

Grapewine News



COLORADO RIVER HISTORICAL
SOCIETY MUSEUM

Padre Francisco Garcés - Missionary/Explorer

Francisco Hermenegildo Tomás Garcés was born in Morata del Conde, Spain on April 13, 1738, and died on July 19, 1781. As a young boy he felt he had a calling from God to become a Spanish Franciscan priest and missionary. Garcés was ordained in 1763, and served at the Franciscan college of Santa Cruz in Queretaro. In 1768, when the King of Spain expelled the Jesuits from their mission fields in the New World, Garcés was among the group of priests from Queretaro College that replaced them and took over responsibility in Sonora and southern Arizona. His exploration and missionary career in the southwestern USA would begin.



Padre Garcés was assigned to San Xavier de Bac near present day Tucson in 1768. The Franciscans recognized the desirability of establishing a connection with New Spain through the region of the lower Colorado River. The good padre became a key player in that effort. Garcés had a spirit of adventure that was greater than his fear of the desert or its inhabitants, human or otherwise. He conducted extensive explorations in the

intervening, unsettled region of the Colorado and Mojave deserts and northern Arizona. He sometimes did this on his own, however, at least two of the explorations were in conjunction with the soldier/explorer Juan Bautista de Anza. They explored the Gila and Colorado River Valleys, both down the Colorado River to the Gulf of California, up the river to the Grand Canyon, and overland to the Hopi villages. These expeditions took place from 1774 – 1776.

Along with his passion to explore, his mission was to be-friend the Native Americans of the Southwest

in order to promote peace among the tribes and introduce them to Christianity. Padre Garcés became the first European to meet the Mojave Indians in 1776, however, it is debated by some that Coronado was in the region some 200 years before.

By all accounts Francisco was a kind and honest man who was concerned about the spiritual welfare of his fellow man, especially the Native Americans. [con't on pg 2](#)

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He knew that in order to obtain the trust of the indigenous people he would have to assimilate into their culture. He assimilated so well that some thought that he appeared to be a native himself.

Padre Garcés was looking to explore a practical route from Arizona to northern California. After gaining the friendship of the Mojave Tribe, the Native Americans accompanied Garcés on his journey to the coast. Garcés's route, which also



took him through Chemehuevi lands and was documented in great detail in his diary, became known to later travelers as the Mojave Road. This diary is assumed to be the first written account of exploration in the Mojave Desert area.

Father Garcés was a brave but somewhat naive man and put his trust in Spain and the Mexican government. In 1779, Garcés was assigned to the ill-fated hybrid mission to establish Spanish colonies on the Colorado River among the Quechan and Yuma Tribes at Yuma Crossing. He, Juan Diez and other Franciscan missionaries established two settlements along the river. The Spanish settlers were disruptive to the two tribes, and showed little respect for their land and culture.

They were all killed there during the Yuma uprising. Padres Díaz and Moreno were killed on July 17 and Padres Garcés and Barreneche died on July 19, 1781. Garcés spent thirteen years of his life dedicated to exploration and missionary work.

As recounted in *The Making of a Martyr: The Young Francisco Garcés*, by John L. Kessel: "On that sweltering day, July 17th, 1781, the Yuma ran wild. Yelling as they came, they swept over the two intrusive Spanish settlements, the garrison missions meant to hold the Yuma Crossing and simultaneously civilize a heathen people. In their wrath they killed, slashed, and burned: they ripped altar linens into loincloths and before they were done with it, they beat to death their missionaries, four Franciscans, one of whom they decapitated."

Garcés and one other friar escaped the initial onslaught, but were found two days later and killed. Padre Francisco Garcés was stationed in the southwest for thirteen years. He is considered to be a martyr.

Two memorials to Padre Garcés are located in Bakersfield, California. One is a statue that is located at the Garcés Memorial Circle on Chester Avenue. The other is Garcés Memorial High School, which is the city's Catholic high school.



WORD PUZZLE

Padre Francisco Garcés

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

ASSIMILATED
 CHEMEHUEVI
 CHRISTIANITY
 CULTURE
 EXPLORE
 FRANCISCO

GARCES
 GILA
 JESUITS
 MISSION
 MISSIONARY

MOJAVE
 PADRE
 PEACE
 PRIEST
 SPAIN
 YUMA

June2023 puzzle answers: Avi Kwa Ame

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

PRESIDENTS CORNER

Hi Hot July,

So many special things going on at the museum. First of all, we had the opening of the educational garden it definitely was a hit over 100 people showed up including the city, the press and other medias. The refreshments were a success and were depleted quickly.

We at the museum are so happy for this beautiful memorial to our community. This is a long time coming and a special thank you to Laurie Thompson and her crew for making this a reality. Well, the July 10th event with the Parks and Recreation department was quite a success. Several programs went on with the different age groups, but I think the gold mining was the biggest hit. Thank you Claire and your staff for helping with this project. We are hoping to continue with these programs coming this Fall.

Thank you Laurie Thompson, Mary Ragusa, Pat Herzig, Robbie Adams, Richard Dotson and Denise Vallon for all of the expertise with the children. The hard work and dedication of all involved with our museum volunteers, sponsors, businesses and the city have made all this possible I am so proud to be the president of the Colorado River Historical Society and Museum.

We are very happy to announce that shortly we will be starting the building of the new addition Not sure when but hopefully soon. Keep listening and the date will be announced.

And again thank you to all the volunteers. Without you we couldn't continue as a museum and the historical society.

If you need any questions answered or have suggestions or would like to become a volunteer or sponsor please call me anytime at 928-219-2582

Sincerely,
 Karole Finkelstein, President

EVENTS CALENDAR

All events are at the museum unless otherwise stated

No museum events are scheduled through the summer. Watch for information on our event program starting in September

Seek peek at the upcoming Fall Event Season:



Debbie Miller-Marschke does a full costume presentation of Olive Oatman, covering her life from the time the family left Illinois on a wagon train, to the massacre that took almost her entire family's lives near Yuma, her captivity by the Apache and Mojave tribes, her life among the Mojave in the Mohave Valley and Needles area, her return to Ft. Yuma, and finally her later life.

GIFT SHOP NEWS

Featured Items:

Tee Shirts, Tee Shirts and Tee-shirts

Available in the gift shop now.

Youth Grey Camel - \$10.00

Women's Grey Camel \$15.00

Regular All Sizes, Colors - \$15.00

Pocket Tees \$17.00



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 |
| Fundraising & Event Coordinators | |

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

With summer here and things starting to heat up, the number of visitors that come to the museum has declined some. If you haven't been in lately, this is a good time to stop by and see what's new in our displays.

Remember, we have an all-volunteer staff that oversees the operations of the museum, all the monies collected from membership fees go directly to the costs of the operation of the museum (other than staffing), new display items, and future expansion of the museum.

Thank you again for all your support!

GRAND OPENING OF THE EDUCATION GARDENS

Our grand opening event of the Educational Gardens on June 23 was a huge success. With the help of both the Bullhead City and Laughlin Chambers of Commerce, we were able to pull it off without a hitch. Special thanks to all of our wonderful volunteers from the museum that helped out with the refreshments and in general being on hand to help with the crowd. Every room of the museum was full of people including Mayor D'Amico with many other city dignitaries. We had the city media group documenting the event as well as the Mohave Daily News. The official sign in sheet topped 120 but there were more like 200 people that in attendance.

We were able to spend time outside showing off the new native flora and fauna displays. A total of 6 new displays are in the backyard area including a Cactus Hill, our Prehistoric display (where our alleged dinosaur footprint is), on to the Mojave tribe, Pioneer, Mining displays and the wonderful Mural wall serving as our fauna display. There are an additional 2 displays outside the yard, the Davis Dam replica and Moss Mine headframe.

Simon Garcia of the Mojave tribe, along with some of his men, came up the week before and finished the Mojave shade structure. Craig Steinle, the mural artist, was on hand talking about the mural he has created on the back of the schoolhouse depicting Spirit Mountain with some native plants and animals.

We were able to show off our wonderful amphitheater built by the Mohave High School woodshop class under the direction of coach Rudy Olvera and the gold panning table in the mining area built by the Academy of Building Industries kids woodshop class under the direction of Paula DeShaw.





**COLORADO RIVER
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MUSEUM**

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Hours of Operations:
Tuesday—Saturday 10:00am - 2:00pm
(last admittance 1:00pm)

Grapevine News Editor - Laurie Thompson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

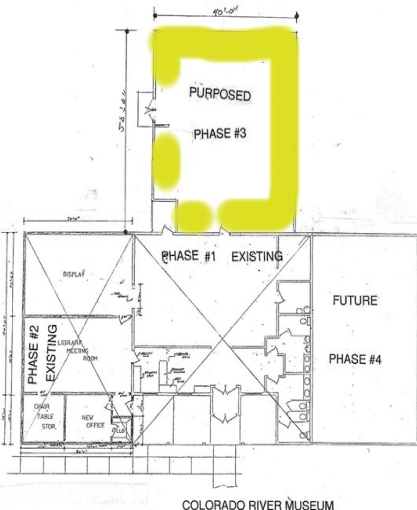
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- Denise Vallon – Director
- Barbara Brandt - Director
- Jim Lucas – Director

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.

Museum Phase 3 Update

We are pleased to announce the funds have been raised to start our next phase of the museum building. This addition will store our archives and collections not presently displayed in the museum. Also, with this addition we will also have an area to do maintenance and repair on our artifacts as needed.



Seeking Donations for Our Collection

We are 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.