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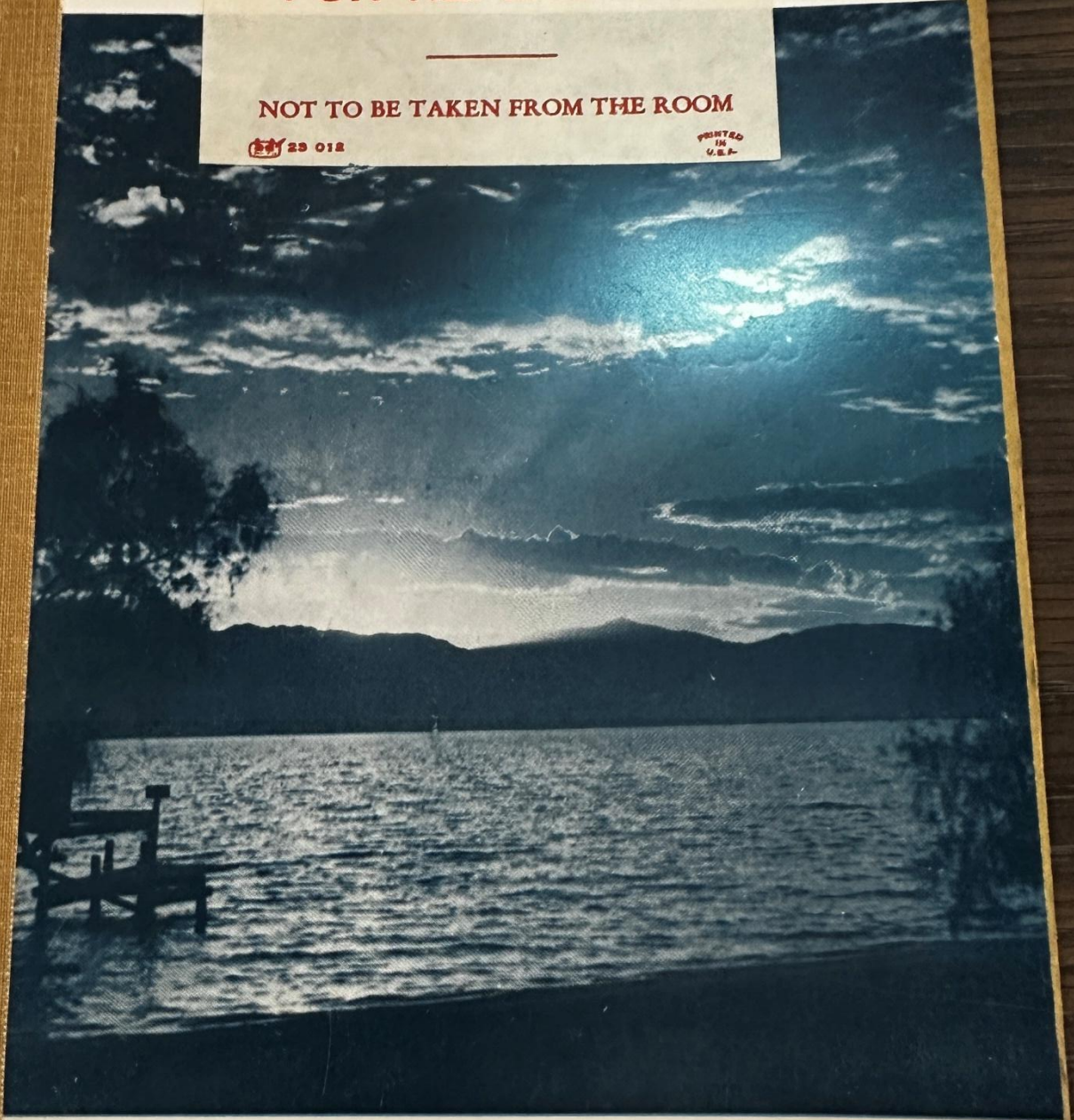
# Salton Sea Story...

**FOR REFERENCE**

**NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THE ROOM**

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**By Helen Burns**

*To my father and his great faith  
in the future of the Salton Sea.*

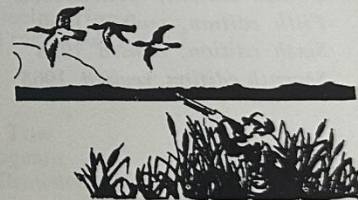


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## SALTON SEA STORY

By HELEN BURNS



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BY *Helen Burns*  
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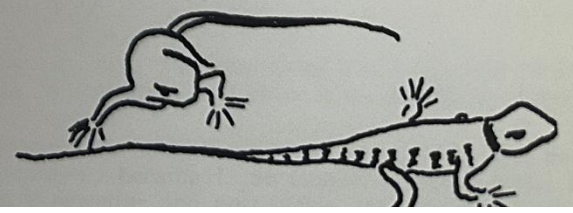
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## Introduction

After having lived at Salton Sea Beach (on the shores of the Salton Sea) during the reportedly unbearable months of June, July, August and September, with no cooling system other than sea breezes, I am compelled to let it be known (first of all) that it is entirely bearable, pleasant and even enjoyable in this "off season."

There are early-morning strolls along the beach; breezes felt coming from across the Sea, leaving dancing ripples in their wake; steak, corn and potatoes over an open fire; swimming by moonlight; and through it all the ever-changing panorama of sky, land and water.

Yes it is delightful—even in summer; and my love for this glistening desert sea, with its surroundings of magnificent color and form, gave me the desire to learn all about it. I had not the slightest difficulty in obtaining my information, for many I approached spoke fluently about its history and present status, but the information I gathered was most confusing. It was, in part, as follows:

The Salton Sea is a dry lake, a mirage.

The Salton Sea is bottomless in some places. You can walk across the Salton Sea anywhere. It came gushing out of a hole in the ground. It came from the Gulf of Mexico. It came from the Colorado River at Yuma.

At the time the water came in, many people and animals were drowned, as there were ranches in the Salton Basin and the water poured in like an avalanche. At the time the water came in, a railroad and salt mine were in the Basin and there was time to take out the equipment before any damage was done.

The water is not clean. The water contains minerals which are wonderfully healthful and have marvelous healing qualities.

It is salty because of evaporation. It is salty because it came from the Gulf. It is salty because of the salt beds.

There are tarpon, sea bass, mullet and corvina in the Sea. There is only one kind of fish in the Sea.

Shells found in the soil are ancient seashells; the shells found in the soil are soft-water shells brought in by the Colorado River.

Salton Sea is receding. Salton Sea is rising.

The Salton Sea is treacherous. The Salton Sea has no tides and no undercurrents and is remarkably safe—ideal for children and those who don't swim.

Its waters are warm all year around. Its waters are cold in winter.

The only place to hunt is in the reeds along the Alamo and New Rivers. The best place to find ducks and geese is in the middle of the Sea. (See Page 18)

The more I persisted, the more inconsistent my information became and the more confused became I. So finally, in self-defense, I "took to" the library, typewriter and post office. After much search and a great deal of exploring, I found the facts concerning this fascinating Sea and surrounding area. They are set down on the following pages for those who pass this way.



## *Impressions*

The summer visitor to the Colorado Desert finds, set in shimmering sands and pale blue skies, a vast Sea, the limits of which are beyond his sight. He turns from the highway to the shores of the Salton Sea, where he breathes deeply of the clean salt air, delights in the gentle breezes, revels in the deep blue of the waters and the myriad shades in the mountains surrounding them. He is lulled by the waves lapping softly on the sands. He watches a bird floating dreamily overhead; a white sail far out catches his eye. Such peace! He likes it. He wants to stay.

Though the winter visitor may see much the same picture, still a more restless exciting scene may greet him. In the winter and spring months strong winds occur in the Desert-Sea area making patterns in the sand and tossing waves on high. The Sea turns green as if in envy of the boundless playground of the winds. A shrieking bird may pierce the sky, then plunge recklessly into the wildest wave, providing accent to the wave-wind roar.

This exhibition, often lasting only a few hours, though at times two or three days, lends a wild excitement which is as luring as the mild summer scene. The visitor again is pleased; he's somehow satisfied. He will return; and seeing, will know the enchantment which is bringing many here to live the year around. With each succeeding visit to this land, a stronger attachment is formed until one scarcely can let go.

There are: Summer, with its lazy-calm and gentle breezes; fall when warm days and nights linger; winter, famous for its sunshine and cool nights; and spring, when the world comes to pay tribute to Mother Nature's flower magic. (The glorious carpet of flowers in the desert is nearly as beguiling as the Sea itself; and seen together, they present a picture never to be forgotten.)



## *History*

After the wonderment at first viewing the Salton Sea, comes the question, "how?", and its history is an absorbing one.

The Colorado Desert is the upper half of a geological trough extending from the San Geronio Pass, between the San Jacinto and San Bernardino Mountains, California, to the Cape of San Lucas, Mexico. It is believed that this was all mountainous in earliest times and that the Sea occupied the whole area, making islands of the loftiest peaks and bringing many forms of sea life, fossilized beds of which are now found as high as 1,000 feet above sea level. Geologists agree that the Salton-Gulf depression was caused by a series of the earth's movements<sup>1</sup>, begun much later, about the middle of the Tertiary Age (20 million years ago). During these disturbances the earth subsided leaving a jagged scar stretched from the Gulf northward. At this time the Gulf of California swept in and an immense Sea was formed. So, for the second time the Sea occupied this area<sup>2</sup>.

The peaceful, silent panorama of Sea and mountains today give the average person little indication of the blazing fury which formed them. Indeed, no combination of words or stretch of the imagination could picture the violent upheavals which must have taken place. Mountains suddenly thrusting angry heads into the sky, some crashing into hollows far below; fiery volcanoes spewing then drooling red-hot lava streams, they creeping snakelike through the chaos; an

1. The strongest factors leading to the conclusion that the Salton Basin was formed by a settling, or falling away, rather than by erosion, are: (1) San Andreas Fault, longest on the continent, lies in a northeasterly position traceable from Santa Barbara to the east shores of the Salton Sea. (2) Obsidian Butte and Pumice Butte and the Mud Volcanoes (Solfataras) are located on the southeast rim of the Salton Sea. (3) The Santa Rosa Ridges' tilting and seeming to plunge southeastward into the desert toward the Basin. (4) Position of rockbed and soil.
2. There is some difference of opinion regarding the time of the Sea's occupation of this area, its duration and its expanse. However, it is definitely agreed that the Sea was here at one time and that the immense Lake followed at a later date.

The Sea's presence is proved by the many square miles of marine fossil beds, especially oyster shells, found here. In places these beds are 200 feet thick. The shells range from very small to some nine and ten inches across.

The highest ancient shoreline, deposits of travertine which were once under water, and many shells, along with the nature of the salt in the Basin, prove that fresh water occupied the area after the Sea.

One rather recent theory is that the Ocean came in long before the trough was formed, and at the time the earth was subsiding the delta was being formed by the Colorado, so that, contrary to the general opinion for many years, the Gulf of California never did flow into the trough. Every theory seems to be borne out by nature in some respects and contradicted in others. However, the one on which this paper is based is a generally accepted one.

inrushing torrent; sky and earth of fire and smoke and steam—and then a calm, not a thing alive to see or feel—this may well have been the beginning of the Colorado Desert and the Desert Sea as we know them today, although of course the configuration of the region in those times was a great deal different.

In these ancient times when mountains and Basin were formed and the waves of the Gulf were curling on the desert sands, a powerful river made her entrance and she still is playing the leading role in the story of the Colorado Desert. The Colorado River is rightly called the Mother of the Valley, as she built it and nourished it, and she is still supplying water and nourishment to make possible the tremendous and diversified crop yield throughout Imperial and Coachella Valleys. But this work was begun in ages past. The Colorado River carried her rich load of silt to the shallow, smooth channel of the Gulf where, on emptying into its waters, she deposited it. As she dropped this silt she began building a delta until, over a period of time, this delta extended from the Algodones Sand Hills, below the Yuma of today, to Cerro Prieto, Mexico, and it was high enough to completely divide the Gulf, cutting off this upper portion, leaving here a beautiful inland Sea. Today this delta is 100 miles wide at the base, 75 miles at sea level and rises 46 feet above sea level, where it is from 8 to 12 miles across—a mighty barrier which is not apt to be washed out or shaken down by any series of floods or earthquakes.

Then the Colorado, sometime in her meanderings, found the Basin,



*Salt being recovered from the Salton Basin in 1904.*

possibly while it still held the imprisoned waters of the Gulf. Though her waters varied in amount and their presence was spasmodic, the Sea gradually rose. The Colorado shifted her channels many times, leaving the Basin for long periods, then returning and perhaps pouring her full volume into it. At other times when she was flowing into the Gulf, her flood waters would overflow and find their way into the Trough, so that the process was variable. It is believed that the Basin experienced desiccation and refilling many times and that the Lake fluctuated for hundreds of years. Eventually, though, the Sea was displaced by fresh water, as shown by the ancient shoreline, shells and travertine (calcium carbonate deposit), which were all formed by fresh water. This immense Lake was 100 miles long and about 35 miles wide.

Because of the Indian pottery and relics still found along the old shoreline, it is known that some of the more adventurous Indians discovered this beautiful land and brought their families here. The ancient Lake and the Valley in which it settled are both known as "Cahuilla," from the Cahuilla Indians, who inhabited the area. (Lake Cahuilla is sometimes referred to as Blake Sea, for Professor William Blake, who made the first thorough scientific studies of the region.)

Then in her typical spirit of abandon the fickle Colorado turned from Lake Cahuilla and it eventually evaporated in the winds and under the blazing sun, leaving a Basin of salt beds, shells and dead fish surrounded by ringed water lines on the mountains.<sup>3</sup>

This gradual drying up of the Lake is part of the tradition of the Indians and they state that the water of the shores of the Lake retired "poco-a-poco" (little-by-little). One can imagine how, many many years after their ancestors had first come into this land, the Indians were forced to leave as the waters became salty and fish died; how they moved to the mountains above San Diego or to the Colorado River valleys, relating their strange story.

Our River, though, was not yet through with the Salton Basin. Again she began to fluctuate between the Gulf and the Cahuilla Basin, which is now referred to as Salton Sink or Salton Basin, because of the beds of salt left by the Lake. She came by the way of the Alamo River until her new banks were formed, again sending her back into the Gulf. And always when she came she brought her minerals and animal matter, enriching the soil.<sup>4</sup> It is recorded that her flood water flowed into the Salton Sink in 1840, 1842, 1852, 1859, 1862, and 1867, and some of the waters found their way into the Basin nearly every year after that.

Men saw the great possibilities for Reclamation of the Colorado Desert as early as 1852. They were considered visionary and their plans fantastic, but there was always someone interested and working for this great project; and finally, in 1896, the California Development

3. The deepest depression of the Basin contained a body of crystalline salt, which extended to a depth of 25 feet below the surface. This salt bed was being used commercially at the time of the flood in 1905. The salt found in the Basin was from the condensation of fresh water rather than the evaporation of Sea water.
4. Now the soil in the Valley has layers of colloidal clay and fine silt as deep as 1,000 feet. This has been deposited here intermittently by the Colorado. The sand in the soil is mostly that which has been washed down from the mountains. More of the sand is found in the northern part of the Basin, farthest from the River's inlet.

Company was organized. Because of lack of funds, no work was done until 1900, and it was 1902 before water was first turned into the main canal for irrigation.

One of the difficulties at first was securing a concession from the Mexican Government, as the main canals were to run through Mexican soil for several miles. This was obtained, however, the terms requiring that a head gate for taking water from the Colorado River be maintained on the Mexican as well as on the California side. (Since the construction of the All-American Canal the canals have all been north of the border. Gates at Imperial Dam, above Yuma, divert Colorado River water through the All-American Canal, and a portion of this water is subsequently diverted into Mexico at Pilot Knob, about twenty miles downstream from the Dam.)

The first canals brought water from the Colorado River to Imperial Valley, delta lands lying below sea level between the Gulf of California and the Salton Basin. A railway was constructed and towns were built, the first towns being Brawley, Imperial, Holtville, Heber and Calexico.

By September, 1904, the California Development Company had constructed over 700 miles of canals and ditches, had brought 8,000 settlers into Imperial Valley and had nearly 75,000 acres in cultivation. (In 1914 the Imperial Irrigation District was organized and in 1915 it took over the canal properties. In 1918 the Government appropriated \$15,000 and the Imperial Irrigation District contributed \$30,000 towards a complete survey and cost estimate for an All-American Canal. In 1940 waters from the All-American Canal were being used for irrigation in Imperial Valley and there are now 450,000 acres being irrigated by these waters in that Valley.)

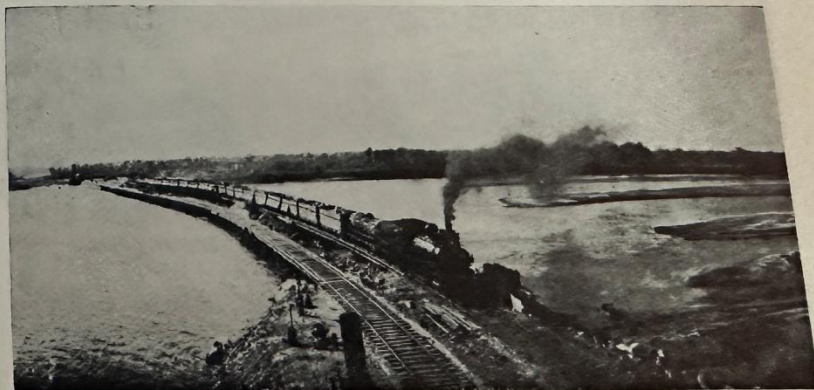
While the California Development Company was working on the construction of the Canals for reclamation of the Imperial Valley, artesian wells were supplying water for irrigation in Coachella Valley, to the north. It was in 1900, six years after the first strong flow of artesian water was obtained, that the hydraulic method of drilling was introduced into the Valley, and from that time agricultural expansion has been continuous. Indio was the trading center for the Valley, and there were settlements in Mecca, Thermal and Coachella. (The waters of the Coachella Branch of the All-American Canal were available in 1948. In 1949 regular deliveries of water commenced. This Branch of the main canal is now 124 miles long, and when all of the laterals are completed, 80,000 acres in Coachella Valley will be irrigated by its water, waters from the same River which is responsible for the area's colorful history and potential productivity.)

In the fall of 1904 the California Development Company was unable to furnish sufficient water for the winter crops because the first four miles of the canal below the River were silted so much. The floor of the head gate was only three feet below the low water elevation of the River and this was too shallow to take enough water through to prevent silting of the canal. (The Colorado is known to carry nearly ten tons of silt with every acre foot of water. The Grand Canyon is a good example of her erosive powers; for it is this mighty River which has carved a valley 217 miles long and 2,000-6,000 feet deep, bringing the rich load of silt into the Colorado Desert's valleys.)

Because of the silting, during periods of low water the California Development Company had been cutting a by-pass around the head gate to insure a sufficient flow. No damage was done as the gap was always closed before high water. This time, though, the by-pass would not be workable because of so much silt. So, after much deliberation and because of lack of time and of funds to alter the gate, they cut another channel from the River and to the canal below the silted four miles. (See map page 15.) A concession was obtained from the Mexican Government as this channel was about four miles below the Mexican boundary. It was planned to close this before the annual spring floods. The new channel was 50 feet wide and 3300 feet long. It provided ample water for the crops; but in December, when plans were being made to fill in the ditch, an early flood came rushing down the Gila River into the Colorado. An immense volume of water came through the ditch and canal. The waters cut back and widened the ditch but no harm was done. Then, before anything effective could be done, other floods of constantly increasing volume followed; and in April, 1905, the whole River tore through the ditch, her churning water defying all attempts at control. The channel had widened from the original 50 feet to 800 feet. The waters flooded and eroded farm lands in the Valley floor before they reached the Salton Basin.

A freak waterfall was formed where the flooded New River flowed into the Salton Basin. (See the historical map on page 15.) The swift churling waters washed away the sand underneath and what was at first a ripple gradually grew into a vicious cataract, as it worked its way upstream swallowing everything in its path. Families labored feverishly to harvest their crops before the oncoming roaring waters brought disaster. A picture of this phenomenon may be seen on page 13.

The California Development Company made several unsuccessful attempts to close the breach and efforts of the Federal Bureau of Reclamation were without success. In one year the cut had widened from 50 to 4,000 feet.



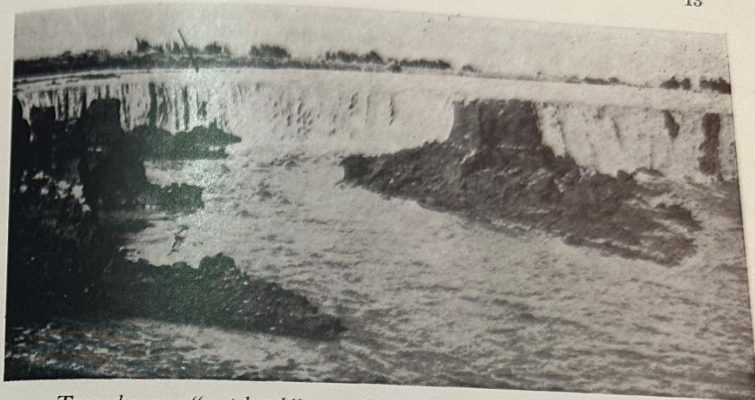
*Rocks were hauled to close the widening gap.*



*Dynamite was used in an effort to check the menacing flow.*

It was in September, 1906, after the urging of President Theodore Roosevelt, that the Southern Pacific Railway Company took over the task of diverting the runaway. The main line of the Southern Pacific Railway crossed the floors of the Salton Basin. It was moved three

times before the advancing waters. Desperate attempts were begun. Huge mattresses made of brush



*Treacherous "cut-back" running upstream from the Salton Sea.*



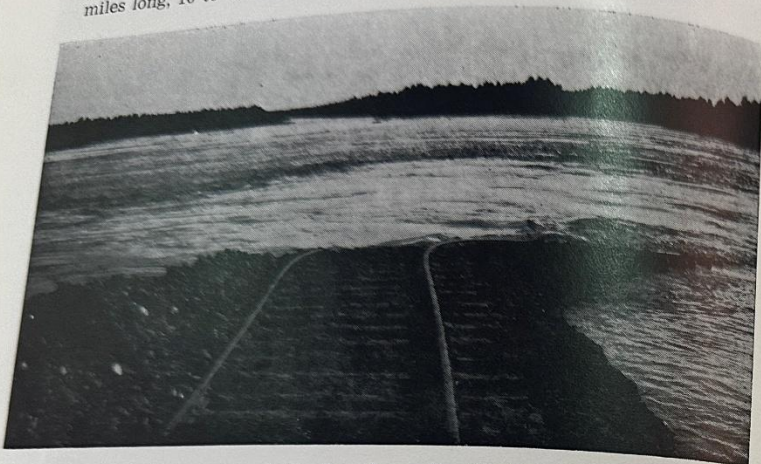
*Ranchers in Mecca fleeing from their flooded home.*

and willow trees were sewn with heavy wire and cables and fastened along each side of the bridge. Every available freight car was loaded with rocks and rushed to the scene. All quarries from here to New Orleans were used and equipment for the quick-loading of rocks was ready. Day and night rocks were dumped on the mattresses. As the rocks were piled higher the waters became more menacing and the swift raging torrents cut away the banks and were removing silt from around the rocks and mattresses. It was a terrific struggle for both man and his adversary, but the men worked swiftly and the rocks were thrown faster than the River could cut away. So, the battle

SALTON SEA STORY

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was finally won and the mighty Colorado again turned to the Gulf (February 10, 1907), leaving the beautiful Salton Sea, which is now 34 miles long, 10 to 16 miles wide with a maximum depth of 40 feet.



*Submergence of the Southern Pacific Tracks.*

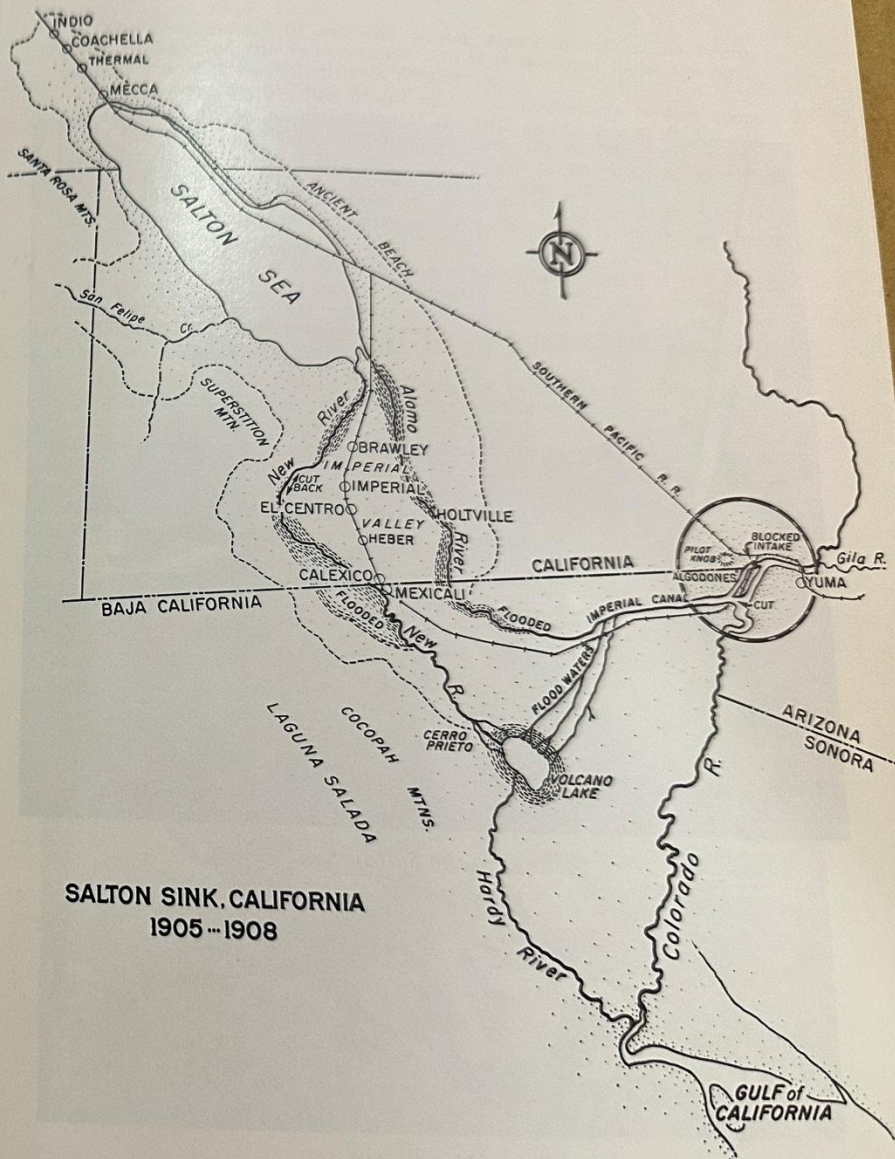


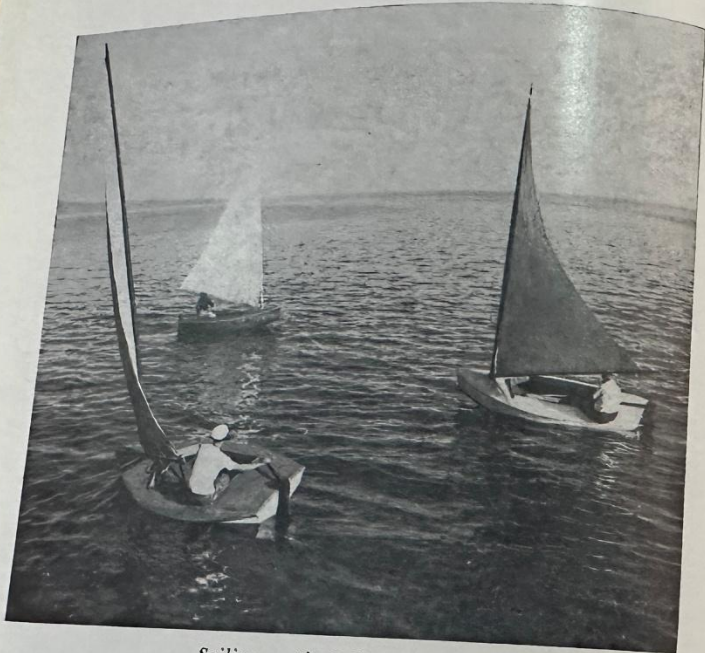
*Flood Scene 1906*

*Communities were washed away as the water flowed toward the Salton Sink.*

HISTORY OF SALTON BASIN

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*Sailing on the Salton Sea*

## *Sports*

The combination of Sea and winter sunshine makes the Salton Sea a playground the year around, and it is destined to be the most popular resort area in Southern California.

**Skiing:** The Salton Sea offers year-around pleasure in this sport and it is recognized as being one of the best skiing waters in the nation. Many of the national champions find the Salton Sea an ideal place for practice and work out. During the spring and fall months the beaches are filled with skiers waiting their turn for a tow, sunning, or watching a novice take off from shore for the first time on skis. This is a wonderful family sport, being enjoyed by those from 6 to 60.

**Swimming:** These waters could not be better adapted to the swimmer. He is buoyant; the waters are warm in summer and, though cold in winter, there is sunshine after the swim; the Sea is usually calm enough for easy swimming; and there is no danger from tides, undercurrents, holes or treacherous fish.

**Boating:** Salton Sea is known as the fastest water in the world, due to the fact that it is 232.5 feet below sea level; and with the greater water density, propellers can take a tremendous bite. There is great interest in the annual races held here. Many are bringing their boats to the Salton Sea both summer and winter. Speed-boat racing and skiing come first in popularity and sailing is a delight as winds play constantly on this desert Sea.

**Hiking:** A hike along the beach is always pleasant. Besides listening to and watching the waters, there are ever-changing colors



*"Wait a Minute"*

## SALTON SEA STORY

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in mountains and sky, and the fish jumping or birds sailing, floating dipping and diving into the Sea. Barnacles adorn driftwood, branches and rocks which are washed up on the beaches. These, and small shells and interesting rocks make treasured souvenirs for the visitor. Many who spend their vacations here have great fun exploring the mountains, studying land and soil, picking up Indian relics and unusual rocks and shells in the foothills and along the old beachline.

**Hunting:** Dove, quail, ducks and geese abound in this area and may be had in season. Duck and goose hunting is best at the south end of the Salton Sea and in Imperial Valley where there are grain and leach fields. Dove, quail, pheasant, ducks and geese can be found in the many ravines and washes in the foothills and desert bordering the Salton Sea.

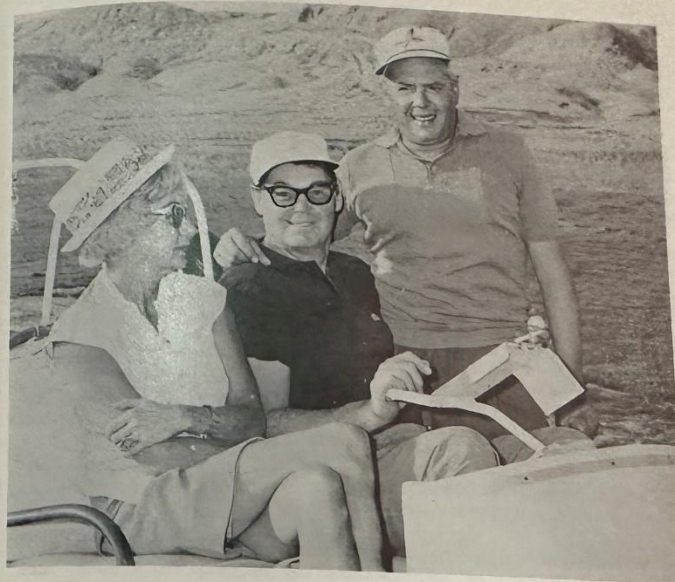
**Fishing:** Mullet formerly migrated into Salton Sea via irrigation canals from the lower Colorado River and the Gulf of California and are not now abundant because of limited water releases to the Gulf of California. Commercial fishing is no longer allowed in the Salton Sea. Mullet may be fished for at any time of the year by those with sport fishing licenses.

The corvina, which were introduced to the Salton Sea from the Gulf of California some years ago, are plentiful and being caught in abundance by sport fishermen nearly the year around. The sargo are also abundant.

**Rock Hunting:** The "Rock Hound" has one of the most absorbing hobbies, and he is nearly always well rewarded for his hikes and camping trips in this vicinity. In his collection are: chalcedony, quartz, calcite, tourmaline, garnet, serpentine, obsidian, sandstone, rainbow rock, pumice, mica, petrified wood, petrified oysters, geodes and pottery. (In the mountains above the old shoreline Indian pottery of great value has been found. See Map, back cover.)



*Waiting for a Tow*



*Desi Arnaz and Johnny Weissmuller at the Salton City Pro-Celebrity Amateur Golf Tournament this year.*

## Calendar

### JANUARY

**Sheep Shearing Contest** — Westmorland.

**Icebreakers**—Club initiation at Salton Sea Beach. All those skiing 20 miles on New Year's Day become members of the Club and receive their cards and sweater emblems, proving skiing to be a winter as well as summer sport at Salton Sea.

**Lettuce Festival**—El Centro holds its annual Lettuce Festival during the middle of the month. The festival highlights the many and diverse aspects of the multi-million dollar lettuce crop and features a queen contest, salad-tossing contests, and a Lettuce Ball.

### FEBRUARY

**National Date Festival**—The Date, Coachella Valley's unique agricultural product, inspired the brilliant festival, which is presented in

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Palm Springs, Calif.

February of each year. Throngs gather in Indio's colorful grounds, delighting over the many displays and unusual entertainment.

Each night an Arabian Nights Pageant is given in an Outdoor Theatre, permanent setting being of Old Bagdad. The visitor is completely charmed by this sparkling performance and by the exotic atmosphere in and around the grounds. Costumed localites add much to the color and brilliancy of the celebration.

**Imperial County Fair**—One can hear or read of the wonders of the Imperial Valley's agricultural attainments, but a visit to the County Fair, held in El Centro the last of February through the first few days in March each year, gives him an awe-inspiring picture of the diversity, fine quality and wealth of the Valley's remarkable industry.

**Palm Springs Golf Classic**—Played over four courses in Palm Springs and Palm Desert in February of each year. They are: Indian Wells, Bermuda Dunes, Eldorado, and Tamarisk.

**Salton City's Annual Pro-Celebrity Amateur Golf Tournament** is held at the Salton City Course the day following the Palm Springs Golf Classic.

**Russ Peck Memorial Golf Tournament**—Is held at the Barbara Worth Country Club in El Centro for the first part of February each year.

**Tomato Festival**—Niland's big annual celebration at which a queen reigns over the gala festivities.

### MARCH

**Wildflowers** bring the desert sands to life. From February through July they may be found peering brightly from bush, rock and driftwood. But in March, especially after a winter of considerable rain, they set the desert floor ablaze. Verbena outdoes them all, exhibiting solid carpets of lavender stretching for miles along the highways, to the Sea and into the foothills. Wild heliotrope and hollyhock, encelias, phacelias and beloperone, splash the landscape with their blue, flame, yellow, and red. The more observant many find beautiful waxlike blossoms, such as the hesperocallis undulatus, a lily which one is startled to see flourishing in the dry desert sands, and which compares favorably with the most choice and rare flowers to be found anywhere. The stately ocotillo is seldom seen by the passerby in the Salton Sea Desert, but it abounds in the mountains above the old shoreline. They cover the mountainsides and mesas west of Salton Sea, their tall thorny branches thickly covered with velvety green leaves leading to the flamelike tips. Their resemblance to carefully arranged torches standing high over Salton Sea would seem to complete the setting for the springtime Show.

The wildflowers' mad splurge of color extends from mid-February into April, the air is pungent with the many fragrances. Then the desert floor is left for another year with her predominant grays, browns and greens. But spring will bring another Fiesta of the Flowers, when the atmosphere will tingle with excitement over the "Big Show" of the desert.

### APRIL

**Easter Services**—Early Easter morning services are held at Travertine Rock overlooking the Salton Sea. One is deeply touched and



*Patti Carr being crowned "Miss Salton Sea"*



*Sunrise Service at Travertine Point*



*Tom Parks—National Champion and holder of Salton Sea swim record*

inspired by the sight as well as the sermon; for Christ lived in a desert land much like this and frequented the Sea of Galilee to which the Salton Sea bears such a striking resemblance. One can almost see Him speaking to His followers on the shores of the Sea or walking alone in the mountains.

**Easter** at Salton Sea Beach starts with an early Easter breakfast, children's Easter-egg hunt, and in the afternoon Boats and Bonnets Parade and Easter-egg hunt on skis. West Shore merchants join in sponsoring this event.

**Fishing Derbies** are sponsored by many communities and merchants around Salton Sea: Westmorland, Calipatria, Niland, North Shore, the West Shore and Bombay Beach each have their own celebrations. Helen's Beach House at Salton Sea Beach features a three month derby starting in April.

**Cotton Carnival—Calexico—Annual Pet Parade**—In El Centro, during the latter part of April. Kids enter pets, bicycle floats and costumes in a well-attended kids parade.

**Spring Season**—Is in full swing at Salton Sea with many boat and ski events taking place. Clubs and resorts plan week-end festivities.

## MAY

**Salton Sea Swim Championship** held the first Sunday in May each year, when internationally famous athletes test their endurance and speed in a one and two-way swim across Salton! The first event was held in March, 1954 when Ray Carmassi crossed after a second attempt. Tom Park holds the record of 4 hrs. and 9 minutes, set in 1956. Greta Anderson now holds the one-way record for women of 4 hrs. and 25 minutes, also set in 1956. Amy Hiland, of Long Beach, has the two-way record of 14 hours and 57 minutes for the 21-mile swim.

**Anniversary Celebration** with Fireworks.

**Corn Festival**—During the last of May this festival is held in Coachella's shopping district. Valley residents and visitors enjoy ball games, dancing, gay carnival and entertainment by Coachella's local talent.

**Cantaloupes**—These melons are harvested from the middle of May into early July in Imperial Valley. These are the nation's earliest melons.

## JUNE

**Salton Sea Bathing Beauty Contest**—Takes place in June. The chosen Miss Salton Sea presides over all activities on the Salton Sea.

**Grape Harvest**—Thompson Seedless grapes, the earliest in the country, are harvested in June and July—Coachella Valley.

## JULY

**Helldivers**—Salton Sea's biggest summer sports event is the Helldiver's initiation which takes place on the Fourth of July at Helens Salton Sea Beach. Over one hundred skiers make the trip across Salton and return each year to become members of this novel club.

## SEPTEMBER

**Dates**—There are two types of date grown in the Coachella Valley; soft dates, which ripen rapidly and are harvested in September; and the Deglet-Noor, most widely grown here and ripening from September through February. The Deglet-Noors can be kept for long periods of time, while the soft dates are quite perishable.

The dry air prevailing in the Coachella Valley during August and September is well suited to the Deglet-Noor, which is very sensitive to atmospheric conditions, especially during the ripening periods. Coachella Valley is the only section of the United States where this date is grown, and it is considered the finest in the world.

The date trees were originally imported from Africa and countries around the Persian Gulf, and the date industry started in Coachella Valley in 1904.

**Aquacade**—Westmorland presents the Aquacade, when a queen is selected from the Salton Sea and Imperial Valley to reign over the many events.

## SALTON SEA STORY

## OCTOBER

**Duck and Goose Hunting.**

**Salton Sea Regatta**—In the Fall of each year, spectacular speed-boat races are held at the Salton Sea. This is a world-famous event and as many as 125 top-ranking inboard and outboard drivers (from the midget outboard to the Gold Cup Class) from all over the country participate. Many existing records have been set here and it is a thrilling experience to see these speedy craft vie for the championship.

**Cotton Carnival**—In late October, during the cotton-picking season, this gay event is celebrated in Calexico with entertainment booths, dancing and games.

**Cattle Call**—This event features an outstanding rodeo, western parade and relating events. It is held in Brawley.

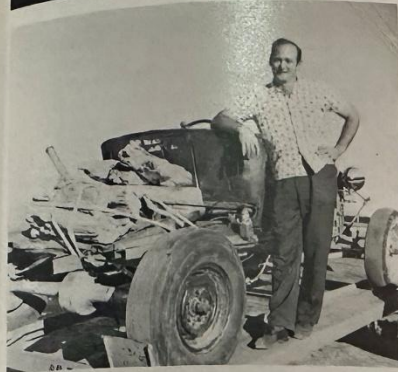
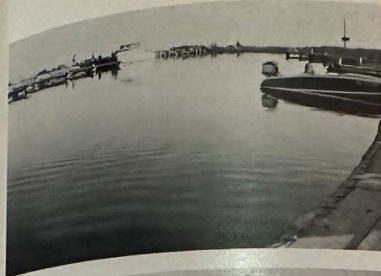
## NOVEMBER

**500-Mile Race** held at Salton City annually. This is a world-famous event. Sponsors are the Salton Sea Recreational Foundation and United Speedboat Association. There is \$12,500 given in prize money. Three classes may enter this race: Unlimited Inboards, Unlimited Single Engine Outboards, and Unlimited Twin Engine Outboards.

## DECEMBER

**Santa's Christmas Island Festival**—held along Salton's West Beaches. This is an event much looked forward to by small fry and adults as well. Santa and his helpers arrive at the Beach on skis. This takes place the Sunday before Christmas and is sponsored by business people and residents at Salton Sea Beach. A Christmas Island theme is followed throughout the holiday season at Salton Sea Beach.

**Christmas Parade**—Sponsored by Los Vigilantes, of El Centro, boasts entries from all over Imperial Valley. Biggest thrill is Santa Claus, who is brought into town aboard a 100-year-old stagecoach.



## Places of Interest

See Map—Back Cover

**THE ANZA-BORREGO DESERT STATE PARK** lies off Highway 99 to the west. Its boundaries are irregular but it covers 450,000 acres in all, which comprises 75 per cent of the California State Park areas.

State park officials are dedicated to the maintenance of the desert in its natural state, and visitors delight at the variety of plant and animal life and the diversity of geological formations throughout the park. Elevations in the park rise from near sea level to 6,000 feet in the San Ysidro Mountains, which accounts for the wealth of scenery.

One may reach the park by driving west on the Truckhaven Trail, by taking Highway 78 or Highway 80 to the West.

**PAINTED CANYON** is located a few miles off highway 195, just east of Mecca. The road up the Canyon is sandy and it is best to leave the car and walk. However, it is well worth exploring, for the color and form found there are something always to be remembered.

**BOX CANYON**—A beautiful scenic drive. The canyon is named for the vertical rock formations rising on every side.

**INDIAN PETROGLYPHS**—A dirt road running west for two miles from Highway 99, just 11 miles south of Indio (at Valerie Jeans) takes one to the base of the hills upon which the old shoreline can be clearly seen. At the foot of the hills there is a turn to the right, through a fence and the road follows along the base of the hills for a few hundred feet, where Indian writings can be seen chipped on travertine-coated rocks.

**FISH TRAPS**—About 1,000 feet from the Petroglyphs are found shallow pits which were one time believed to be used by the Indians as fish traps. Recent archeological investigation, however, indicates that they were the foundations of brush shelters.

**TRAVERTINE ROCK** is an ancient landmark located just south of the Riverside-Imperial County Line on the west side of the Salton Sea. It is made up of huge boulders. The old waterline can be clearly seen encircling the tip of this ancient island, and the rocks below this line are covered with travertine (calcium carbonate), 18 inches thick in some places, deposited by the waters of ancient Lake Cahuilla. On the northeast side of Travertine Rock is a narrow cave about 20 yards deep. Fragments of pottery have been found there, showing that it was inhabited.

**CORAL REEF** is located near the mountains west of Thermal. It is a long jagged ridge on which the old beachline is strongly marked. The so-called "coral" is actually travertine, which encrusts the rocks which were once submerged. There is no vegetation. Small shells cover the ground and pottery fragments are found here.

**DESERT SHORES** is 25 miles south of Indio, off Highway 99. It is a lush place for this desert country. It is also known as Fish Springs and it was one time the watering place for travelers, the first water after leaving Indio and the last until reaching Carrizo, 45 miles south. Small fish came up with the waters of the spring and swam in the pool. A monument is to be erected at the spring site.

Much of this land is now owned by Thomas Brothers of Pasadena. Great plans have been made and are being carried out for an extensive land development and building program on Salton Sea. The whole shoreline has been filled and dredged. A network of trailer sites front the canals. (A little Italy).

There are now two cafes, three motels, harbor and boat launching facilities, boat rentals and skiing instructions, swimming pools, a trailer park, two cocktail lounges and two taverns, a market, variety store and a resort full of lovely desert homes. A community district has been formed here and the population is now several hundred.

Fingers of Mobile Estates are now open. Many are moving trailers on the property there. A beautiful Clubhouse with projection room, dance floor, small bar, lounge, showers, fireplace is located on the water's edge for the convenience and pleasure of those residing in the mobile estates.

Residential, trailer and business sites are being sold.

**SALTON CITY**—A great seaside development initiated in 1958 by the M. Penn Phillips Co., of Azusa, and recently taken over by the Pacific Community Management Co., a subsidiary of Holly Corporation, Dallas, Texas.

Here one can vision a near-miracle of the desert; for in a few years a most barren, remote area has been transformed into a beautiful resort which is now attracting thousands of city people who are eager to find recreation away from crowded areas. It is also attracting many retired couples who have built their homes here, enjoying the health-giving climate and a more quiet, peaceful life. Then there are those building second homes in this growing recreational area, where their families can spend weekends, holidays and vacations.

There is a highway center and a marina center. In the former are: a fine restaurant, luxurious motel, market, liquor store, laundromat, delicatessen, airport, administration and developers' buildings, engineering department offices, and an arcade which houses the Chamber of Commerce and the Community Services District offices. There is now a fine golf course and clubhouse.

Beautiful blacktop highways and drives lead through the business and residential districts to the marina area, where an elegant yacht club graces the shores. There is a fine ultra-modern motel with pool, there are marinas and docking facilities, boat rentals, repairs, excursions, a cafe, deck patio, trailer park with pool, beach playground and a fine camping area.

**NORTH SHORE BEACH AND YACHT CLUB ESTATES** — An elaborate and exclusive residential and resort area opened in 1960 by Ray Ryan and Trav Rogers of Palm Springs. Don Eastvold and Associates have taken over part interest and are making great strides in its expansion and sales. The Club, motel and marina are now owned by Trav Rogers and Associates. There are definite restrictions for this beautifully planned and appointed club and grounds. The Club is fashioned after a luxury liner towering over Salton's shores, with portholes, decks, Commodore room, masts, etc. There is now a service station, liquor store, luxurious motel with pool, co-op apartments, stable with a fine string of horses, landing field and driving range. Fine accommodations for boat storage and laundry. Boat excursions, rentals and sales. Hollywood and Palm Springs people comprise many of the club members and visitors there. Residential and commercial sites are being sold. These are limited, however.

**BOMBAY BEACH**—located 17 miles west of Niland and 16 miles east from State Park on the east shore of Salton Sea. Highway 111. It is a community of business people from all over Southern California who enjoy spending holidays and vacations at the desert sea. They spend their time working on their cottages, boating, skiing, fishing, swimming and just plain relaxing. Two harbors, beach, several hundred beach cottages, a few rentals and snack bars and taverns can be found here. Lots are available. An increasing number of families have become permanent residents.

**SALTON SEA BEACH** is located on the northwestern shores of the Salton Sea. It is in Imperial County, five miles south of the County Line, off Highway 99. A blacktop highway leads the way through the property and to the beach, where swimming, speed-boat racing, sail-boating, skiing and sunning are enjoyed every month of the year. It is becoming a favorite stopping place for travelers as well as local people. For health, sport, genuine pleasure and relaxation, no place could compare.

There is Helen's Beach House, a cafe, dining room, and cocktails. There are two motels, unique tavern and real estate office, two campgrounds, two launching pads, harbor, beach and playground. Trailer sites by the sea are being sold.

**U.S. SALTON SEA BASE** is 18 miles south of Salton Sea Beach on the shores of the Salton Sea. It is a Government station and is not open to the public.

**SUNDIAL**—A beach opened in 1955 at the Salton Sea. It is between Desert Shores and Salton Sea Beach on the west side of the Salton Sea.

**SUPERSTITION MOUNTAIN** is a long low ridge south of the Salton Sea. It is mainly interesting for its deadly reputation among both Indians and whites. Unusual and interesting minerals are found. Indians one time inhabited the area, but water has never been found there. One hears tales of lost men and gold mines in the Superstitions.

**FIG TREE JOHN SPRINGS AND AGUA DULCE**—Old Juan Razon, better known as Fig Tree John, at one time lived on the southwest rim of the Salton Basin. The fig trees, cottonwoods and palms were the most striking features of this spot. The fig trees, along with John, gave it the name Fig Tree John Springs, and it is still shown on many of the maps under this name.

John's first home was submerged in the flood of 1905 and he moved to higher ground, where a spring of good water and a cluster of Washingtonia Palms offered relief from the dry and barren landscape immediately surrounding. This, Fig Tree John's second home in this region, is called Agua Dulce (sweet water).

One still hears tales of this famous old man of the desert, his shrewdness and, some say, of his not too honorable character. He was not popular among the white people, but he gloried in showing papers signed by the last great chief of the Cahuillas, making him "capitan" of the Agua Dulce Tribe and the owner of all the surrounding land.

**HIDDEN SPRINGS**—The route to Hidden Springs can be seen on most maps, but the sandy road leading to it makes it prohibitive to most cars. It is about a four-mile hike up the gradual slope of the mountains. They are well named for numerous ravines lead from the main path and one is fortunate to find the right one, leading to springs and a cluster of palm trees hidden behind a steep barricade of rock.

**DESERT BEACH**—The Salton Sea's rising waters of 1951 and 1952 caused such damage to the pier, harbor, cafe and motel that they are closed to the public. However, lots in the subdivision are being sold.

**HOT WELL**—This well was tapped accidentally while the aqueduct was being constructed. It is located, by the canal about 4 miles off Highway 111, at the southeastern side of the Salton Sea. A big iron casing has been put in and boiling water bubbles out the year around. Algae in the water attracts minerals, and one can see colored rocks being formed under the flowing waters.

One visiting this unique spa, nestled on the gradual slopes of the desert mountains, might much more easily imagine himself in the

Holy Land than in Southern California. Sometimes hundreds of people are gathered there to benefit from the clear air and sunshine as well as the waters of the numerous hot pools which vary in temperature according to their distance from the source.

**Geothermal Steam Wells**—The chemicals have been found to be important, the steam useful as well as the hot water. The natural agents provided by these steam wells are especially valuable in the manufacture of rubber tires and rubber products. Chemical and electrical companies are showing great interest in the wells. Imperial Irrigation District is making arrangements to tie into the electricity.

**STATE PARK**—Opened in February, 1955, this is very popular with campers. There are shelters, picnic tables, camp stoves, beach, and boat launching facilities.

**MUD POTS**—These were submerged by the rise of the Salton Sea in 1954 and can no longer be seen. They were located southwest of Niland, at the southeast end of the Salton Sea. The fields of mud were constantly bubbling, steaming, boiling and plopping their way upward. They were directly in line with the great San Andreas Fault and were one time traced for a distance of 15 miles. Water and mud heated by subterranean volcanic rocks were ejected through the vents in the earth's surface. One often hears of the Paint Pots, very similar to those just described except that they were brightly colored. They have also been covered by the rising waters.

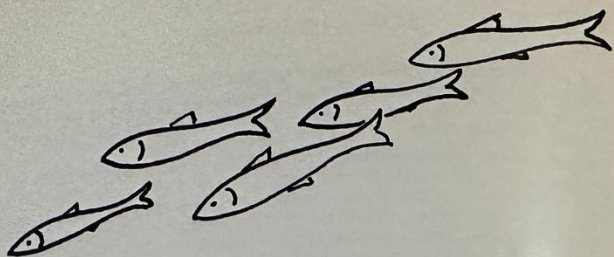
**DRY ICE PLANT**—In 1942 there was a flourishing dry ice plant industry in this area, but operations have been suspended, and its ruins can be seen from the road leading to the Mud Pots. However, there are smaller wells of carbon dioxide (used in the manufacture of dry ice) and these are being worked. New steam wells are now being developed in this area.

**PUMICE BUTTE AND THE OBSIDIAN BUTTES** — These lie southwest of the Mud Pots, Obsidian Buttes being the southernmost. The floating rocks and black glasslike stones found there make interesting souvenirs from the Salton Sea. These Buttes, like the Mud Pots, lie in the fault line, indicating that at one time the molten layers under the earth's surface broke through forming these foreign Islands in a sea of sand.

**MULLET ISLAND**—is a curiously weird place alternately inhabited and abandoned by those who see possibilities there.

From the background of softly lapping water comes the occasional croak of a crane or chirp of a small long-legged water bird. One may see small fish, half dried, lying on the sand with mouths open as if gasping for a last breath, buzzards busily picking at their feathered prey, or hear the dry whirl of black dusty wings spread overhead. And through a screen of gray dry reeds one sees Mullet Island and perhaps huge white pelicans floating still and boatlike in the distance.

It is now again an island since the water has risen. Much hunting and fishing in the area, a favorite boat excursion spot.

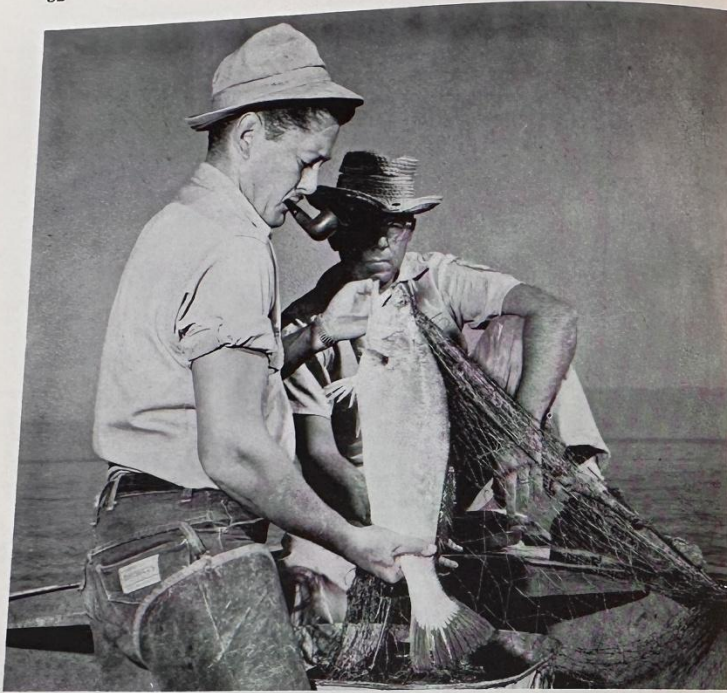


## Appendix

### FACTS AND FIGURES

1. The Salton Sea is located between Indio and Brawley and extends nearly to Oasis on the north and to Calipatria on the south. It lies in both Riverside and Imperial Counties. The Sea is bordered by Highway 111 on the east and Highway 99 on the west. The main line of the Southern Pacific Railroad (Indio to Niland and Yuma) runs parallel to Highway 111 along the Sea.
2. In ancient times it is known that the Sea covered this area. It is believed that the Gulf of California swept in later, when the earth subsided. The Sea water was followed by fresh water from the Colorado River, forming an immense Lake. The shoreline of this ancient Lake Cahuilla can be seen on the mountains.
3. The Salton Sea was formed in 1905, when the Colorado River broke through an irrigation ditch and flooded the Salton Basin (September, 1905, to February, 1907).
4. The Southern Pacific Railroad ran through the middle of the Basin when the waters came. There was a salt mine in the northern section and there were a few ranches in the Basin.
5. The New and Alamo Rivers, flowing through Imperial Valley, and the Whitewater Channel, in Coachella Valley, along with other drainage ditches and springs running into the Salton Sea, provide enough water to keep the Basin filled to its present level. The Salton Sea is a natural drainage Basin for approximately 75,000 square miles of territory.
6. Mountains form a perfect setting for the Desert Sea. The San Jacinto Mountains lie to the northwest, the second loftiest in Southern California; the Santa Rosa Range lines the Sea south of these; then to the southwest, the Vallecitos. These mountains are members of the Peninsular Range, which extends into Lower California. It is this great barrier which separates Coachella and Imperial Valleys from the Coastal plains and protects them from the storms which blow in from the Pacific Ocean. To the north are the Orocopia Mountains, then southeast of these and bordering the Sea to the east are the colorful Chocolate Mountains.

7. The Coachella Branch of the All-American Canal takes off just north of the Mexican border a few miles east of Calexico and runs along the foothills east of the Salton Sea, around Indio, and its laterals extend as far as the Imperial County Line, at the north-west end of the Sea. The Coachella Branch is 124 miles long now, and 80,000 acres will be irrigated by its waters when all the laterals are completed.
8. The Sea is very shallow for several hundred yards from shore. Its greatest depth is 40 feet. It is 34 miles long and 10 to 16 miles wide.
9. The surface of the Salton Sea is now 232.5 feet below sea level. Records show the Salton Sea to have fluctuated a great deal since its formation. It receded from 195 to 250 below sea level in its first 18 years. Since that time it has shown a fairly regular pattern, rising during the winter months and dropping slightly during the summer. However, in many years the winter's intake has exceeded the evaporation and since 1925 the Sea has risen from 250 to 232.5 feet below sea level. The most recent marked rise was in 1951-52, when a humid summer, which prevented normal evaporation, was followed by considerable extra inflow into the Sea from rainfall in the surrounding areas. Also, during this period and in 1953, there was a large increase in acreage planted to cotton, particularly in Imperial Valley, and this, combined with an increase in new land opened for irrigation in Coachella Valley, resulted in surplus inflow to the Sea. Mexico, too, is responsible for an increasing amount of drainage into the Salton Sea through New River, but what the future runoff from this large area will be is not known. However, since 1955, the Sea has more or less stabilized, showing less increase.  
The Sea's rising has not been mysterious or alarming. Its future shoreline some years ago was estimated by the United States Geological Survey at 220 feet below sea level, it being expected that the evaporation from the inflow to the sea would become equalized at about this level.
10. The salt content of Salton Sea is now about 3.5 per cent, or the same as that of the ocean. These factors contribute to the salt content: (1) Salt picked up by the Colorado River over its 240,000 square miles of drainage area and carried into Salton Sea through the canal and drainage systems of the adjoining areas—the present salt content of the River water is about one ton per acre-foot of water. (2) Salt left after the great amount of evaporation of water each year. (3) Large salt beds left in the basin by ancient lakes. Salton Sea will retain about the same salt content until it stabilizes some time in the future, after which it is expected that the evaporation each year will cause the salt content to increase gradually.
11. Those who have bathed in these waters regularly have been amazed by the rapid healing of any cuts or abrasions. Many with rheumatism and arthritis claim marked benefits.



*Corvina are plentiful*

12. Swimmers agree that the Salton Sea is ideal for swimming. There is no tide or undercurrent, the waves being governed solely by the winds. The waters are nearly always smooth enough for good swimming and in many places one can go out one fourth mile without being in too deep to touch bottom. Then he may swim as far as he likes parallel to the shore without the slightest danger. There are no holes, treacherous tides or sea life to fear. Children shout with joy as they play safely along the beaches or in the shallow water.

The Sea can be very treacherous to those who go far out during the windy seasons. It is the wise hunter or fisherman who travels within easy distance of the shallow water, for the storms rise suddenly; waves, dashing high, relentlessly and in close succession, give one far out with inadequate equipment small chance to reach safety. Those who are familiar with the Sea have learned to watch for storms. These can be seen coming from any direction by changes in color or roughness of water, white caps and clouds of dust in the distance.

13. The striped mullet were abundant in the Salton Sea just a few years ago. As many as 10 tons were caught at one time and as high as 175 tons per year by the commercial fishermen and they were being canned commercially. However, they have become almost extinct. Any holder of a sport fishing license may take mullet from the Salton Sea.

The California Department of Fish and Game, through allocations of \$103,025.36 by the Wildlife Conservation Board, contracted with the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) to carry on an investigation of the Salton Sea. They set up a laboratory there, and completed their project of the study of the fishlife in the Sea.

The Department of Fish and Game and the UCLA team introduced many kinds of fish from the Gulf of California. The gulf croaker (*Biardiella*) have been very successful and are now present in great numbers. They are too small to be considered sport fish, but they are providing food for the larger corvina. The corvina are plentiful, and are now being caught in great numbers by sport fishermen.

14. The temperature of the water varies much during the year. In summer it is warm day and night; in the spring and fall it is in the 70's; and in December, January and February it is in the low 50's at times.

15. Occasionally one notes a rusty color of the water along the shore. This is due to the presence of an excessive growth of small microscopic plants. These are free floating during life and when conditions are especially favorable they increase with phenomenal rapidity, so that they color the water.

The phosphorescence noted in the Salton Sea during the summer months has increased considerably in the past two years. According to Bob Hulquist, of the Department of Fish and Game, "Phosphorescence, or bioluminescence, is a type of light ray given off by the sea life. It is a complicated physiological function of many members of the animal world."

16. This Sea has the reputation of being the world's fastest body of water because of the low altitude and accompanying density of water. Speedboat races are held in the fall of each year and many records have been set.

17. There were no barnacles in the Sea before the last war. They are believed to have been brought in from the Pacific Coast on sea planes or boats stationed during the War at the sea plane base at, Sandy Beach. The barnacles have become very numerous. They cover every object submerged in the Sea.

A marine worm has also become prevalent; it was introduced into the Sea in the early 1930s. The worms are main source of food for the fish in the Sea.

18. Several types of small shells are found along the beaches and in the soil throughout the Colorado Desert. These are fresh-water shells and were brought in by the Colorado River during her many visits to the Salton Basin.

19. More than 200 varieties of birds inhabit this area. Among those found along the shores of the Salton Sea are: ducks, geese, seagulls,

pelicans, teal, snipe, grebe, willet, egret, sandpiper and killdeer. Ducks and geese begin migrating as early as September.

20. The Washingtonia Palm is a native tree of the Salton Basin. These trees sometimes reach a height of 60 or 70 feet. The columnar trunk is topped with a crown of green fan-shaped fronds, some of which sprout each year from the top of the tree, while the old ones beneath dry and fall against the trunk forming a shaggy brown collar under the green. Many small groups of them stand hidden around water seeps in little canyons, and others can be seen from the Highways. They are a sign of the presence of water, but as the trees are very tolerant of alkali, the water is not always sweet. The fruit is small and black, but edible.
21. Kaiser Steel's Eagle Mountain Mine is located northeast of the Salton Sea about 15 miles due north of Desert Center. There are currently approximately 500 employees and 1,000 residents of the community of Eagle Mountain. Two trainloads of iron ore are shipped from the mine to Fontana each day. Two hundred and fifty (250) modern air-conditioned homes comprise the community of Eagle Mountain.
22. Tales of lost gold mines are prevalent in the desert and there is always someone with jeep, pick and shovel on the trail of fabulous riches. Pegleg Mine is the one most frequently sought in the Salton Sea region.
23. The "Winning of Barbara Worth," by Harold Bell Wright, is a fact-fiction novel dealing with the reclamation of Imperial Valley. As this story has done much to publicize the Imperial Valley, several businesses there have been named for the heroine, Barbara Worth.
24. The Salton Sea West Shores Women's Club was formed in February, 1962. The Club's objectives are the establishment of a Scholarship Fund, a Charity Fund, and the building of a Clubhouse.
25. The Salton Sea is properly termed "Sea" because it has inlets and no outlets.
26. A Salton Sea U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, Flotilla 84, was formed in August, 1960. This group has been active in making boatmen safety-minded. Classes are being held in seamanship and small boat handling, warning flags have been installed at each landing, courtesy boat inspections are given, cruises and monthly meetings are held all with the idea of promoting greater boating safety on Salton.
27. The Salton Seafarer is a newspaper printed monthly, first issue being in April, 1958, which carries news and feature articles and pictures of the entire Salton Sea area. It is supported by its many subscribers, the land developers and those in business at Salton Sea.
28. The Salton Sea Property Owner's Association, formed in March 1962, has as its interest the promotion and distribution of information on events and facts pertaining to the Salton Sea, as well as protecting the interests of the area.



*Dates and Citrus in the Coachella Valley*

29. Crops: **Imperial Valley**—Since 1940, when water from the All-American Canal first flowed into Imperial Valley, agriculture has taken great strides. The Valley is now one of the leading agricultural production areas in the nation. Its controlled farming makes it possible to grow a variety of products, to produce the year around, and to harvest tremendous per-acre yields, which have been exceeded nowhere.

The Imperial Valley is famous for the nation's earliest melons, and huge truckloads of alfalfa hay are shipped out nearly the year around. Flax and sugar beets are two major crops which have recently been added to the long list of produce. Per-acre yields of flax are more than three times the national average. Imperial County is the nation's largest producer of beet sugar; one of the most modern sugar refineries in the world has been constructed in the Imperial Valley.

Lettuce and carrots take the lead in vegetable crops; others are cabbage, peas and onions, tomatoes, squash, cucumbers and asparagus. Citrus fruit, grapes, grain, cattle and sheep all have their places in the vast industry of the Imperial Valley.

Crops: **Coachella Valley**—Being a winter resort center and the date capital of the world, Coachella Valley's potentiality is tremendous. Thousands of visitors come to see the unusual date gardens and to enjoy the winter sunshine.

Many varieties of dates have been imported to Coachella Valley from the Persian Gulf region. The Deglet-Noor is grown most widely at present and is grown in no other place in the United States. These are considered the finest in the world.

Of the grapes, principally Thompson Seedless are grown, their chief value being in their early maturity. Coachella growers ship their grapes in June or July, well ahead of other producers. Grapefruit is the most important citrus. Tangerines are second, then lemons.

The principal garden crops are sweet corn, green beans, tomatoes, onions, lettuce, eggplant, peas, potatoes, spinach, peppers, squash, okra and melons. Cotton and flax also are important crops.

30. Climate: In the Colorado Desert the sun shines practically the year around. The percentage of sunshine is higher than for any other division of the United States. There are short mild winters and warm summers. Fog and Smog are unknown.

Along the Sea the summers are from 10 to 15 degrees cooler because of the Sea breezes, which blow almost constantly. During the summer months, winds from the desert come infrequently and for only an hour or so at a time. At these intervals the temperatures may rise as much as 15 degrees in ten minutes. In the summer the prevailing winds are from the southeast during the day and north at night. Winds are strongest in the spring, most commonly coming from the west or northwest.

The Peninsular Range on the west is mostly responsible for the sunshine and clear skies in the Salton Sea area, Coachella and Imperial Valleys. Few heavy rains pass the lofty barrier into the Valleys below. In the winter one often comes from black thunder clouds and pouring rain in the mountains to blue skies and warm sunshine in the desert region only a few miles away.

Although there are only three or four inches of rain each year, thunder storms do produce heavy local rains occasionally. There are numerous culverts along the highway through which storm ditches run toward the Sea.

In winter there is a wide variation of temperature during a twenty-four hour period, as warm days are quite often followed by nights of temperatures as low as 28 or 30 degrees.

Standing on the shores of the Salton Sea in summer, one revels in the gentle Sea breeze as he looks desertward where unmentionable temperatures prevail; in winter, through sunfilled skies one often sees snow or cloud-capped mountains only a short distance away.

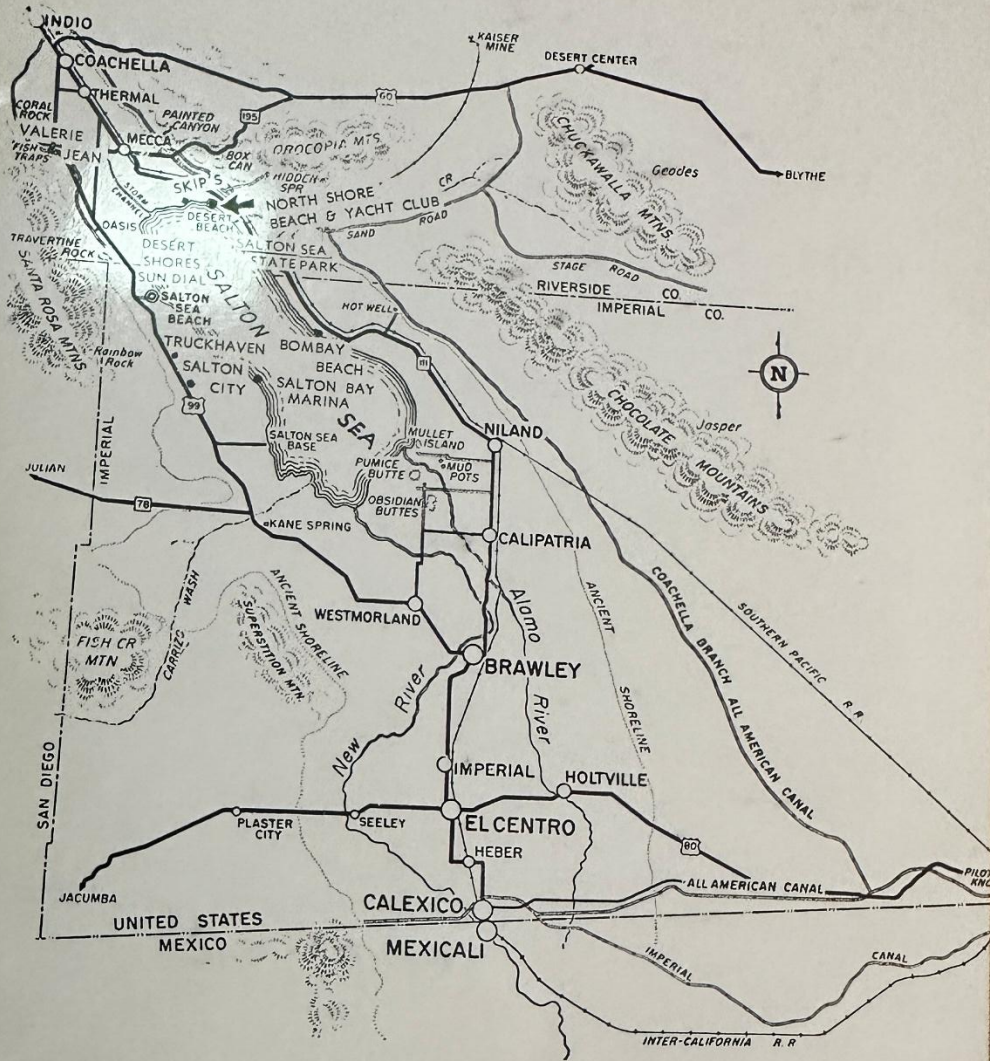
31. Salton Sea's West Beaches stretch along Highway 99 west side of Salton Sea. They are: Desert Shores, Sundial, Salton Sea Beach, and Salton City.
32. Salton City is located 35 miles south of Indio on Highway 99. It covers 17,562 acres!
33. In September, 1961, Salton Sea west beach areas received their Certification of Annexation with the Coachella Valley Water District, assuring the continuance of an abundant fresh water supply.
34. Schools serving the area are: Niland, Westmorland, Brawley elementary grammar schools to the south; Oasis and Mecca grammar schools to the north; the Coachella Valley Union High School to the north, Brawley High to the south, and the College of the Desert, opened in 1962 at Palm Desert.

## *A Sketch*

*With words spent and papers neatly stacked, this study of the Desert and Sea is finished, but not complete, nor can it be; for how can one adequately tell of phantomlike qualities in white moonlight beside a diamond-studded Sea—these ethereal qualities carried over under a brilliant sun, where delicate fleeting tints give way to shadows, then a rosy glow—morning's scintillating waters, evening's Sea of crystal blue.*

*And how can one adequately tell of a future as bright as the sun, moon and stars, which all seem by their clear sparkling brilliance here, to be ever-featuring this Land of the Desert Sea.*

Welwood Murray  
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## Salton Sink in 1963

Known today as the Imperial Valley, this reclaimed desert area—watered from the Colorado River—supports a population of nearly 100,000 persons, and is one of the most productive agricultural regions in the world.