



COLORADO RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

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THE COMING OF THE RAILROAD

The Atlantic & Pacific Railroad (A&P) was chartered in 1866 to build west from Springfield, Missouri, along the 35th parallel of latitude (approximately through Amarillo, Texas, and Albuquerque, New Mexico) to a junction with SP at the Colorado River. The infant A&P had no rail connections. The line that was to become the St. Louis–San Francisco Railway (Frisco) would not reach Springfield for another four years, and SP did not build east from Mojave to the Colorado River until 1883. A&P started construction in 1868, built southwest into what would become Oklahoma, and promptly entered receivership.

In 1879 A&P struck a deal with the Santa Fe and Frisco railroads to construct a rail line for each. The railroads would jointly build and own the A&P railroad west of Albuquerque. In 1883 A&P reached Needles, California, where it connected with an SP line. A&P also built a line between Tulsa, Oklahoma and St. Louis, Missouri for Frisco, but a Tulsa-Albuquerque portion of A&P remained incomplete.

Santa Fe still wanted to reach California on its own rails (it leased the SP line from Needles through Barstow to Mojave), and the state of California eagerly courted the railroad to break SP's monopoly. In 1897 the railroad traded the Sonora Railway of Mexico to SP for their line between Barstow and Mojave, giving the Santa Fe railway its own line from Chicago to the Pacific coast.

The coming of the railroad to the Tri-state area, which up until that time was serviced only by overland

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Hi everyone! I want to wish everyone a Happy Spring and welcome our neighboring states into the same time zone!

We will be at the Winter Expo on Thursday, March 24 from 8:00 a.m. until 1 p.m. at the Anderson Field House. Please come down and visit with our wonderful volunteers, some new some old, who have put up a very nice display.

Please join us also on Saturday, April 2nd from noon until 2:00 p.m. at the museum when Simon Garcia of the Ft. Mojave Indian Tribe will be at the museum to speak with you and perform some of the traditional Bird Dances of his people.

Karole

freight and steamboat would further allow the expansion of mining interests, cattle ranching, and open the way for all the cities, as we now know them to develop and grow.

The new line opened in August of 1883, delayed because the annual spring flooding made building a bridge across the river almost impossible. With just a few hundred feet left to complete of a 1500 feet plus span, a large portion of the bridge was swept away. The original wooden truss bridge was built on the Arizona side of the river and crossed over the river about 2 miles below Needles.

In the spring of 1883, two former conductors for the Southern Pacific Railroad left their jobs to take new positions with the Pacific Improvement Co., a division of the railroad. Frank Monaghan and Dan Murphy set up a primitive mercantile to provide supplies to the worker's building the railroad line and became responsible for all the supplies needed to build the first homes and businesses in Needles.

Both bachalors at the time, they settled in Needles and became the go to men to get things done. Frank became the judge, Dan was the Marshal. They ran the first post office and bank out of their stores of General Merchandise/Groceries/Saloon. They initialed the first utilities and built the first ice house, mostly financed by the railroad.

Dan Murphy was a seeker and dreamer, and while Frank usually stayed behind in Needles to handle their own businesses, Dan was out and about looking for new sources of income. He found one such source it in mining. A big strike at the Josephine Mine outside of Kingman, AZ started his run of wealth.

If you would like to know more about these pioneers of the Tri-state area, please join the Needles Chamber of Commerce at the El Garces Train Depot for a program they are sponsoring: "The Days of Monaghan & Murphy" on Saturday, April 9th at 4:00 p.m. The event will highlight author Joseph Ryan's new novel called "Ice & Oil." Joe will be the keynote speaker and will be conducting a book signing after his presentation. Hor'dourves, water and punch will be served. There is no price of admission, but donations are always welcome.

Hope to see you there!

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.

UPCOMING EVENTS APRIL-GARCIA

THE COLORADO RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS...

SIMON GARCIA OF THE FT. MOJAVE INDIAN TRIBE

STORYTELLER AND TRADITIONAL BIRD DANCER
SHARING HIS PEOPLE'S HISTORY

WHEN: SATURDAY, APRIL 2ND
WHERE: AT THE MUSEUM
TIME: NOON - 2:00 P.M.



1239 HIGHWAY 95
BULLHEAD CITY, AZ

MUSEUM FUNDRAISER

As we move into 2022, we find that we are almost \$150,000 short in our building fund to build our third addition. This addition will store our archives and collections not presently displayed in the museum.

We are required, by contract, to be completely out of our Davis Dam site by June of this year. The county has generously, but only verbally extended that date by one year.

The Davis Dam site required a considerable amount of work to make into our temporary archives and collections, and the Collections Committee spent hundreds of hours cleaning up the outside of the building grounds and inventorying our archival material and collections. We now have multiple shelving units to hold our collections. The artifacts were cleaned, photographed and entered in the data base. The data base was formulated by Laurie Thompson, and she has done a phenomenal job!

The City of Bullhead has offered us a temporary place, but as you can imagine moving everything once, let alone twice is a nightmare! We need a permanent place to call our own.

In the coming weeks the museum's Fundraising Committee will be using a variety of methods to raise money for our building fund. Your contribution is tax deductible, but please check with your own tax consultant.

Consider joining our Patron Program, sending a check, or participating in our upcoming events (which are free) with a donation!

It takes a village, and we are counting on you to help us make this a reality.

Cheryl Mangin, Curator

MAY UPCOMING EVENTS

Colorado River Historical Society
proudly presents...

Larry Adams - Speaker

Retired Firefighter and Chief of Bullhead City Fire Department
Recalls the History of the Department

Saturday, May 7, 2022 at the Museum from 3 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

On February 15, 1947 an election was held to decide whether Bullhead City should have its own fire department. The vote was unanimous; 33-0 in favor. On February 24, by order of the Mohave County Board of Supervisors, the Bullhead City Fire District was created. At that time, the fire district covered one square mile in the area of what is now referred to as original Bullhead City. The fire station was located next to the town Chamber of Commerce near the intersection of Main and Fourth Street. The department consisted of 15 volunteer members and the first fire chief was O.C. Buck. There were no fire hydrants in the district at that time and the fire department served the community with a 1948 Army surplus fire truck.

In 1970, the Bullhead City Fire District acquired some federal land on Hancock Road. The building of Station 1 was started in August and completed in November. In 1971 Larry Adams was elected to the position of fire chief, the apparatus was moved to the new Station 1 site, two full time firemen were hired to man the station 24 hours a day, the private ambulance company went out of business, and the Bullhead City Fire Department unofficially went into the ambulance business.

Colorado River Historical Society & Museum
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