifact?
- Does the provenance of the artifact or material increase its significance?
- Is the donor the legal owner of said materials?
- Do we have enough resources to maintain/store/display it.
- We cannot accept an artifact with stipulations on it such as it must be displayed in a particular way or time period.
- We do not accept loans.

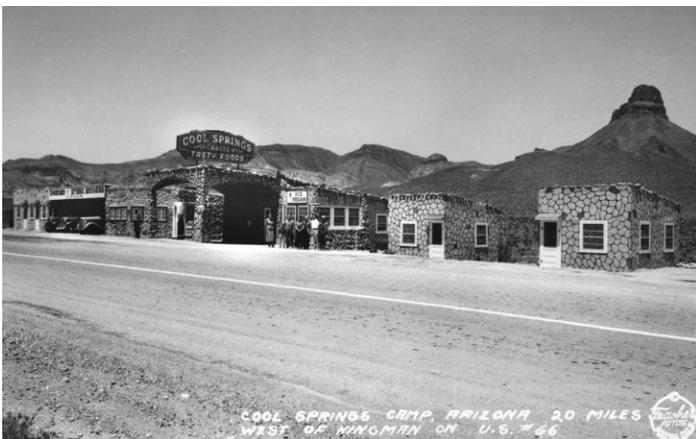
Give us a call at the museum if you have an artifact or historical item you would like us to consider!

We are actively seeking local historic photographs and Mohave Valley Daily Newspapers before 2010.

meal, a Texaco gas station to refuel your fuel tanks, cabins, and spots to set up a tent and camp for the night if you so desired.

In 1952 when Route 66, and later Interstate 40, was routed south around the Black Mountains and through Yucca, the majority of the traffic no longer passed by Ed's Camp. Once called the "coolest spot in the desert" today the camp sits frozen time with rusting bed frames, old tires, and other debris strewn about the site.

Today the property is still fairly intact, though falling down. The property is heavily signed "No Trespassing."



Cool Springs

Built in 1926, the initial camp included a café and a Mobil Oil Station. The last stop before the steep Gold Road grade, the camp was a welcome respite to check vehicles' oil, water, and gas, and grab a bite to eat.

In the 1930s, James Walker moved his family from Huntington, Indiana to operate the camp, improving the station and building eight tourist cabins. However, sometime later, the couple divorced, leaving Mrs. Walker and the children to run the camp.

The camp continued to flourish, and Mrs. Walker remarried a man named Floyd Spidell. After World War II, when people began to travel at a pace never seen before, the chicken dinners served at Cool Camp became famous for the many travelers making their way to California.

In the early 1950s, the Yucca Bypass was developed, which took its toll on the camp as well as nearby Oatman, effectively turning it into a ghost town.

Sometime later, the Spidell's divorced, and Floyd was left to run the camp. In 1957, he was joined by his niece, Nancy Schoenerr and her husband Chuck. Though traffic had dwindled on the steep Sitgreaves Pass, they continued to operate the camp until 1966, when the entire camp burned completely to the ground, leaving nothing but remnants of the stone foundations. For the next several decades, the site was left abandoned and neglected.

It was briefly rebuilt for the movie "Universal Soldier" in 1991, then promptly blown up. However, in 2001, the camp was purchased by Ned and Michelle Leuchtner and the delicate restoration process was begun. In 2004, with the help of builder Dennis DeChenne, Ned fully restored the Cool Springs Camp station based on old photos. Cool Springs opened to a new generation of Route 66'ers, featuring a gift shop and museum.

Today Cool Springs is owned and operated by Dwayne Blake.

## NEW MAP CASES

The Collections committee was able to secure two new map cases from a generous \$1000 donation from the Colorado Historical Trails Association. The museum's share of the purchase was approximately \$1798.

This will allow us to further protect most of our historical map collection that have already been placed in archival protective sleeving. We were able to find a local vendor for the purchase which made the delivery very easy.