

Fall
2017

Litchfield Legends

A publication of the Litchfield Park Historical Society and Museum

Litchfield Park Centennial Edition

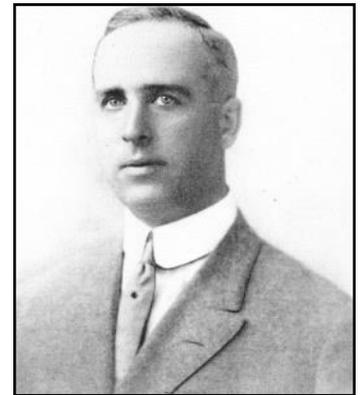
Litchfield Park—The First 100 Years

Grand Opening—Sunday, October 22nd, 1:00—5:00 p.m.

In honor of **Litchfield Park's Centennial year (1917)**, the museum is taking a look at the first 100 years of the town's history through a series of exhibits. Visitors to the museum can see how the city of Litchfield Park grew from a **small company town**, through the beginnings of an **American new town**, and into the **city** it has become today. These displays provide a wonderful opportunity to understand the evolution of this area of the Southwest Valley. They explain how Paul Litchfield and the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. converted the desert into the cities of Litchfield Park and Goodyear. Listed below are the exhibits you will be able to view beginning on October 22nd:

The Company Town – Litchfield Park 1917-

1959: Litchfield Park started as a small company town that began to form at the north end of Litchfield Ranch (present-day Litchfield Park and part of Goodyear) in the first few months of 1917. Many resources were needed – and all of them immediately. Items such as a general store, business office, school, machine shop, housing for employees, water sources, and electricity were established quickly. As the small community grew, a barbershop, church, café, drugstore, hospital, and pool hall were added. In 1918 a formal plan was laid out by Paul Litchfield and Phoenix architect L.G. Knipe. While never fully realized, the intended purposes for each of the four corners of downtown Litchfield Park have largely remained the same throughout the town's history. This community was designed to meet the needs of the employees and their families of these Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. subsidiaries: the Southwest Cotton Co., and later, Goodyear Farms and Goodyear Aircraft-Arizona.



Paul W. Litchfield

The New Town – Litchfield Park 1964-1986: After Paul Litchfield's death in March of 1959 and Kenneth McMicken's less than three weeks later, there was an attempt by the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. to create a unique city called Litchfield Park. Its design was inspired by the American *new town movement*. An announcement of this goal was made in 1964 in New York City by Goodyear. Victor Gruen and Associates from Los Angeles were hired to plan and execute the project. The proposed city would cover the area from the Agua Fria River on the east to Cotton Lane on the west; and from Camelback Road on the north to McDowell and Van Buren Roads on the south. Twelve villages would be located along the north and south sides with a central core of commercial and public buildings running through the property from east to west. The first village – to be called *Tierra Verde* (green land) – would be superimposed over the old *company town*. Walking trails, a lake, recreation center, and a new professional building would be added to the already existing elementary school, Wigwam Resort, golf courses, and the small commercial area. The work began in the mid 1960s. After 20 years of toil on this project by the developers, Sir

In This Issue:

- Litchfield Park: The First 100 Years
- President's Letter
- Melissa Thomas Memorial
- Litchfield Park Museum 5th Anniversary
- Centennial Coin
- Famous Faces of Litchfield Park
- Los Campos Book
- Sponsors
- Membership Form

Continued on Page 7