

Grapewine News



COLORADO RIVER HISTORICAL
SOCIETY MUSEUM

Treasure Hunting in the Desert

Early tales tell of naughty children finding only a lump of coal in their stocking on Christmas morning.... today there are many that search the desert for similar stones.... and exhibit a great deal of excitement after finding only a tiny nugget shining in their pan. Today's article is about those men and women that spend time looking for those shiny objects strewn about the landscape.

To the untrained eye, the desert landscape seems composed primarily of sand, dirt, and scattered dry brush. However, there is much treasure to be found if you take the time to look. Scientists tell us of geological forces moving continents and uplifting mountains. These same forces created tremendous heat and formed hot lava that spewed forth from volcanoes and covered the surrounding earth. The molten lava, called magma, cooled and hardened into primarily igneous rock. One such volcanic caldera is reported to have been over twelve miles wide, located between the Black Mountains and Colorado River. Evidence of the now cooled lava can sometimes be seen along mountainsides, or highway cuts, layered with other materials, all accumulated over eons of time. The magma also contained various minerals and metals, such as gold and silver, as well as the many different forms of the semi-precious stones of interest.

The American West was settled primarily with those seeking their fortune. Early Spaniards searched the southwest looking for the fabled "Seven Cities of Cibola" hoping to duplicate the riches found in Peru and other South American countries. Later, trappers traveled the rivers and streams to trap beaver and other fur-bearing animals for their pelts, much valued in England at the time. Then gold was discovered in the mountains of California causing a world-wide stampede of people hoping to get their portion of the gold. A few decades later this was repeated with the finding of gold in the Klondike area of northern Canada. Some, arriving late, returned to "less fertile" ground that had been passed over in the rush to the goldfields of California. Thus was developed the silver mines of Virginia City and the gold and silver mines in northwest Arizona.

This is the legacy for many of those living, or visiting, in the southwest today. Some with pick and shovel, maybe using a gold pan, and some with more modern devices such as metal detectors and/or dry-washers, they too, scour the mountains and deserts for their share of the riches. The amateur prospector, not wishing to make the investment or provide

the storage related to the more modern tools, consider the following. Using a whisk broom and dustpan from the kitchen closet, sweep up material from the bedrock of dry stream beds. Work on the downstream side of large rocks or other obstructions which may have slowed the rush of water and allowed the heavier material to fall out. An oversize screwdriver can be used to pry open crevices and cracks which often trap the smaller nuggets. Use plastic pails to hold the collected material until it can be panned in the



convenience of the shade and comfort of your backyard. Note: label each pail as to the precise location from which it was obtained should you be fortunate enough to find sufficient cause to wish to return for more of the same. Many are pleased to find the semi-precious stones such as onyx, fire agate, jasper and chalcedony that are to be discovered about the area. These can be cut and polished to appear jewel-like and become beautiful ornaments. Geodes are another beautiful find, with their beautiful crystalline treasure hidden inside an otherwise seemingly ordinary rock. Quartz is another beautiful stone that comes in many varieties. Many amateur collectors simply search for unusual or pretty shapes. Still others enjoy the search for arrowheads and pottery shards which tell a story of ancient peoples who inhabited this land long before our arrival, although it is illegal to collect native American artifacts on public lands.

Now, there are those who may consider these pursuits as trivial but to you it is important. What others think is of no consequence. What is important is the feeling of satisfaction one feels when finding a nugget in the gold pan, an intact arrowhead along the trail, or maybe a bit of meteorite on a

con't on pg 2

con't from pg 1

dry lakebed. Also provided is bright sunshine, fresh air, and freedom from the TV set. More important is it provides a purpose. And with a friend or a group it provides a common purpose. The two following items provide proof that such interest is not just a fad or passing fancy. Quartzite, Arizona, once only a spot on the map of Interstate 10 that travelers passed through at freeway speeds, now attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors to more than nine different shows during the winter months of January and February. These shows provide rocks, gemstones, minerals, etc. all collected from the far corners of the globe. Examples include semi-trailers of crystals from Arkansas, jade from Brazil, gems from Alaska, ad infinitum. The original Tucson Gem & Mineral Show has now grown to over thirty different shows, all held at the same time at different venues, and attracting many, many thousands of visitors during the early winter months. There are local clubs, state and national organizations that provide information and opportunities to assist in your search. These groups share common interests, provide information and encouragement, and occasional field trips. Others have private claims that allow members to use at their convenience. There are many online resources as well: the International Gem Society (gemsociety.org), rockseeker.com, howtofindrocks.com, and rockhoundresource.com to name a few. These sites provide a lot of information on rockhounding particular to the area you are searching. Museums often have rock and mineral exhibits that can explain the areas they are found, what, if any, commercial uses exist, as well as provide beautiful specimens to admire. The University of Arizona Alfie Norville Gem & Mineral Museum in Tucson is one example. The Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. has many of their collections available online at www.si.edu/spotlight/geogallery.

One final thought: beware of local and state regulations. Though it may seem perfectly harmless to collect rocks lying about, there are nevertheless many rules regarding this activity, depending on the area in which you are looking. BLM land is generally safe for rockhounding. Arizona State Trust Land does not permit rockhounding, nor do the National Parks. As for private land, you must of course have permission of the owner.

To conclude this Christmas story, some suggestions for a small gift or stocking stuffer would be one of the many books on the subject of rockhounding and gold prospecting. Perhaps something for the tool bag such as a magnet, a magnifying glass, maybe a rock pick.

Good hunting and Merry Christmas!!



PRESIDENTS CORNER

Hi and Happy December. We have been very busy with many special things going on. The new building is going very quickly because of Pueblo Construction and Larry Adams. The Educational Garden is looking fabulous with new donations that have been made so now we have many light lamp posts for the garden.

On Dec 7 the Bullhead City police department came in with the Santa sleigh and about 50 or 60 children with their parents showed up. The kids got to visit with Santa and get some small gifts, chocolate and cookies. It was so awesome, hope we get to do again next year. Thank you volunteers who helped, Robbie Adams, Denise Vallon, Laurie Thompson, Susana Van Sloten, Faith de la Torre, and Tami McKinley.

Also, just had our volunteer Christmas party at Laurie Thompsons house, it was so awesome with plenty of food, fun and a gift exchange.

I want everyone to know anytime you need to talk or ask questions please call me at 928-219-2582 and I will try to answer as many questions as possible. Anyway, have a Great December and happy New Year and don't forget to stop by the Museum .

May our new year bring great things to the museum hopefully more memberships and donations

Sincerely
Karole Finkelstein
President

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Remember, December is the month that your 2023 membership expires. We sent out a reminder letter recently to renew your membership to all of you that are coming due.

Thank you again for all your support!

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

WORD PUZZLE

Treasure Hunting in the Desert

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

ARROWHEADS

COAL

GEMS

LANDSCAPE

ONYX

QUARTZ

TRAIL

CALDERA

CONTINENTS

GEODES

MINERALS

PELTS

SAND

VOLCANIC

CIBOLA

CRYSTALLINE

JEWEL

NUGGET

POTTERY

TALES

Nov 2023 puzzle answers: Maynard Dixon

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

ALL DECKED OUT FOR THE SEASON

MERRY CHRISTMAS



GIFT SHOP NEWS

Don't forget to stop by and do some of your Christmas shopping at the museum. We have lots of gifts for kids such as puzzles, books, and don't forget the Walters stuffed animal.



EVENTS CALENDAR

All events are at the museum unless otherwise stated

Fort Mojave tribe - Paul Jackson:

Paul the tribes historian will talk on the river and Spirit mountain. He is also going to bring some of the Mojave dancers.

January 17th 2023 - Wednesday 5:00pm - 6:30pm

Debbie Miler-Marschke - Olive Oatman :

Debbie does a full costume presentation of Olive Oatman.

Coming this Spring - Date TBD



Santa's Visit to the Museum Dec 7th

New Building Addition Update:

The museums' new addition is moving along at lightning speed. We are looking forward to our move-in date. We are especially excited about the work area which will consist of commercial grade stainless steel counters and sinks for cleaning and repairing of the artifacts.





**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: 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
- Laurie Thompson – Director
- Robbie Adams – Director
- Denise Vallon – Director
- Jim Lucas - Director
- Mary Wall – Director

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.

SEEKING DONATIONS FOR OUR COLLECTION

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.

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

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 |
| Research | Librarian |
| Fundraising & Event Coordinators | |