

Litchfield Legends

Spring 2013

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the Children of Tom Heim, Sr.

a publication of the Litchfield Park Historical Society

Tierra Verde:

A Planned Community

It was the 1960's and times were changing. Two significant streams of history were about to converge in Litchfield Park --- the New Town Movement and the *company town*.

The first stream found its source in the late 18th century with the Industrial Revolution. It had come and stayed. As we have witnessed many times, every change in technology has an impact on the way people live going forward; some of it is good and some of it is bad. While the Industrial Revolution produced many labor-saving machines and provided thousands of jobs for people who no longer wanted to work on farms, it also created industrial cities that were overcrowded, chaotic, and polluted. A largely rural way of life had been reshaped into *life in the city*.

By the early 1800's, people began calling this unintended by-product of the Industrial Revolution "*Urban Disease*." To cure this *disease*, model communities were proposed. One such idea was the Garden City Movement of the late 1800's; and it is from that concept that the New Town Movement was derived. New Towns were towns built after World War II that were purposefully planned, developed and built as remedies to the overcrowding and congestion of industrialized cities. The main goal was to establish a completely self-sufficient community and provide *sustainability* for the inhabitants. Suburbia had sorted people by income levels, didn't provide work for its inhabitants, and rarely offered opportunities for neighbors to mix. New Towns were designed to create an environment that was human in scale, housing for all income levels and ages, areas in which to interact with one's neighbors, and employment for most. They were designed to offer inhabitants a better way to live.

The second historical stream was to be found within Litchfield Park itself. Both Paul Weeks Litchfield and Kenneth McMicken had passed away. Litchfield died on March 18, 1959, and McMicken followed two weeks later. For forty-three years, these two men oversaw the ups and downs of the Southwest Cotton Co. and Goodyear Farms. They had weathered the years of The Great Depression and World War II and preserved Goodyear's holdings in Arizona. Now the cousins were gone and the era of the *company town* went with them.

TWO NEW EXHIBITS ON DISPLAY

GRAND OPENING

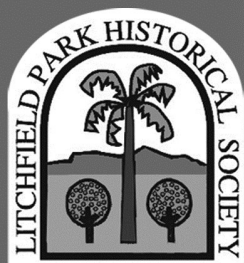
Sunday, April 7th, 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Tierra Verde: A Planned Community

STITCHES IN TIME: Local Historic Quilts

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Letter from the President: Lisa Brainard-Watson

With the coming of spring, we see beautiful flowers blooming and vibrant green grass changing our landscape. We are preparing for changes, too. At the end of March, we will close two of our exhibitions: **"Early Mexican-American Life in Litchfield Park"** and **"A Company Town: Litchfield Park from 1916-1959."** They have been well received; we were gratified to see how they touched the hearts of so many of our visitors. We will be replacing them with two new exhibits: **"Tierra Verde: A Planned Community"** and **"STITCHES IN TIME: Local Historic Quilts."** Read this newsletter for more details about them. They are scheduled for a **public opening on Sunday, April 7th, from 1:00-5:00 p.m.** It should be an exciting Spring!

TIERRA VERDE continued from Page 1

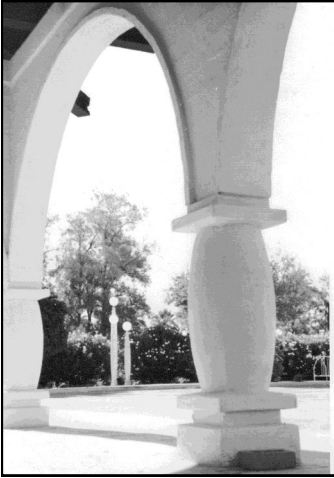
It is in this context that Litchfield Park's *Tierra Verde* period flowered. The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. had come up with a new plan for its *company town*; Litchfield Park was to become part of the New Town Movement. Howard Hyde, an employee of Goodyear and a son-in-law of Paul Litchfield, oversaw the venture. He and Richard Barnet, Hyde's right-hand man, hired the firm of Victor Gruen and Associates from Pittsburgh to head a consulting team to plan for Litchfield Park's future. Victor Gruen was a renowned city planner.

A design was laid out for a city of 100,000 people. Its borders were Camelback Road on the north, almost to the Agua Fria River on the east, McDowell Road on the south, and Cotton Lane on the west. The city would be called Litchfield Park and would include six different communities. Each community would be comprised of two villages, and each village would contain four different types of neighborhoods. Down the middle of the city (east to west) would be a central core area that included a college, civic and arts centers, a hospital complex, and a cluster of regional shops. Each village would center itself around a small group of local businesses, churches, an elementary school, and a recreational center. Each community would be isolated from heavily trafficked roads. Residential streets were closed loops and the communities were connected with a pathway system for walking, riding bicycles, and driving golf carts. In 1964 the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. announced it would build a New Town. The first village was to be superimposed over the existing town of Litchfield Park and its new name would be *Tierra Verde*. Work began.

Come and view this little-known time period in the history of Litchfield Park. See how it left an indelible impression and shaped today's community: the lake, the Rec Center, the commercial area, the professional building, and the development of the various Litchfield Park neighborhoods. See the plans that make today's Litchfield Park so uniquely different from other surrounding developments.

And find out why the project was never completed.

Did you know? Mike Cartsonis named most of the streets in Litchfield Park.



Tierra Verde: A Planned Community



Moving old buildings to make room
for new construction



Litchfield Park Club



Village Planners: (left) Pat Cusick, (right) Mike
Cartsonis and unidentified man.



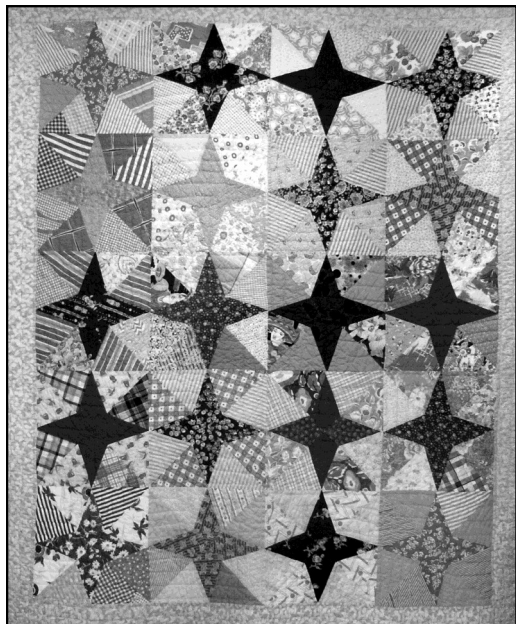
STITCHES IN TIME: Local Historic Quilts

Come and view our exhibition of historic quilts dating from 1900 to 1940 --- the years that the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. was in full swing. Located in **The Wigwam Gallery** of our museum, this exhibit is a kaleidoscope of colors and prints. Many were made from flour sack material. The patterns are traditional --- *Grandmother's Garden*, *Butterflies*, *Sunbonnet Sue*, *Stars*, *Patchwork Sofa*, *Drunkard's Path*, *Dresden Plate*, *Irish Chain*, *Snowball*, *Amie's Choice*, as well as some with embroidery and appliqué. See the unique color palettes in these wonderful examples of hand quilting.

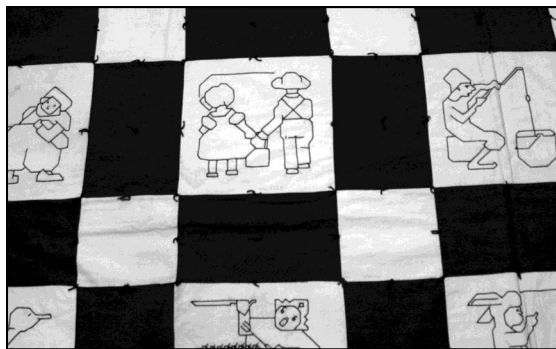
Quilts during this time period were intended to be used. Because of their utilitarian nature, most show wear. Some have been preserved for 80 years. All of the quilts are unique works of art and personal expressions of the women who created them.

Come and celebrate the world of quilt-making with us.

EXHIBIT OPENING: Sunday April 7th, 1:00-5:00 p.m.



"Octagon" Courtesy of Brenda Little



"Beverly" Courtesy of Mary McElvain

Kathleen O'Connell
and Donna Wisnoski
(Quilted Textile
Appraiser) evaluating
quilts



Did you know? Trontera St. was mistakenly named. It was supposed to be Frontera—the Spanish word for *frontier* or *border*.

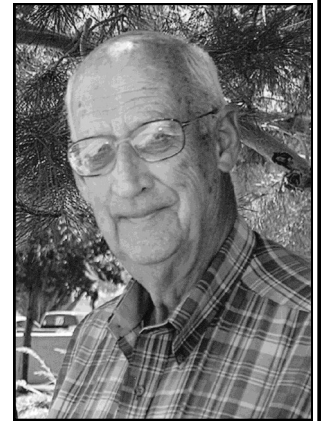
In Memoriam Jim Warkomski 1927-2012

On December 22nd, the LPHS unexpectedly lost Board member and good friend, Jim Warkomski. Jim had been a member of the LPHS and served on the Board since its inception. He had been the Society's Treasurer for nine of those years. Jim had a passion for history and was a driving force in the re-establishment of the WWII Memorial on the Litchfield Elementary School grounds.

Jim was born in Pennsylvania and was a registered professional engineer and land surveyor. He worked for many years in Aerospace Engineering in California and Arizona. When Jim took over the family cotton business in 1969, he and his wife and family moved to Litchfield Park. He briefly opened his own engineering firm, but remained an active surveyor until his death. He leaves behind his wife, Anne, and two sons, Ed and Jon, and three grandchildren.

All the members of the Board of the LPHS have been so saddened by this loss. Jim was the most honorable of men. His wisdom, patience, and perseverance were treasured by all of us who were fortunate enough to know him. He has left a space in our hearts that no one can quite fill. He is truly missed.

The Board of Directors of the LPHS



TOP 25

Did you know that the story about our new museum on October 19, 2012, in the ***West Valley View*** was selected as one of the top 25 news stories of the year?

We are so proud of that recognition.

Thank you, *West Valley View*.

You made our day!



STILL LOOKING

The LPHS is ***still looking*** for historical photos and artifacts to add to its new museum.

Check your closets, spare rooms, and garages. **You may have something for us to treasure.**

The Arizona Quilt Documentation Project is coming to the museum in the fall ...

The Arizona Quilters Hall of Fame has set out to document quilts of all ages that have either been made in or brought to Arizona. Their members are dedicated to documenting, collecting, and preserving information about quilts and quilt makers of Arizona --- past and present.

The information they collect will include not only the owner/maker and physical data of the quilt, but also the history of the family, community, socio-economic status, cultural influences, and artistic traditions from which the quilt came. This information will be archived in the Quilt Index, a recognized database for quilt documentation.

The Documentation Project will be at the museum in the fall as a joint project with the LPHS and Quilters Anonymous, a local quilting group. Watch for further information with the date of this event and the procedure to get an appointment to have your quilt(s) documented.

Special thanks to: **The City of Litchfield Park** and **Tim Blake**, LandCare Unl.

General Counsel—**Paul J. Faith, Esq.**, Faith, Ledyard, Nickel & Shelsky P.L.C.

Research Consultant—**Dr. Gloria Cuadraz**, ASU Office of Oral History & Ethnography

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Check out these items for sale at the Litchfield Park Historical Society and *Museum*.



NEW MUSEUM HOURS

Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays

10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

and by appointment --- call 623-535-4414

DO YOU HAVE EMPTY ALUMINUM CANS?

The LPHS will recycle them for you. Leave them at the garage door of **610 North Old Litchfield Road, Litchfield Park**. The money realized from their recycling will help the LPHS pay its utility bills.

LPHS 2013 Membership/Special Donation Form

January 1 – December 31, 2013 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 ☐ Benefactor \$300 ☐ 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

Do you have historic photographs or artifacts you would like to donate to the LPHS? ☐ 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.