

Earl's Diary - Monday - February 10, 2014

Dear Loyal Readers wherever you may be;

The cult gathering had concluded in Quartzsite so it was time to leave and continue my travel excursion through California and Arizona. My route this morning took me back into California, through Blythe and then south around the Salton Sea with the final destination of Anza-Borrego State Park.

My departure from Quartzsite was almost on time. I had planned to leave at 10:00. However, with a few goodbyes, that took half an hour. So - I pulled out at 10:30. Never fear, dear readers, fifteen miles down the road, I gained an hour because I crossed the Colorado River and back into California! That meant it was only 9:30. Now that's some fast time changes!

Five miles west of Blythe I turned south on state highway 78. At that point it was indicated that Brawley, California, was eighty-nine miles, and a strange name of Glamis was 39 miles. (Glamis??? What kind of name is that? Perhaps I will find about it down the road.)

Southeast Riverside County is farming country. I suppose it's all desert land that has been irrigated by Colorado River water. No wonder the Colorado is a swamp when it reaches Mexico! Anyway, that's enough editorializing for today, there were miles and miles of alfalfa fields. Along the way a few lettuce fields were spotted.

Eventually I passed through the Colorado river drainage area and hit a stretch of mountainous badlands. My paper map says these are the Chocolate Mountains. (That happens to be my favorite treat.) The pavement on the road was very good, however, many stretches were like traveling on a roller coaster.

About half way to Brawley the strangest sight started to appear. It looked like sand in the distance. Sure enough when I approached closer, it was sand. Piles and piles of sand, or should I say miles and miles of sand! I had heard previously about the Imperial Sand Dunes but didn't know that THESE were THOSE sand dunes. The road sides were narrow and lined with "no stopping or parking" signs so I couldn't stop to take pictures. I found the following images on the internet. They are just like the ones I would have taken if those "no stopping or parking" signs hadn't been there. Here is your view of what I observed on that interesting drive through.





Remember the word Glamis from above? This is what I found at 39 miles! It's just a huge RV parking lot full of huge stickie toyhaulers!



Located in the southeast corner of California, the Imperial Sand Dunes are the largest mass of sand dunes in the state. Formed by windblown sands of ancient Lake Cahuilla, the dune system extends for more than 40 miles in a band averaging 5 miles wide. Widely known as "Glamis" and a favorite location for off-highway vehicle enthusiasts, the dunes also offer fabulous scenery, opportunities for solitude, and a home to rare plants and animals.

Millions of years ago, tremendous earth upheavals elevated the area above the ocean and the constant action of erosional forces over the eons have all had a part in sculpting this vast region. Where Lake Cahuilla was once thought to have been, the dunes are now what may remain of its sandy beaches. Now blown by prevailing westerly and northwesterly winds to their present location, this process of erosion continues today, causing the dunes to migrate at a rate of approximately one foot per year.



The road goes right through the middle of the sand dunes.



Miles later the farming town of Brawley appeared. Again, there is more farming on former desert land. I wonder if they want to ship some of our northern California water (through those tunnels under our Central California Delta way down here?) There I go editorializing again! Earl, you've said enough!! You will get your chance again tomorrow!!

I arrived at Palm Canyon Campground of the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park about 1:00. It was just time enough for a bite of lunch and the requisite nap. Tomorrow is another exploration day. So, I hope you will come back and travel along with me. Until then - - Bye for now - Earl