

# Litchfield Legends

a publication of the Litchfield Park Historical Society

Produced with major support from La Loma Village/  
La Loma Care center, Rosemary Lang-Fiebig, Realtor,  
and Wigwam Golf Resort & Spa



## Kenneth B. McMicken

### Fondly called by his employees, "Patrón"

Margaret McMicken Bartol, Granddaughter of Mr. McMicken

Kenneth B. McMicken once was described as a philosophical cross between Will Rogers and Uncle Remus- "a man who has made Goodyear Farms everything a farmer dreams about." This sums up the smiling executive who spent part of his life building the 16,000 acre Goodyear Farms project into one of the outstanding irrigation units in the world.



a charter member and first President of the Litchfield Park Kiwanis Club. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of Litchfield Park School beginning in 1924. He served as Vice President and National Council Representative for the Roosevelt Council, Boy Scouts of America, and was a founding member of the Church at Litchfield Park.

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McMicken was asked by President of the Board, P.W. Litchfield, to join the Goodyear organization in 1917. One of his earliest assignments was to study methods of raising cotton in the Valley of the Nile, Egypt. On his return to Arizona with a favorable feasibility report, McMicken undertook the task of raising cotton on the virgin desert land. Long staple cotton was in heavy demand for truck tires for USA forces overseas in World War I.

His knowledge of cotton growing took him to Peru where he was adviser to that nation's cotton industry, showing those growers the American way of cotton culture. In the scientific field, he was a leader in working with the University of Arizona to develop pure seed strains, and helped organize the Arizona Crop Improvement Association to produce better agriculture seeds.

In addition to being an authority on cotton, "K.B." developed noteworthy cattle feeding, soil conservation pest control methods, which made Goodyear Farms a leader in production and management. In 1943, he represented the entire United States cotton belt at meetings in Washington on boll weevil control.

His civic, professional and club activities spanned a multitude of organizations. He was

In order that we might acknowledge the achievements of the past generations and preserve our heritage for future generations, it shall be the Mission of the Litchfield Park Historical Society to encourage an awareness of and an interest in the history of Litchfield Park and the Vicinity through the collection and display of historical facts, recorded history, artifacts and memorabilia and through special projects as determined by the membership.

## Mark your calendar

### MEMBERS ONLY:

#### LPHS Annual Membership Meeting

Saturday, January 30, 2010 - 10 a.m. to 12 noon  
Refreshments

*Special Program To Be Announced*

(Invitations Will Be Mailed to All Active LPHS Members in January.)

### THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO

#### Litchfield Park Historical Society's 9TH ANNUAL FOUNDER'S DAY EVENT:

*Historic Sites and Sacred Places of Litchfield Park*  
Saturday, March 27, 2010 - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### WATCH FOR MORE INFORMATION

*The Litchfield Park Historical Society is a proud recipient of an Arizona Humanities Council Project Grant in the amount of \$5,000.*

*The funds will contribute to the 2010 Founder's Day event, "Celebrating 100 Years of History: Historic Sites and Sacred Places of Litchfield Park."*



**Did you know?** In 1966 Goodyear Farms was the largest block of irrigated crop land in Arizona, under one owner - 9150 acres.

## Board of Directors 2009

### Executive Committee:

Rosemary Lang-Fiebig, *President*  
Julia Sweeney, *Vice President*  
Lisa Brainard, *Secretary*  
Jim Warkomski, *Treasurer*  
Margaret McMicken Bartol, *Past President*

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Dolores Angus Sara Homan  
Ruth Cox Linda Lamm  
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Faith, Ledyard, Nickel & Shelsky, P.L.C.



*Rosemary Lang-Fiebig,*  
*President*

## Letter from the President

### Litchfield Park Historical Society continues to grow and do.

This past March,  
2009 we presented  
a much-lauded,  
highly-successful

### major community-wide event, "**Rancho La Loma Homestead – 90 Years of History.**"

That event included narrated tours of the Litchfield/Denny families' Rancho La Loma estate via tractor-pulled wagons; presentation of a 15-minute video documentary produced by LPHS, "Tour of Rancho La Loma," starring Julia Denny Litchfield, granddaughter of Paul and Florence Litchfield; a large, beautifully-displayed collection of historic photos pertaining to the history and family life on "The Hill;" as well as wonderful musical performances by choral groups from schools in the Litchfield Elementary District. There was a "whopping" attendance of over 800 people who joined us that day!

Since moving into our offices at "Aunt Mary's House," LPHS has also been working to consolidate, sort and archive the numerous historic photos, artifacts, mementoes and books that have been donated to LPHS over

the past several years. Prior to our obtaining office space those items were, of necessity, housed in the temporary custody of various Board members at their personal residences. Now we finally have space to unite all those wonderful archive items in one location for cataloging and preservation!

As our latest endeavor, LPHS will be initiating Saturday Open Houses on December 5, 12 and 19 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. So, please come to visit LPHS and view the first of a series of periodic historic photo and artifact displays that will be on exhibit.

LPHS has a number of other events and projects on our planning board – and, as you can imagine, all of these things take money to implement. We need your help to provide the revenues needed for archiving, preserving and sharing the history of Litchfield Park and its environs. Your past support has been very gratifying and appreciated. With on-going support from our members and the community as a whole, we hope to be able to continue – perhaps even increase – the number of public events and historical resources we can make available for the community.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

## Sponsors

### \$500 Level:



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### Rosemary Lang-Fiebig, CRS, GRI

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### \$100 Level:

**RICK HUGHES**  
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At Haircutters in the Park

**JOHN MANOBIANCO**  
State Farm Insurance

*Special thanks to the City of Litchfield Park*

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Kenneth was a member of the Farm Bureau Federation of Arizona, past president of the Arizona Crop Improvement Association, president of the Arizona Cotton planting and Seed Distributors, director of the Arizona Cotton Growers Association, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors of the Agua Fria Soil Conservation District, Chairman of the Board of the Arizona Citrus Growers...just to mention a few.

Mr. McMicken was a prime mover in efforts to accomplish adequate flood control for Trilby Wash. "McMicken Dam" is part of an Army Corps of Engineers project, which was completed in 1956, to protect the entire West Side area from ravages of flash floods. In recognition for his untiring work and

leadership the dam was named in his honor and stands today continuing to provide vital protection.

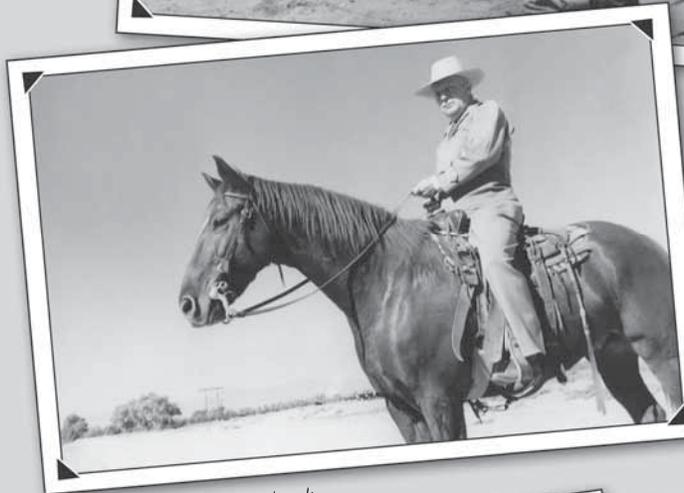
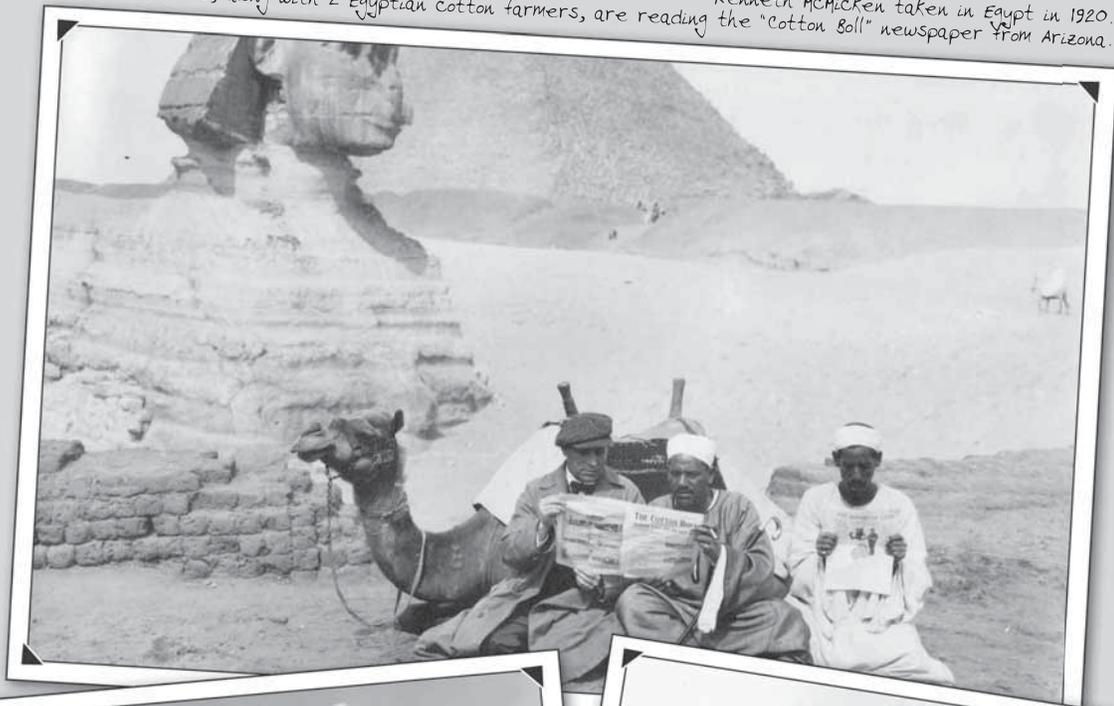
Kenneth retired from Goodyear Farms in 1958 at the age of 76. He stepped down as Vice President and General Manager of Goodyear Farms after 40 years of service. He remained a Director and Consultant for the Farms until his death in 1959.

Kenneth Bruce McMicken was one of the best known and beloved men in the field of Agriculture in the state of Arizona. His reputation was highly regarded in the far corners of the world. His civic and community activities helped erect a town and lay the foundation for present day Litchfield Park. He was truly an outstanding leader.

**Did you know?** Rural Fire Protection Company began fire protection in Litchfield Park in the fall of 1968.

# Litchfield Park Through the Years

He, along with 2 Egyptian cotton farmers, are reading the "Cotton Boll" newspaper from Arizona. Kenneth McMicken taken in Egypt in 1920.



Ken McMicken on horseback



Happy Birthday to The Wigwam Resort:  
First Opened to the Public, Thanksgiving Day, 1929



Bruce, Bob, Kenneth and Ethel McMicken

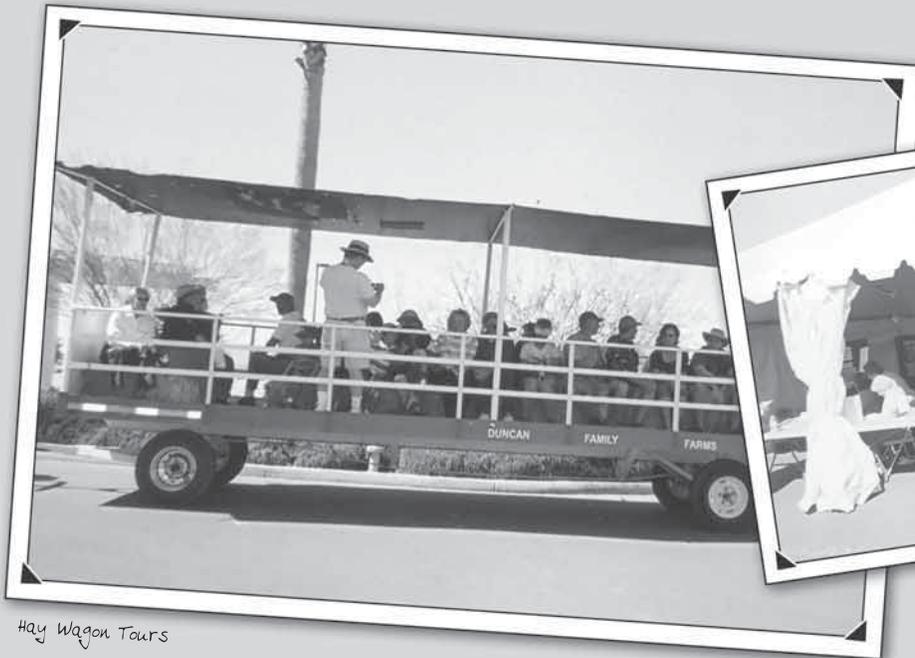


Ken McMicken and P.W. Litchfield at Awards Recognition

**Did you know?** The Litchfield Park Garden Club was established in March, 1966, by Mrs. Artie Kirkpatrick who was also the Remedial Reading teacher at the Litchfield Elementary School.

**Did you know?** When the Litchfield Park Post Office was located in the center of town, mail was promptly in boxes at 8:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. daily.

# 2009 Spring Event



Display Tent



Hay Wagon Tours

Enjoying the Photo Exhibits



Litchfield Elementary Choral Group



Julia Denny Sweeney, Nikki Salazar and daughter Jessie

**Did you know?** Naj Abraham, of Abraham's Market in early Litchfield Park, made personal inspection of meat at the Cudahy Company each Monday morning before purchasing the meat.

## A TEACHER FOR ALL "REASONS"

All children can remember a teacher who was special in their life; someone who could make school enchanting. Litchfield Park had a teacher like that for 35 years.

Lenore Pouquette was born in 1919 and raised in Ray, Arizona, a small mining town. She contracted polio as a child but had only slight residual effects in one arm. After graduation from the Ray High School she attended Arizona State Teachers College in Tempe where she majored in Spanish and met her husband, Frank Pouquette. He was of Basque descent and helped his mother with her sheep business until he finished college. Both Lenore and Frank wanted to teach school. Because of the war they were not married until 1945, and in 1949 both took teaching positions in the West Valley; Lenore in Litchfield Park, and Frank in Avondale.

Lenore was the 13th teacher hired in the Litchfield Park School District. Jim Tretheway had been the 12th teacher hired one year before. The Pouquettes were given housing in the Goodyear Farms area between the church and the drugstore. The rent was \$30.00 per month with no utility fees, free water and yard maintenance; a nice bonus for young new teachers!

Lenore always taught third grade at Litchfield Elementary School. Her room was in one of the four original adobe structures that faced north toward the Wigwam. The largest class she recalls was 27 students. There were no coolers, but a teacher could bring her own fan or assess each child ten cents to purchase a fan. In 1951 swamp coolers were installed and Lenore said, "That was heaven!"

The classes were a combination of camp children, local students and children from Luke Air Force Base and all were quite compatible. She recalls that the elementary grades consisted of about 250 students in the late forties. Lenore said, "The school nurses, Mrs. Valenzuela and later her sister, Mrs. Yanez, were a wonderful asset to the schools and did much of the outreach work."

As a teacher, Lenore incorporated her love of cats into the classroom as well as other nature curriculum items. Former students fondly recall Señor Gato, (see photo above), the cat who had free run in the classroom. Mrs. Pouquette made nature studies



*Lenore Pouquette with students. Señor Gato assisting.*

interesting and lively, using things the children saw every day as her curriculum.

Lenore recalled there was always a Christmas Pageant at The Litchfield Community Center and all of the school children participated. Students worked for weeks getting costumes made as well as preparing songs and little plays. There was also a big Fiesta every fall in September when Goodyear Farms provided food and entertainment or dancing.

One year she and the third graders made up a song to the tune of Old McDonald had a Farm, but changed it to "Old-Man Litchfield" Had a Farm. The school administrators told her the children must say Old Mr. Litchfield instead. When P.W. Litchfield later heard about the lyrics, he told Lenore he was sorry it had been changed and thought the first words would have been more fun.

In the 1970's Lenore heard of the new program of team teaching in California, and thought it might be a new approach for the Litchfield District. The school could not afford to send her to classes, but the California schools were still in session, so Lenore went there for three weeks and brought back all the ideas and plans which she, Pam (Busey) Eldean, Wanda Kirkpatrick and Barbara Porter then implemented in their classes. Each teacher had each of the children for some part of the day and both teachers and students were enriched by this program. Pam recalled the special events after social studies units. There was a Mexican Fiesta after the unit on Mexico, and a trip to Sunset Point following the Cowboy/ Farming unit. The grand finale each year was a trip by train to Tucson for a day at the Sonoran Desert Museum with a bus ride home. These teachers went far beyond the daily curriculum and children always remembered their extra efforts. Lenore spent her last year at the new Scott Libby School before she retired in 1984.

Lenore died in July of 2009, and dozens of former students asked to speak at the service and recall the remarkable effect Mrs. Pouquette had on their lives. There is no better tribute for a teacher than to know they were influential in helping children.

Daughters Charlotte (Goodyear) and Sharon (South Carolina) survive along with five grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

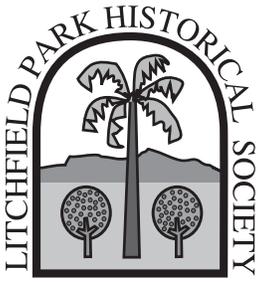
### **Fellow teachers and students provided the Litchfield Park Historical Society with recollections of Lenore.**

**Bette Sari Ladd** (fellow teacher). "I clearly remember my first day at school and telling Lenore about some new text books that I thought were wonderful. She promptly replied, "Newer is not always better."

**Linda Lamm** (former student) "Mrs. Pouquette and my mother worked for the Litchfield Elementary School. My mother died several years ago, and every year until this year I would get a card from Lenore on my mother's birthday."

**Marty Etchart** (former student) "She was one of the nicest women I ever knew."

**Pam Eldean** (former student and fellow teacher) "I could hardly wait for the after lunch chapter of *The Bobbsey Twins* each day." "I always thought Lenore was a wonderful example of someone who did not let her physical handicaps slow her down."



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# Membership corner

**It's That Time Again** – Time to renew your membership in LPHS for the 2010 membership year. Or, if you have not yet become a member of Litchfield Park Historical Society, now is the time to do so! The 2010 Membership Application is printed below. Please fill out the application, mark the membership level you choose, and mail the completed application to LPHS along with your membership contribution check.

OR – if you have already joined for 2010 or are a Lifetime or Honorary Member – **PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING AN ADDITIONAL DONATION TO LPHS** to assist us in the costly work of preserving the history of Litchfield Park. Simply fill out the form below, mark your "Special Donation" level, and mail the form and your check to LPHS.

Either way, we are sincerely grateful for your donations. If you have any questions about membership or upcoming activities, please call Rosemary Lang-Fiebig, President, at 623/694-0022 or email at rlangfiebig@realtor.com.

*(NOTE: If your employer has a "matching grants program," please advise them about your donation to the Litchfield Park Historical Society and provide us with the appropriate form to apply for their matching funds donation.)*

**Thanks in advance for your support of Litchfield Park Historical Society.**

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## LPHS 2010 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/SPECIAL DONATION FORM

(January 1 - December 31, 2010 membership year)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Membership Dues (please check one)\***

- Student – \$5    Single Adult – \$20    Family – \$30    Bus/Professional – \$60    Contributor – \$125    Benefactor – \$300  
 Lifetime – \$600 (fee may be paid in 1 to 4 installments within a 12-month period, with initial payment to be a minimum of \$150. Lifetime membership status and card to be issued upon receipt of final payment to LPHS.)

**Special Donation: (please check one)\***    \$25    \$50    \$100    \$500    \$1,000    Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make your check payable to **LITCHFIELD PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY**. Mail check and Membership Application/Special Donation slip to **Litchfield Park Historical Society, P.O. Box 1936, Litchfield Park, AZ 85340**

**Would you be interested in working on a committee?**    Yes    No

**Do you have historic photographs or artifacts to contribute to LPHS?**    Yes    No

\*Litchfield Park Historical Society is an official IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation; and your membership dues and other donations are tax deductible for persons who itemize.