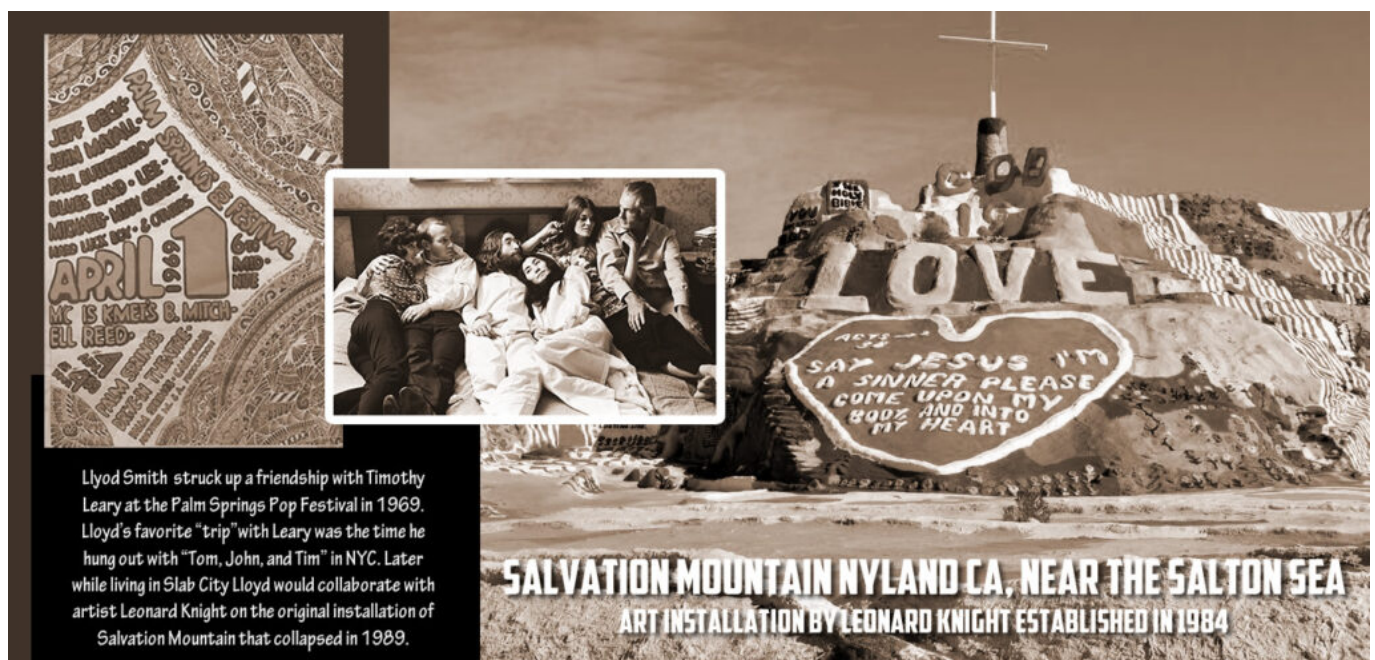


1980 – The Last Residents Move Out of Oasis Palms

In 1980, Lloyd relocated his trailer from the Cliff Hanger Trailer Park in Oasis Palms to Slab City in Niland, California, near the Salton Sea. Lloyd harbored his father's suspicions of a hidden agenda over water rights. He believed powerful interests were vying for control of the water beneath the land, attributing the absence of post-earthquake disaster relief from the state to these shadowy forces. Without insurance and the means to rebuild Oasis Palms, Lloyd felt betrayed by a lack of public assistance that could have potentially saved Oasis Palms from its impending doom.

During his tenure in Niland, Lloyd forged a friendship with fellow artist Leonard Knight. In 1984, they embarked on a collaborative venture: Knight's ambitious art installation, christened "Salvation Mountain." Lloyd lived out the remainder of his life as a local legend in Slab City, recounting the extraordinary tales of the 1960s and 1970s to anyone who would lend an ear. Many regarded Lloyd's stories of Gram Parsons, Timothy Leary, and Denis Hopper as too far out to be true.



Lloyd Smith struck up a friendship with Timothy Leary at the Palm Springs Pop Festival in 1969. Lloyd's favorite "trip" with Leary was the time he hung out with "Tom, John, and Tim" in NYC. Later while living in Slab City Lloyd would collaborate with artist Leonard Knight on the original installation of Salvation Mountain that collapsed in 1989.

The Fenner aquifer sits below Oasis Palms and holds over 34 million acre-feet of water. In California in 1983, NASA imagery revealing the size of the Fenner aquifer attracted the British entrepreneur Keith Brackpool, who bought the land, co-founded Cadiz, Inc., and started digging wells.