



COLORADO RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

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MAY 2021

STEAMBOATS OF THE COLORADO RIVER



The Gila at Yuma

Rio Colorado, 1877

Arizona as it is; or, the coming country. Compiled from notes of travel during the years 1874, 1875, and 1876 by Hiram C. Hodge, New York. Published by Hurd and Houghton, Boston: H. O. Houghton and company. Cambridge: The Riverside Press. 1877.

Chapter XVII: Colorado Steam Navigation Company

THIS is the only line of steamers running to Arizona. It is intimately connected with the history and prosperity of the country, has done much to build it up, for many long years supplied most of the wants of both the citizens and the military, and is justly deserving of a longer and more extended notice than can be given in these pages.

In 1852 Captains George A. Johnson, B. M. Hartshorne, and A. H. Wilcox organized a company under the firm name of George A. Johnson & Co., for the purpose of transporting passengers and freight to

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Karole Finkelstein – President
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Jeanette Miller – Director
Dick Warneka – Director
Laurie Thompson – Director

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings everyone. I hope you are having a good month.

My husband and I just returned from a relaxing vacation and the crew at the museum did a wonderful job handling things in my absence. Of course, I was available to them by phone if the need arose.

We will be beginning our summer hours the 3rd week in June and the hours will be Thursday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. We will be closed the first two weeks in June for building maintenance and display updates.

If anyone has a great idea for an event that you would like to see happen at the museum next fall, please contact me directly at 928-219-2582 or by email at: richellefinkelstein@gmail.com.

Karole

and from San Francisco, Cal., and the Colorado River in Arizona, stopping at the Mexican ports of La Paz, Mazatlán, and Guaymas. They first employed sail vessels on the ocean, and in July 1871, they put on their first ocean steamer, which was soon after increased to two. Some years subsequent to its first organization, the company was incorporated under the laws of California, under the name it now bears.

One of the ocean steamers leaves San Francisco every twenty days, running to the head of the Gulf of California, a distance from San Francisco of nineteen hundred miles. At the head of the gulf the passengers and freight are transhipped to four river steamers, and taken thence up the Colorado River to Yuma, one hundred and seventy-five miles, and thence portions are taken up the river to their several destinations, The river steamers make regular trips to Hardyville, three hundred and thirty-seven miles above Yuma, and five hundred and thirteen miles above the mouth of the river.

The Company have now four river steamers of four hundred tons each, and four barges of eight hundred tons.

The river steamers are the **Mohave, Gila, Cocopah, and Colorado**. Captains: J. A. Mellen, William Poole, S. Thorn, and A. D. Johnson. The ocean steamers were the Newbern, Capt. William Metzger, and the Montana, Capt. George M. Douglass. The Newbern was burned at sea in December last, the only serious calamity that has happened to the Company since its organization. The Newbern will be replaced with a new boat.

The Officers of the Company are as follows:

President, B. M. Hartshorne, San Francisco.
General Agent, John Birmingham, San Francisco.
Superintendent, Isaac Polhemus, Jr., Yuma.
Yuma Agent, A. J. Finlay.
Ehrenburg Agent, P. M. Fisher.
Mazatlán Agent, Señor Kelton.
La Paz Agent, Señor Vioseo.
Guaymas Agent, Señor Willard.
General office, 10 Market St., San Francisco, California.

This Company has occupied a position, in supplying the necessities of the Territory, which could not have been filled in any other manner. For many years the citizens and military of Arizona have received almost

COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

Cheryl Mangin – Archivist-Curator
Richard Dotson – Asst. Archivist
Carla Lucas – Member
Jim Lucas – Member
Laurie Thompson – Member

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!

all their supplies of provisions, goods, machinery, arms, etc., etc., through the medium of this Company, and could have obtained them in no other way.

The amount of freight brought to Yuma, in the year 1875, was over four thousand five hundred tons.

The amount of freight shipped from Yuma was:

Mineral Ores — 1,000 tons.

Wool — 60 tons.

General Merchandise — 60 tons.

No. of Hides — 6,170 tons.

No. of Pelts — 1,400 tons.

Way Freight — 1,440 tons.

Also a large amount of bullion and other articles.

The amount received and shipped during the year 1876 is not yet reported.

The Company has a good ship-yard on the Sonora side of the Gulf of California, where their river steamers were constructed, and where their repairs are made.

SUMMER HOURS

We will be **closed** the first two weeks in June.

Our hours of operation for the summer months will be Thursday-Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We are located at 1239 Highway 95 in Bullhead City, AZ. We are closed on all major holidays.

We now have a dedicated parking lot on the south side of the museum that you can access directly from Highway 95 without turning into the park from Laughlin Ranch road.

OUR NEWSLETTER

We are now posting our newsletter on our Facebook page and our website for you to read and/or print. Therefore, we will not be mailing out hardcopies any longer. We will continue to send the newsletter out on email. If you have not provided us with an email address yet, please do so as soon as possible at: crhsmuseum@outlook.com

DONATIONS SOUGHT

NOTE: We are currently actively seeking Mohave Valley Daily News newspapers before 2010 in good condition. If you have editions you would like to donate to us, please drop them by the museum!

COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

The Collections Committee is gearing up to install our brand-new display cases in the Native American section of the museum the first two weekends of June. All the artifacts must be carefully removed from the old cases. We will then also remove everything from the wall, patch, repair and repaint the wall and move the display cases into place. The wall displays will then be reinstalled, and the display cases filled with the artifacts.

Later in the summer we will be installing the other two new display cabinets in the Bullhead City display area, with the same procedures.

We have great plans to have other refurbished wall displays to be ready for the fall when we return to our full schedule. Stay tuned!

CHECK US OUT

E-mail: crhsmuseum@outlook.com

Facebook: [Colorado River Historical Society Inc](#)

Website: Our new website is up and running! Be sure to visit it at:

coloradoriverhistoricalsocietymuseum.org

Museum Phone Number: 928-754-3399

Address: 1239 Highway 95 BHC, AZ 86429