

Fall
2015

Litchfield Legends

A publication of the Litchfield Park Historical Society and Museum

LIGHTER THAN AIR...

Balloons, Blimps, and Dirigibles

New Exhibit GRAND OPENING

**Sunday, October 25th
1:00-5:00 p.m.**

For thousands of years, people moved over the land using horses or horse-drawn vehicles and over water using some sort of boat. The beginning of the 20th century found inventors from all over the world launching into new modes of transportation. Automobiles and trucks proliferated on land and aircraft of all sorts finally lifted men above the earth and moved us further and faster than any of our ancestors could have imagined. This exhibit takes a peek at a fascinating, but historically temporary means of air travel. Its evolution takes us from the days of early hot-air balloons that hovered over the ill-fated Louis XVI and his wife Marie Antoinette through to present-day launches that both entertain and inform us. The period in-between will astound you with both its inventiveness and its many tragedies.

Curators John Donahue and Susan Adams have selected pictures of the heady days of hot-air ballooning that originated in France in the late 1700s. Following this period, balloons were used world-wide for observation purposes during wars; as well as balloon racing and the fabrication of our first space probe. Not to be forgotten are the hundreds of Goodyear-built blimps that were used effectively to spot dangerous enemy submarines during WWI and WWII.

A large portion of the exhibit is given over to the enormous dirigibles of the early 20th century – luxurious airships that conveyed eager explorers and travelers across vast oceans and immense continents at speeds never before imagined. A subset of these dirigibles is a group of mighty zeppelins. These airships were invented by Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin for whom they are named. You will see photos of these gigantic behemoths as they floated above the landscape always surprising people on the ground with their size. Also included are photos of the legendary *Hindenburg*. You'll be amazed to see the aluminum appliances in the restaurant's kitchen, the aluminum grand piano used to entertain travelers in the lounge, and the sleeping quarters with their fold-up sinks that had hot and cold running water. You'll also discover the mystery (yet unsolved) of how the *Hindenburg* met its end.



P.W. Litchfield in the gondola of
the Goodyear Blimp

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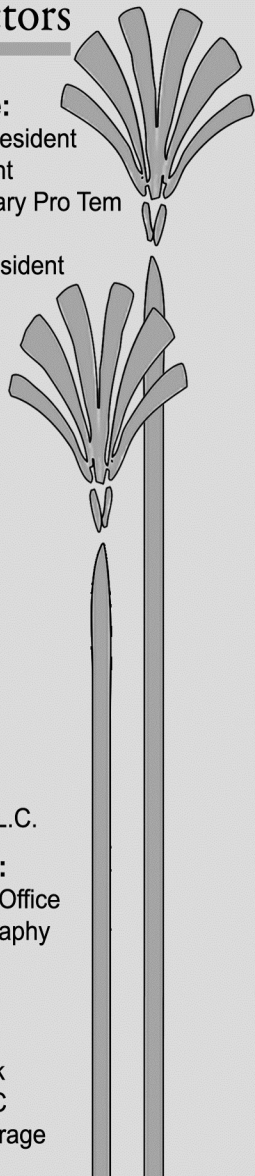
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Special Thanks

The City of Litchfield Park
Tim Blake, LandCare LLC
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Letter from the President

Fall is a time of change. In most places, sultry evening temperatures give way to a slight chill in the air. Kids are back in school, football season is in full swing, and our plans are shifting from that last summer vacation opportunity to the flurry of the coming holidays. Some people resist change, while others can't wait for a reason to sweep clean the clutter of yesterday so that they can live in the moment or look forward to the future. One thing we know for sure is, like it or not, change will come.

We at LPHS are not immune to change, and anticipate the possible relocation of our current office and Museum from its current site, formerly known as *Aunt Mary's House*. We are excited to see how the LPHS will be able to respond to this challenge, and are seeking to prepare ourselves and our members for contingencies that may arise. We will do our best to keep you posted as more information becomes available.

We trust you will all enjoy the changes the season and the holidays will bring.

Lisa Brainard-Watson

President of the LPHS and MUSEUM

All-time Membership High

The LPHS and Museum is pleased to announce that we have an all-time high in LPHS and MUSEUM membership this year! To date, we have **182 memberships (298 individuals)**. We are also proud that our museum attendance is just under 3000 visitors; and this past summer we remained open on Wednesday mornings to accommodate our summer visitors.

At the end of October, we will be entering our fourth year as a history museum. We are eagerly looking forward to showcasing three wonderful new exhibits, as well as new additions to our permanent collections. Thanks to all of you for believing in our mission; and supporting our museum with your membership, generous donations, additions to our artifact collections, and bringing your friends and family to visit our museum.

With much appreciation and gratitude to all of you ...

The Board of the LPHS and MUSEUM

LIGHTER THAN AIR Continued from page 1:

Post WWII finds the country turning to more playful and pleasant uses for balloons and blimps. One event for which balloons were created is Macy's annual Thanksgiving Day Parade. In 1957 our own Goodyear Aircraft plant, which had been built at the southern tip of Litchfield Ranch in 1941 for the WWII effort, became the sight for creating one of these gigantic balloons. You'll see images and a video of the *Popeye* balloon; and you'll hear four Southwest Valley women (*the balloon girls*) tell about their experience creating this epic cartoon figure out of rubber.

The age of ubiquitous blimps and dirigibles has passed – and with it the romance and excitement of the time. Just by looking at the photos one senses the enthusiasm and amazement of those who lived during that time period and cast their eyes skyward. ***Come and see this fascinating exhibit today!***



The Balloon Girls

GOODYEAR AIRCRAFT ...

Arming for War

New Exhibit GRAND OPENING

Sunday, October 25th, 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Historian C.V. Wedgwood stated, *"History is lived forward but is written in retrospect. We know the ending before we consider the beginning and we can never wholly recapture what it was to know the beginning only."* In researching this exhibit, one realizes how true that statement is. All of us today know how WWII ended; however, to them the goal had to have felt overwhelming. One can't help but be astounded by the scope and depth of that war and the fact that **everyone** (men, women, teenagers, and the disabled) were **all in**. If they weren't fighting the war at the front, they were at home helping in any way they could. For many of us, this exhibit will bring to mind family stories that we heard as children – because this was our parents' generation – the people who not only took on the massive challenge to clean up the chaos created by this far-reaching war, but also conducted it with a clearly focused determination. Guided by a personal character honed during the years of the Great Depression (1930s) and based on faith, family, and a sense of national patriotism, that generation was determined not to lose their country or their freedom.



Goodyear Aircraft offices in Akron, Ohio

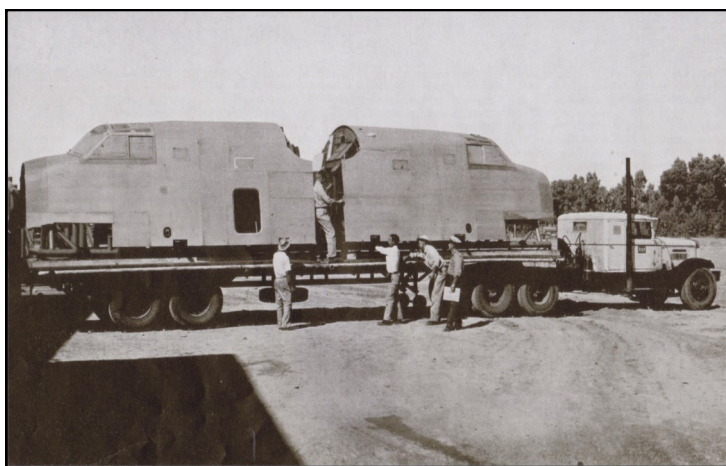
Paul Weeks Litchfield was always a forward-thinking man. Under his direction, the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. had entered the aircraft business more than 30 years before WWII when it began to manufacture specialized tires for planes. This in turn led to the creation of a department for the design and production of airplane wheel and brake assemblies; and from then on, Goodyear grew with the general expansion of the aviation industry.

Goodyear Aircraft Corporation in Akron began in December of 1939. It built a gigantic complex of buildings which included the massive Goodyear-Zeppelin Airdock from the 1930s. Groundbreaking for the **Goodyear Aircraft Corporation in Arizona** was in August of 1941 – three months **before** the Pearl Harbor attack. It was completed in 180 days and began with one building. Not only was the Arizona plant strategically located between aviation production centers located in Texas and on the West Coast, it was protected against any possible air attack because it was inland.

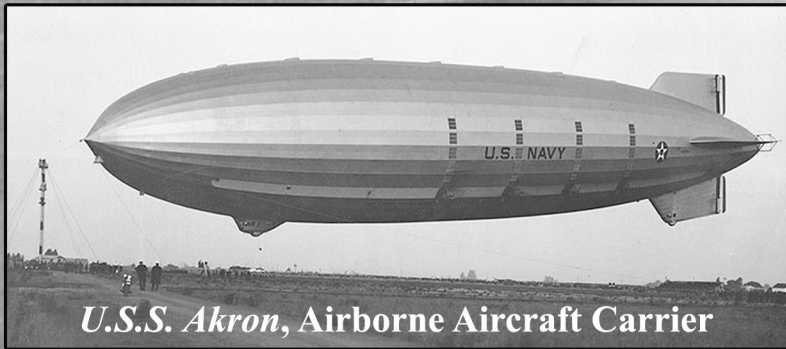
After the attack on Pear Harbor in December of 1941, Paul Weeks Litchfield converted all of the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. plants world-wide to production for war. Many other CEOs of the time also followed suit in their various companies. Within two years Goodyear was recognized as one of the leaders in the manufacture of weapons and equipment; and the Goodyear plants made dozens of military products such as military tires, gas masks, rubber life rafts, and bullet-sealing fuel tanks. Goodyear Aircraft in Akron and Arizona was ranked as one of the ten largest aircraft companies in the country. **The goal was to bring victory to America.**

Initially the Arizona plant specialized in constructing the flight deck for Consolidated's PB2Y3 four-engine flying boats. They were popularly known of as the **Coronados**. The flight deck is that portion of the plane that is located above the hull where the crew functions. Each flight deck had between five and six-thousand parts that had to meet exacting tolerance standards. Additionally, the completed flight deck had to match the hulls, wings, and tail portions that were being built in other feeder plants around the country.

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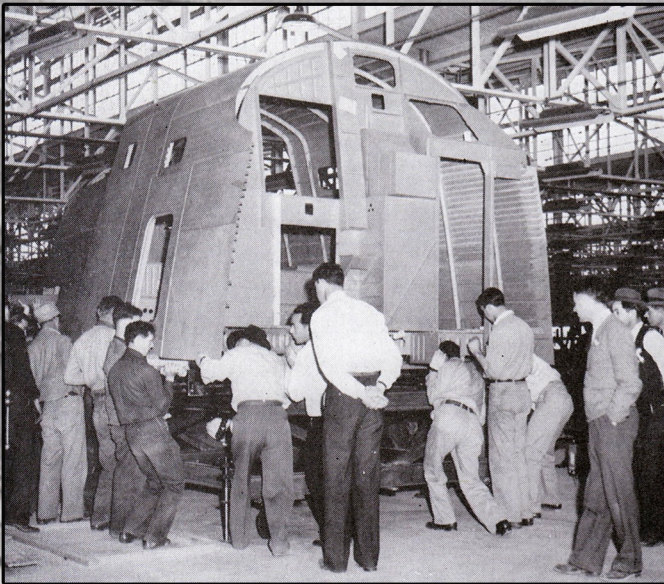


Flight decks being loaded onto trucks in Goodyear.



U.S.S. Akron, Airborne Aircraft Carrier

**P.W. Litchfield and U.S. Navy
Admiral John S. McCain Sr.
(Sen. John McCain's father)**



Flight Decks built at Goodyear Aircraft in Arizona



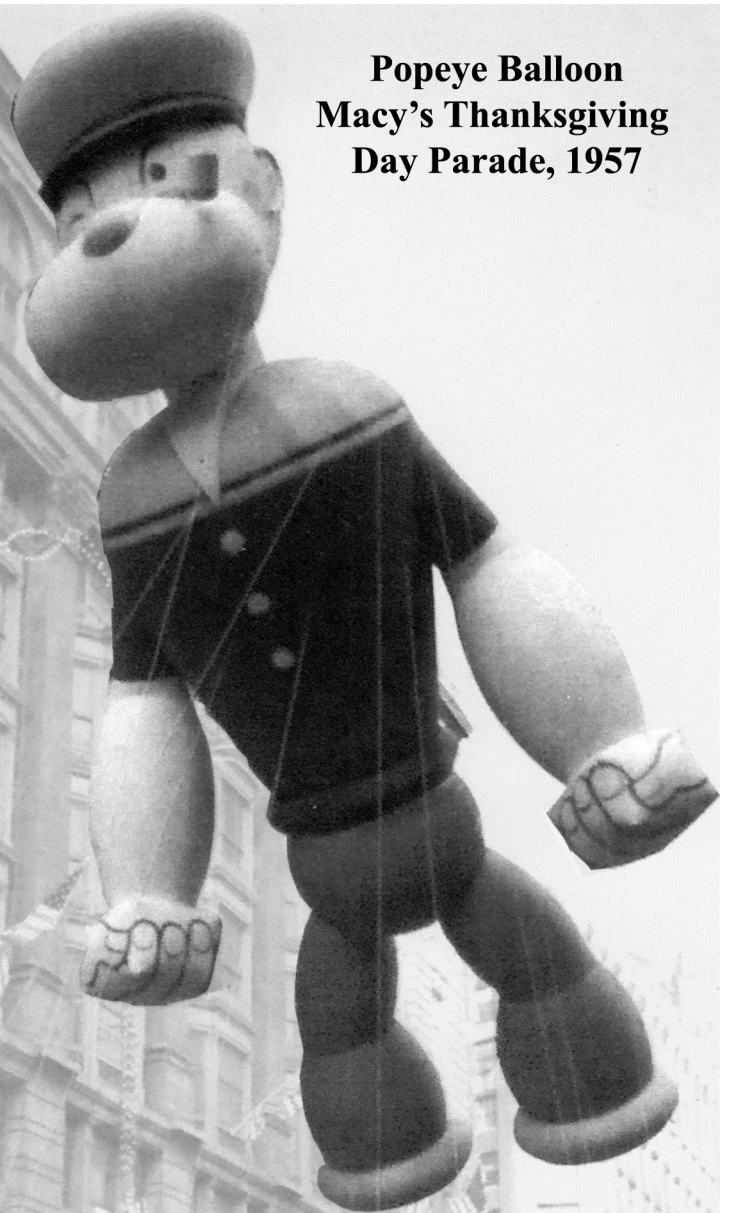
**P.W. Litchfield, U.S. Navy Admiral Davison, and staff
review Goodyear Aircraft -Akron Plant changes
for war effort**





Spirit of America visits Super Bowl XLIX
in Glendale, Arizona, 2015

Popeye Balloon
Macy's Thanksgiving
Day Parade, 1957



Travelers on the *Volunteer*, 1947



Volunteer at Wigwam Resort in 1937



Charles Lindbergh takes a ride
in the Goodyear Blimp,
***Defender* in 1927**

GOODYEAR AIRCRAFT Continued from Page 3:

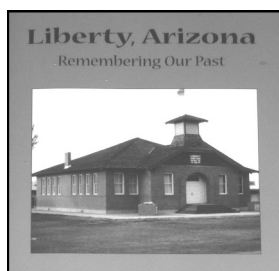
In January of 1942 the plant employed 150 men. By the time of peak production in 1945, it employed 7,668 workers – men, women, and teenagers – even the blind who used their other highly-developed senses to carry out their part of production. The commitment of these men and women was to turn out a perfect product. They were not about to let down their family members who had gone to fight – their fathers, brothers, sons, and uncles. They knew that these men were depending on the machines that they were constructing; and they were going to do their best.

This exhibit examines the work done at Goodyear Aircraft-Arizona between the years 1941 to 1945. It is set against a larger framework of WWII events and activities carried out at the parent company in Akron. Also included are photos of the Naval Air Facility that was established alongside the plant and early photos from the town of Goodyear which was incorporated in 1946. Take a look at this fascinating window into the past. You will come away with a deep appreciation for that generation – the one that Tom Brokaw has dubbed *The Greatest Generation*.

The Wilbur E. Kaufman Collection

In late spring, 85-year old Wilbur E. (Bill) Kaufman walked into the LPHS bearing treasures for our museum. Mr. Kaufman, born in 1930 to Fred and Beulah Kaufman, grew up on his father's farm in Liberty, Arizona. He attended Liberty School where his mother was one of the teachers. When his father sold his farm in the 1940s, he moved his family to Phoenix. Young Bill, unhappy in Phoenix, was invited to live with Apprentice Farmer John Edge and his wife Margaret. Earning his keep by working on the farm, Bill attended Litchfield High School and graduated in the class of 1948.

Among the many artifacts Bill donated to our museum are an assortment of early farming tools that his father used, a pitchfork given to him to use when he was 14, and a beautiful small toy tractor he received as a Christmas present when he was six years old. You'll also be able to see a fountain pen and pencil set given to him by the Edges as a graduation gift, his pocket watch, and his dog tags from his stint in the Army during the Korean War. Bill also added two cotton scales to our permanent exhibits and a 1930s typewriter with typing paper and carbon paper. **(This is the time for all of you who are grandparents to bring in your grandchildren and impress them by explaining how smart we all were when we used typewriters and didn't make mistakes!)** You'll also be able to view kitchen utensils from Mr. Kaufman's family. Among these items are a coffee grinder that traveled from Europe around Cape Horn to Arizona (it still works), a cast iron kettle and pans, and a press that was used to extract lard from pig cracklings. We are honored that Mr. Kaufman chose to donate these treasures to our museum; and we know you'll enjoy viewing them in our permanent collections.



Mr. Kaufman, author of the book *"Liberty, Arizona – Remembering Our Past,"* is a Lifetime Member of the LPHS and MUSEUM as well as one of our newsletter sponsors. He has recently completed a new book, *"The Migrant Worker,"* which details the lives of the people who came to Arizona during the 1930s from the Dust Bowl States and settled in the Southwest Valley. The book is filled with pictures and stories from that time period. Mr. Kaufman knew most of these people and grew up with their children. We will be having a book signing for him at the October 25th opening. You can meet him then and purchase a signed copy of his new book at that time.

Check Us Out Online

The Litchfield Park Historical Society and Museum is launching a new look to our website. Visit often to get updates on exhibitions, new merchandise in the Museum Store, browse past copies of our newsletter and to connect to our Facebook Page. Many thanks to Karen Krause and Jeff Raible for all their work on the website and to John Donahue for hosting our Facebook Page. Check it out at LitchfieldParkHistoricalSociety.org



Looking at the Past – Litchfield Park will Soon be 100!

It's time to mark your calendars for 2017! In February of that year, the city of Litchfield Park and the LPHS and MUSEUM will be having a three-day celebration of the 100th anniversary of Litchfield Park. Why February of 2017 and not 2016, you might ask? Isn't 2016 the year when Paul Litchfield came out to the Salt River Valley seeking a means of growing long-staple cotton? Yes, it was. However, in collecting archival material and museum artifacts over the last several years, it came to light that we owned three anniversary programs (1st, 35th, and 40th) indicating that the people who lived through that time period believed that the first year of Litchfield Park was 1917. How could we contradict their judgment?

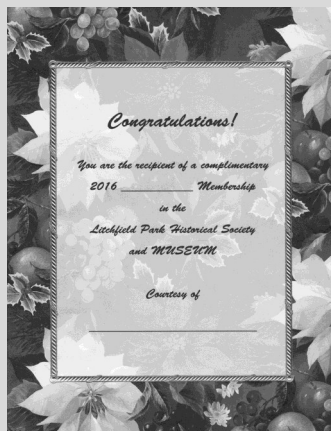
The three programs that we found are what we consider *primary sources*. Researchers covet primary sources – items such as letters, contracts, diaries, programs, etc. because they give an accurate picture of the actual history. *Secondary sources* are items such as books, magazine and newspaper articles, research papers, and the like. These items have in common the fact that they were written by somebody who, in one way or another, had done research of their own. So like a filter, they can often contain distortions, ambiguities, and sometimes just plain errors; and they can even omit important facts. Many times at the museum our docents have to tell visitors that 'we believe this to be true' or 'we aren't quite sure why' or 'we're not certain' or 'we're not exactly sure of that.' Every person who has lived has woven a thread of history. Often those threads are lost or destroyed completely. So sometimes we have to make decisions that are our best guesses with the information we have at the time. However, months later we might actually accession an item into our collections that fills in one piece of information – or dramatically changes what we once thought to be true. It's like fitting pieces into a puzzle. Frustrating? Yes! But researchers at our museum will tell you that it's a fascinating process!

So – in February of 2017, there will be three days of festivities in downtown Litchfield Park. In addition, the society and museum will be having a **100th anniversary commemorative coin** made from Arizona copper, as well as an exhibition marking the high points of the first 100 years in Litchfield Park. And don't close your books after February, because the following October the **museum** will be celebrating its **fifth anniversary!** There will be many surprises to come. Stay tuned and be a part of the celebration.

Give a Gift of History

Gift Memberships are Available!

Looking for something unique to give friends and family? Give a 2016 Gift Membership to the LPHS & Museum. Pair it with an item from the Gift Shop (most items are under \$20) and you will have the perfect holiday gift. Choose from soaprocks, Christmas ornaments, jewelry, note cards, local area history books, Kachinas, Oaxacan carved animals, and more. Stop by the Museum soon.



Sponsors

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Rick Hughes
Haircutters in the Park

Wilbur E. Kaufman
Litchfield High School Class of 1948

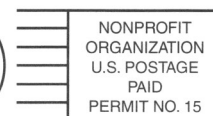
Peter Mahoney
Old Pueblo Café & The Park Café

John Manobianco
State Farm Insurance

Margie Martinez
La Loma Mexican Grill



PO Box 1936
Litchfield Park, Arizona 85340



Museum Hours

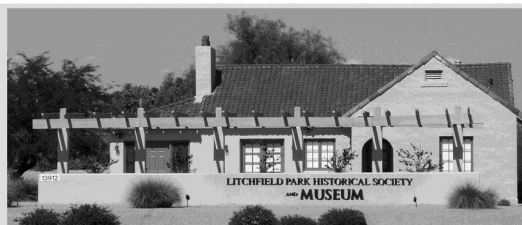
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
And by appointment - call 623-535-4414

Address: 13912 W. Camelback Rd.
Litchfield Park, Arizona 85340

email: office@LPHSmuseum.org

Do you have empty aluminum cans?

The LPHS will recycle them for you.
Leave them at the garage door of
610 N. Old Litchfield Road, Litchfield
Park. The money will help the LPHS
pay its utility bills.



Join Us. It is through your dues and donations that we are able to continue our efforts
to preserve the history of Litchfield Park. *Become a member today.*

LPHS 2016 Membership/Special Donation Form

January 1 – December 31, 2016 membership year

Name _____ Spouse's Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Annual Membership Dues ☐ Single Adult \$20 ☐ Family \$30 ☐ Business/Professional \$60
☐ Contributor \$125 ☐ Lifetime \$600

I would like to make an additional Special Donation of: ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ Other _____

Thank you! Please make your check payable to: **Litchfield Park Historical Society,**
PO Box 1936, Litchfield Park, AZ 85340

Would you be interested in volunteering to work on a committee or help in the museum? ☐ Yes

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