

Grapewine News



COLORADO RIVER HISTORICAL
SOCIETY MUSEUM

The Burros of Oatman Arizona A Unique Wild West Experience



Oatman, Arizona, a small town nestled in the Black Mountains of the Mojave Desert, is a place where the spirit of the Old West lives on. But beyond its historical charm, one of the most unique and enchanting aspects of Oatman is its population of wild burros. These friendly, free-roaming animals have become iconic symbols of the town, drawing visitors from around the world. The history of the burros in Oatman dates back to the late 1800s, when the town was a booming mining hub. Prospectors flocked to the area, seeking to strike it rich during the gold rush. Burros, also known as donkeys, were brought in by miners to help carry heavy loads, tools, and supplies up the rugged mountain terrain. These hardy animals were essential to the mining operations, as they could navigate the harsh desert conditions and steep cliffs better than horses or wagons. As the mining industry began to decline in the early 20th century, many of the miners abandoned Oatman and the surrounding areas. Instead of taking their burros with them, the miners left the animals to fend for themselves.

Remarkably, the burros adapted to the wild desert environment, forming herds and thriving in the region.

Today, the descendants of these abandoned animals are the burros that roam freely around Oatman. The burros have become an integral part of Oatman's identity, playing a key role in the town's culture and tourism. Visitors to Oatman often find the burros wandering the streets, seemingly unfazed by the presence of people, cars, or shops. While they are wild animals, the burros are known for their friendly demeanor, often approaching tourists in search of food. Feeding the burros has become a popular activity, although it's important to note that feeding them anything other than hay cubes, which are sold in local stores, is discouraged to keep the animals healthy. Each morning, the burros come down from the hills to interact with tourists and enjoy the attention. By evening, they return to the desert hills that surround Oatman. Despite their interactions with people, they are still considered wild animals and are protected by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. The population is carefully managed to ensure the burros do not overgraze the land or become too dependent on human-provided food.

For many tourists, the chance to see and interact with the burros is a highlight of visiting Oatman. The sight of these gentle creatures wandering through the streets adds to the town's old-time charm. Photographers, animal lovers, and history buffs alike find joy in capturing images of the burros against the backdrop

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of the town's historic wooden storefronts and rugged desert landscape. Visitors are encouraged to approach the burros slowly and respectfully. While the animals are generally friendly, they are still wild and can be unpredictable. Families with children often find the experience particularly exciting, as kids delight in seeing these animals up close.

Beyond the burros, Oatman offers a variety of other attractions that transport visitors back to the days of the Wild West. Gunfight reenactments take place regularly on Main Street, with actors portraying scenes from the town's lawless past. Souvenir shops sell Old West-themed trinkets, and the Oatman Hotel, a historic building said to be haunted, offers a glimpse into the town's storied history. The burros of Oatman, AZ, are more than just a quirky tourist attraction; they are a living link to the town's mining past and a testament to the resilience of nature. These animals, once abandoned by the miners who depended on them, have carved out their own place in the wild, while still maintaining a special bond with the people of Oatman. For visitors, interacting with these burros offers a rare and unforgettable glimpse into the history and heart of the Old West, making Oatman a truly unique destination. Whether you're a history enthusiast, an animal lover, or just looking for a fun, family-friendly adventure, the burros of Oatman are sure to leave a lasting impression.

NOTE: The information from this article was obtained through CHAT GBT. This general information is not copyrighted.



PRESIDENTS CORNER

Hi, well here it is October and hard to believe heat is still with us. Hopefully, soon we really will see Fall. The Grand Opening of our new wing was held on 10/11 at the museum, and it was wonderful. We had quite a large group of about 70. We had the Crepe Guy come and serve coffee and crepes that were unbelievably delicious. We all got in the picture of the ribbon cutting and guess what, I got to cut the ribbon, which was pretty special. Anyway, I want to thank everyone who came and made this a special day. I did stay for several hours more as we had about 23 more visitors on that day. So anyway, it was a great day and thank you everyone for making our Grand Opening for our new building very special.

I am also hoping that our membership grows. And also that we can gain a few more volunteers. We are splitting days, so some do not have to stay for so many hours. If you know anyone who wishes to volunteer, please tell them to come in and sign up. There are many different kinds of things to do. What is your talent?

If there's anything that you have to donate or want to have the archival committee check it out and see if it's a good fit for the museum, please contact the museum at 928-754-3399.

Also, don't forget voting is coming up. For more information call Ellen Brown as she is in charge of voting this year.

Of note; our hours of operation at the museum now are Tuesday to Saturday 10:00 to 4:00 and if we don't see anybody by 3:00 we close and as always, if you have any questions concerning the museum please call me at 928-219-2582 or call the museum at 928-754-3399.

See you next month!

Sincerely
Karole Finkelstein
President

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:

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|----------------------------------|------------|
| Docent | Handyman |
| Gardener | Data Entry |
| Teachers | Marketing |
| Fundraising & Event Coordinators | |

NEWS FROM THE CURATORS DESK

This past July, Collections Archivist, Pat Herzig and Librarian, Irene Holiman, submitted a grant application to the Arizona Historical Society to fund our project titled, *Archival Records Storage Project*. I am pleased to announce that we received official notice that our request has been approved for funding in the amount of \$1,750.00.

The requested funds will be used to purchase archival quality storage containers to preserve and store the museums' archival collection which includes historical documents such as those of the Soto family who are a prominent ranching family in the Mohave Valley. The archive also houses the professional papers of the renowned miner and inventor, R. L. Dimmick, which relates to mining in this area including mine claims. Other collection documents include information on construction of the dams along the Colorado River, as well as history of the steamboats which were used to transport goods between the Pacific Ocean ports and the settlements, military forts, and mines along the Colorado River. Another large collection in the archive are photographs, negatives and film, including a recent donation from the Laughlin, Nevada Chamber of Commerce featuring people, special events and images of the changing landscape in our area.

The members of the Collections Committee are appreciative of this funding opportunity and thrilled that we will be able to properly care for the numerous materials entrusted to the museum, guaranteeing the collection's preservation for future use and our ability to share the significant history of our area.

Carla Lucas

CRHS Curator

SEEKING COLLECTION DONATIONS

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

◆ 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.

GIFT SHOP NEWS

Our museum store now features, "Flavors of the Southwest". Amongst other delectable items, we are featuring Anasazi Beans. The "Anasazi" were Indians who lived in the four corners area of Arizona. To complete your southwestern meal, we offer a cheesy corn bread mix. Tempt your family and friends to cactus candies for dessert!



Grand Opening of Our New Storage Wing October 11th 2024



EVENTS CALENDAR

All events are at the museum unless otherwise stated

Guest Speaker—Luis Vega:

Join us for a fun and informative evening about 4 wheeling and hiking in the area.

Nov20th 2024 - Wednesday 5:30 pm-7pm(AZ time)

4 WHEEL DRIVE ROADS OF MOHAVE COUNTY, ARIZONA

The Colorado River Museum welcomes Luis Vega. He will be giving a talk and photo presentation "Getting to Know the Neighborhood"

Luis lives in Kingman where he consults for mining companies, conducts prospecting for his own account and occasionally writes a column for the Kingman Daily Miner. He and his wife Paula, have written five books:

- 4 Wheel Drive Roads of Mohave County
- 4 Wheel Drive Roads of Yavapai County
- 4 Wheel Drive Roads of La Paz and Yuma Counties
- Mohave County Hiking Trails
- Call Out (a book on Search and Rescue)

20 NOVEMBER - WEDNESDAY
5:30-7:00 PM (AZ TIME)
AT THE COLORADO RIVER MUSEUM
1239 HWY 95 - BULLHEAD CITY, AZ 86429
(IN BHC COMMUNITY PARK)
928-754-3399

4th Annual Patron Event "New Year at Your Museum":

January 21th 2025 - Wednesday 5pm-6:30pm(AZ time)

Pioneer Family Tips:

courtesy of the Mohave Museum of History & Arts

Clothspins Won't Freeze

Clothspins soaked in strong salt brine won't freeze on the line in the winter. ~Kate Gardner

Making Extracts

Lemon Extract

Put the rind of 3 lemons into half a pint of alcohol. In 4 days pour off into a bottle and add 1 ounce oil of lemon. This will make a strong flavor at less than half price.

Vanilla Extract

Get 3 fresh vanilla beans from a druggist, break them in small pieces, and put them into 1/2 pint alcohol. It will be fit for use in a few days.

WORD PUZZLE

Burros of Oatman

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

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|---------|-------------|-----------|
| BLACK | VISITORS | OATMAN |
| SPIRIT | PROSPECTORS | TOURISTS |
| WEST | HEAVY | OVERGRAZE |
| ROAMING | RUGGED | BURROS |
| ICONIC | ANIMALS | GENTLE |
| SYMBOLS | ABANDONED | WOODEN |

September 2024 Crossword Puzzle answers: Mojave Road

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



**COLORADO RIVER
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MUSEUM**

1239 Highway 95 PO Box 1599
Bullhead City, AZ 86429 Bullhead City, AZ 86430

Phone: 928-754-3399
Email: CRHSmuseum@outlook.com
Web: coloradriverhistoricalsociety.org/
Hours of Operations:
Tuesday—Saturday 10:00am - 4:00pm
(last admittance 3:00pm)

Grapevine News Editor - Laurie Thompson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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- Jim Lucas - 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.

**VOLUNTEER
SHOUT-OUTS**

Volunteers Ray & Carol Wesch



Thank you both Ray and Carol for all your help with setting up and working our events at the museum. Come see both Ray & Carol on Thursdays at the museum.

Volunteer Ray Wesch



Also, thanks to Ray for taking on the job of Educational Programs Coordinator. This is an important part for teaching the local school children about our Tri-state area.