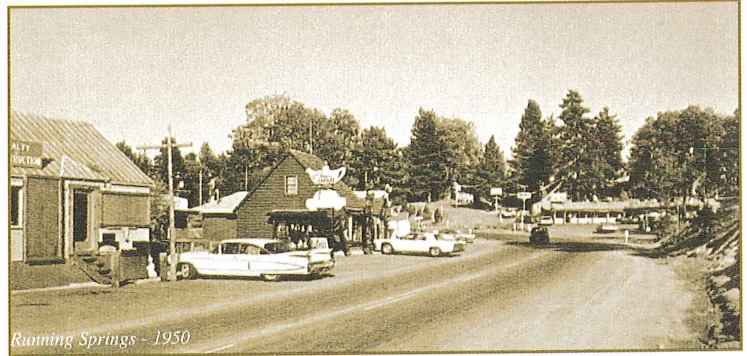


# The History of Running Springs

It was the lure of harvesting virgin timber in the San Bernardino in general and the need for a new road in particular that was the beginning of the area now called Running Springs. In May of 1890, Thomas McFarlane was hired to build a new road up City Creek. By the spring of 1892, the Highland Lumber Company opened to the public their new route to the crest as a toll road. The charge was 25 cents per animal or 50 cents for a wagon and team. The City Creek Toll Road became a popular route to the mountains, even with the danger of meeting a fully-loaded timber wagon coming down the steep grade head-on.

In April 1895, Alfred (Fred) and Albert Smiley, two wealthy brothers from Redlands, purchased 262 acres of forest land from the Highland Lumber Company. They laid out a town complete with hotel and rental cottages. The resort was called Fredalba Park—a combination of the names Fred and Albert. By May of 1896 nine cottages were completed and available for rent for a whopping \$75 per year. A restaurant and more cottages popped up like mushrooms, and Fredalba blossomed. Because of the mill worker and lumberjack families there was eventually enough children in the area to warrant opening a school in 1902. By 1908, Fredalba was a regular town with stage and mail service, full-furnished housekeeping cabins, ready-prepared meals, reasonable provisions and complete camping equipment. When the Brookings lumber operation closed in 1913, the mill workers left and the decline of Fredalba began.

With improved highways came change to the middle crest country of the San Bernardino. Rampant development that had already hit Crestline, Lake

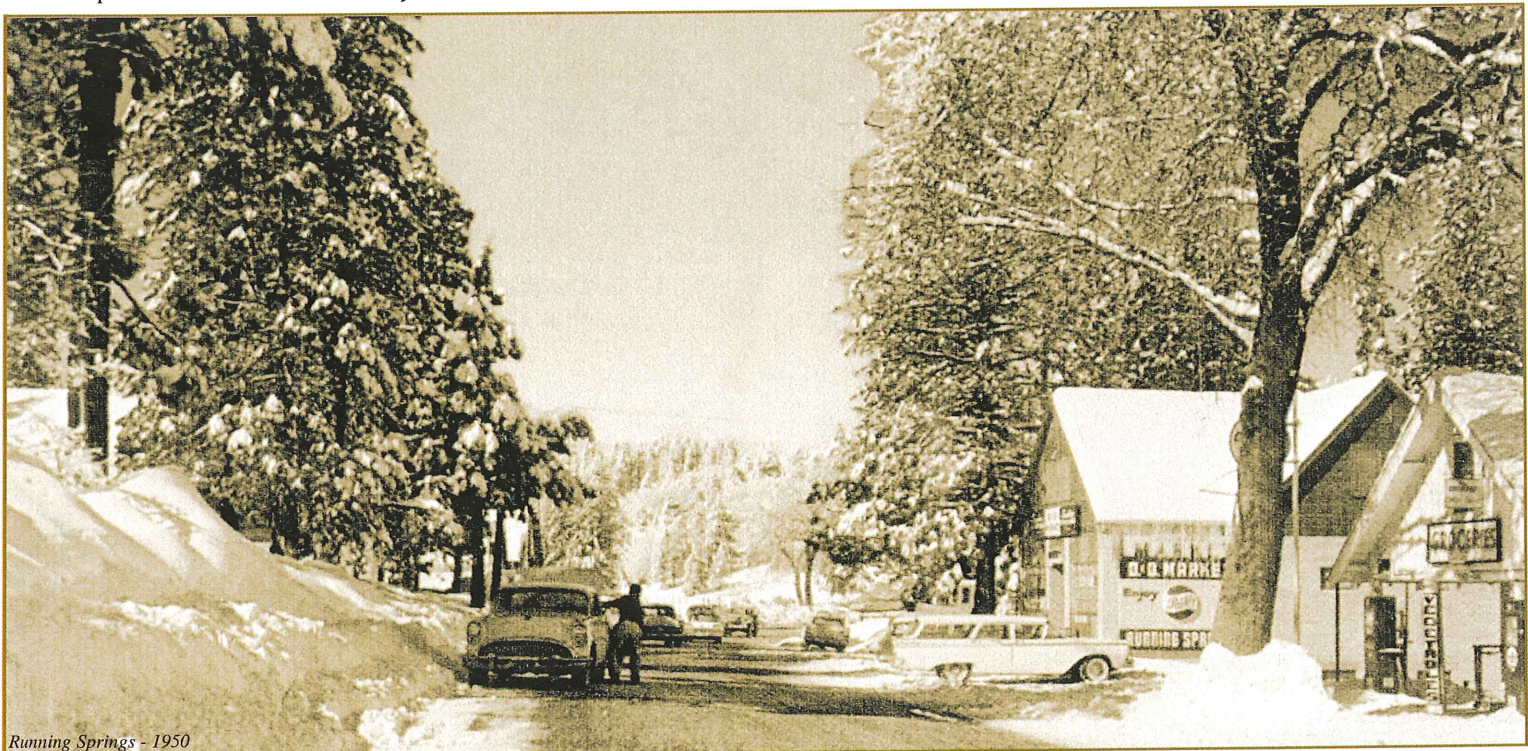


Arrowhead and the Big Bear areas, finally reached Running Springs in 1923. The area around the junction of Rim of the World Drive and City Creek Road known as Hunsaker Flats was sold to a syndicate led by realtor B.L. Smith in 1924. Smith planned out a small business district, housing tracts, and a resort and called the area Running Springs Park. Lots were bought up quickly and by 1927, Running Springs was a fast-growing community with a general store, cafe, gas station, post office and approximately 400 residents.

## Subdivisions Surround Running Springs

Two miles east of Running Springs near the junction of Deep Creek's north and south forks, E.R. Capstaff and his Los Angeles-based backers incorporated Arrow-Bear Company and invested \$200,000 to survey home lots and build a community hall, garage and 50 cabins. Helmar "Swede" Nyquist was hired to build a concrete dam, forming 5-acre Arrow-Bear Lake.

Just west of Fredalba, the firm of Taylor and McMillian developed Luring Pines tract and Luring Pines Lodge, which featured a popular dance hall.





Running Springs - 1950

The Clinton Miller tract southwest of Running Springs featured large lots and streets named for Indian tribes. The Smiley Park subdivision next to Fredalba swallowed up the old resort and remaining lumber community. A.H. Powers named his 80-acre tract, located just west of Arrow Bear, Deer Lick Springs and built a rustic lodge.

On the mountain front south of Running Springs, expensive acre lots were sold with sweeping valley views. British movie star, Reginald Denny built his \$65,000 home overlooking Plunge Creek in 1927. Denny wanted to put in an airstrip so he could fly up to the mountain, but was denied. Another movie star, Hoot Gibson, built a large home and stable just west of Denny's home. The largest of the estates was the two-story mansion of Hollywood producer David O. Selznick. The guests at Selznick parties in the early 1930s read like a "Who's Who" of the Hollywood entertainment industry.

Walter Huston's estate, built in the early 1930's was later converted into a private school.

With the completion of the final section of City Creek Road (Today's Highway 330) to its junction with Rim of the World Drive at Running Springs in 1924, development of the mountain community began to snowball. The improved road put the goal of reaching the mountain crest within range of the average driver. According to the Forest Service, over the Fourth of July weekend of 1925, over 11,360 cars made their way up City Creek Road.

### Running Springs Today

Just a ninety-minute drive from Los Angeles, Running Springs is nestled 6000 feet above sea level and is centrally located between Snow Valley Ski Resort and Lake Arrowhead. Running Springs bills itself as having the best weather in the United States, with all four seasons being mild. Just a few of the year-round activities in the Running Springs area include camping, hiking, biking, swimming, boating, fishing, and hang gliding adventures. Stream fishing, off road and equestrian trails are nearby, and great alpine and cross-country skiing are less than a half-hour away. Nearby Lake Arrowhead, Big Bear Lake and the San Bernardin National Forest offer a wealth of other outdoor recreational opportunities. Other places of interest in Running Springs include the Children's Forest, Lake Arrowhead Children's Museum and the Mountain Skies Astronomical Village, which offers workshops, star watches and a science center.

