

**FREE!**

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- **New Post Office In Darwin, CA**
- **East Mojave Diary**
- **First Annual Fat Tire Festival**
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***YOUR GUIDE TO THE  
DEATH VALLEY AREA***

# *Interesting Places You've Never Been To!*

## Darwin, CA

by *The Intrepid Explorer*

### **HOW TO GET THERE**

Coming from this area, you head to Death Valley. Take Hwy. 190 up and over Towne Pass and down into Panamint Valley. Continue past Panamint Springs. A couple miles up the road is the turn off to go to Darwin Falls. 17 miles further is the turn off to Darwin itself. If you continue on Hwy. 190 you will eventually wind up in the Owens Valley at the foot of the Sierras. This can be an awesome trip in winter as the mountains will normally have lots of snow on them, but you don't have to drive through ANY of it if you don't want to!

### **WHAT TO SEE & DO**

Not too much! Actually, if you like ghost towns, then the drive to Darwin is worth it by itself. In any event, the whole drive over there is something to behold if you haven't done it before. First is the climb up to Towne Pass. As you gain altitude the vegetation changes dramatically from the plants of the hot, valley floor, to those that prefer the cooler, moister conditions higher up. In late spring there should be a good show of wildflowers. Bring your camera! And, of course, as you look back, you have dramatic views of Death Valley down below. If that weren't enough, once you get to the top of Towne Pass you have an even more incredible view of the Panamint Valley, several thousand feet down. It's like a BIG roller coaster ride. Make sure your brakes are in good shape. Once you are down in the Panamint Valley, you can take the road to the south to see Ballarat, or Searles Lake. Both are very interesting side trips in their own right. If you continue you'll pass Panamint Springs. And then the turn off to Darwin Falls.

Darwin Falls. One reason the site has been more or less continuously occupied since the 1870's is the fact that there is water. There is a small water fall around the side of the mountain. And many miles of pipe that brings the water to Panamint Springs. It's an interesting hike, but be prepared to do some scrambling, jumping, and back tracking as there are several paths, and not all are passable, depending on how far you might be willing to go to get to the end. The canyon that the falls are in is full of willows, cottonwoods and lots of plants one would expect to see in a marsh, with lots of water to be found. A very nice place to be on a hot summer day. But wear your sneakers as it's likely you'll get your feet wet somewhere along the way.

Continuing on past the falls you'll climb back up into the mountains once again. About six miles along you'll come across Father Crowley Point. I'd recommend turning off here. It's only a short drive and you'll have yet another spectacular view of the Panamint Valley, this time from the other side. If you're so inclined, this would make a very nice place to stop and have a picnic lunch.



*Darwin "Fixer Upper"!*

About another 10 miles and you'll come to the Darwin turn off. From there it's about 5 miles to Darwin itself. The Post Office building seen on the front cover was in operation until 1953. There are buildings in town that date back to the founding of Darwin. Most everything is in private hands, so remember this when wandering around. For a more detailed map, description, and pictures, see the Darwin link at the end of this article.

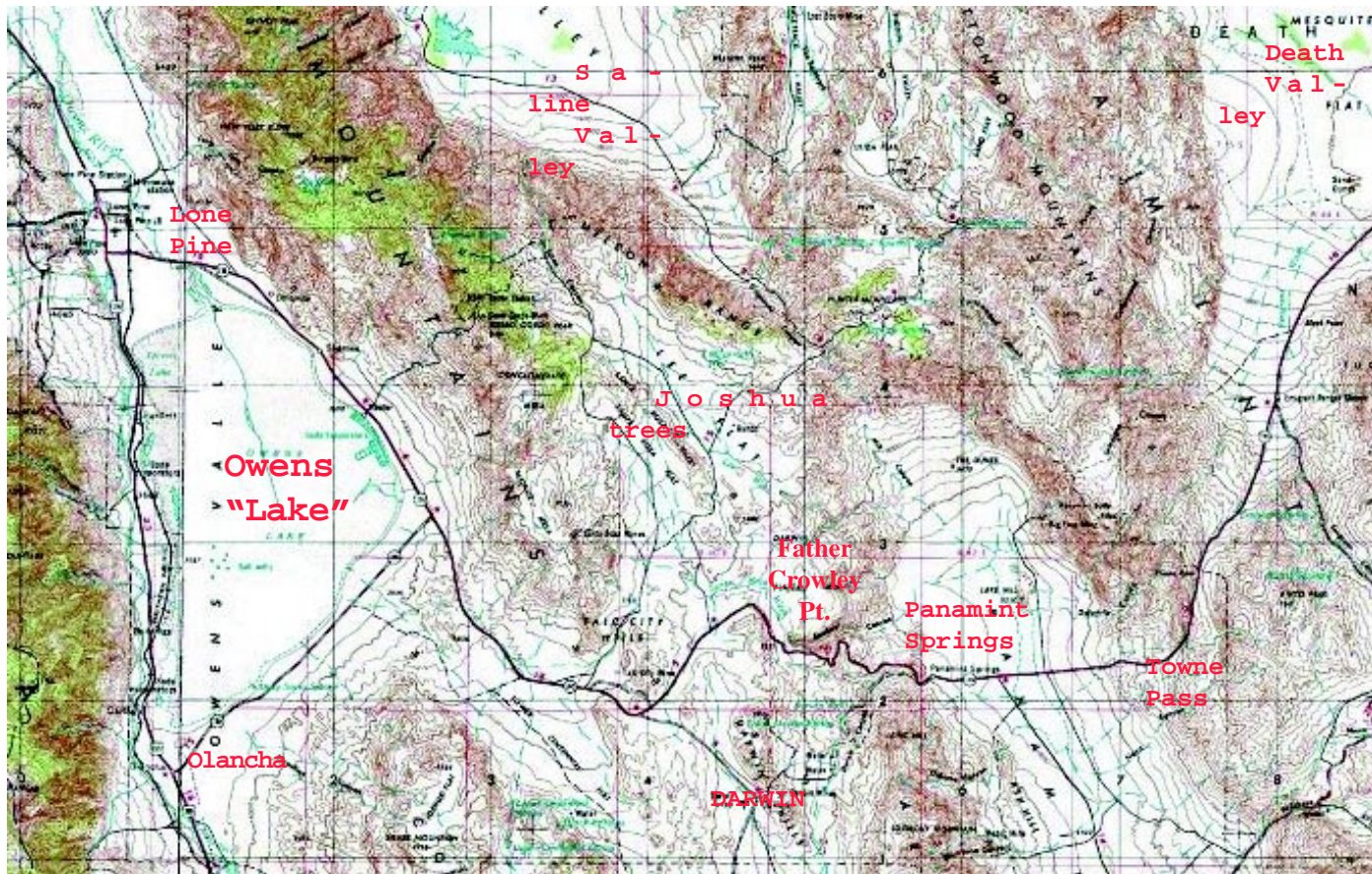
For those who are really adventurous, there is much more to see. You've only just started! Three miles past Darwin is a road to the north that will take you into one of the less visited areas of Death Valley. The roads here are dirt and gravel. Bring a good map. First you'll come to a large forest of Joshua trees. Then the road branches. Towards the east it will lead you to Hunter Mountain, the Saline Valley, and a very steep road up to The Race Track. The road towards the west goes to Cerro Gordo Peak.

If you survive all that, or decide to do it another day, then continuing along to the west on Hwy. 190 you will eventually see mountains everywhere. To the north is the Inyo Range, to the south is the Coso Range. To the west you will see Owens Lake and the Sierras. And if you take Hwy. 136 to the north, you will wind up in Lone Pine.

The Darwin Museum. The Darwin Museum isn't in Darwin! The building it was originally located in was in such bad shape that the contents had to be moved to Lone Pine where they could be better protected. See the link at the end of this page. I hope you've left a nice trail of breadcrumbs, or have been following along on your map as we are at the end of this journey. Enjoy the trip home!

***See maps on page 37***





**Beautiful  
Downtown  
Darwin!**

