

Otto Geissler

Information provided by

Maureen Boren, CVHM Board Member

Otto Geissler came to the valley in 1906 and became a vegetable and grape farmer. He was an early enthusiast of the date industry, and in time, his date palms became profitable. Walt, his son, and Carol, his daughter, grew up in the date industry. Walt became the Field Supervisor for Cal Date and was the liaison between the field and the packing houses. He stayed with Cal Date when it became part of the vast Tennyson Corporation and later Dole Dried Fruit. Walt knew the Coachella Valley forward and backward and took many photographs of every phase of date cultivation. His detailing of the growth of the date industry has added invaluable information to the Coachella Valley History Museum's archives. He donated most of the farm equipment and the entire Blacksmith Shop on the grounds of CVHM and the demonstration Date Garden in front of the Schoolhouse. The Geissler children adopted the Rose Garden as a memorial to their parents and grandparents.