

Vol. No 12 Issue No. 2, April, May, June 2015 * <http://threerivershistoricalsocietyaz.org>

A Hero is Agua Fria Union High School's Favorite Teacher

Times have changed. Gone are the days of the car coats, duck tail haircuts and Mom's Drive In. Today it's warm sweaters, balding heads and Golden Corral. We're left with memories of times long gone, but, those memories are a treasury of historical information. One of the memories that I have and will never forget has nothing to do with actual local history. It happened on the first day of the new Agriculture class at Agua Fria High. Paul Bell, our brand new agriculture teacher, walked to the front of the class and asked, "Who here knows what Corregidor was?"

Unfortunately, not many did know. A couple of classmates and I knew what he was asking about. How many today know about Corregidor? More importantly, how many actually care about it? Well, Paul Bell certainly cared, because he was a young sailor stationed on the Island of Corregidor in the Philippines when the Japanese attacked and subsequently overran the island at the start of WWII. Mr. Bell was captured, and, along with thousands of other prisoners of war, and was forced to endure the now infamous Bataan Death March. Those who were unable to keep up were brutally bayoneted or shot by their Japanese captors. Mr. Bell remained a prisoner until his liberation at war's end in 1945.

During the Death March, and while imprisoned, Mr. Bell witnessed and endured unspeakable torture and other inhumane acts. That Mr. Bell survived at all is testimony to his strength of character and fighting spirit. That he asked the class about Corregidor was not to gain any sympathy or recognition for him. No, his desire was that those who didn't survive were not forgotten, that their sacrifice was remembered. Sadly, it appears that his fears have come home to roost. How many today even know where Corregidor is or what happened there so long ago?

Paul Bell was one hell of a great teacher. He loved what he did and his students loved him. As for me...well, Mr. Bell, I will never forget what you did for your students and the sacrifice you made for your country. I hope others remember too. Paul Bell was one of a kind...rare by today's standards. We were so fortunate to know him...and to learn for him. He passed away some time back. Though he may be gone, his memory remains. Adios, Mr. Bell, we'll see you later.

by Tom Kampert

Buffalo Soldiers in Arizona

With the end of the Civil War, five U.S. Army regiments were sent west to protect the settlers and help open up the territory. Among them were the 9th and 10th Cavalry, two black units, heralding the beginning of the era of the “Buffalo Soldiers” in Arizona.



The first units arrived at Fort Huachuca in Southern Arizona in 1892; troops of the 9th Cavalry joined the 25th Infantry in 1898. However it wasn't until the 10th Cavalry arrived in December of 1913 that the era of the black soldiers really began. The men of the 10th were dubbed “Buffalo Soldiers” by the plains Indians because their curly black hair reminded them of buffalo. The nickname stuck.

Maj. Gen. John B. Brook, USAF Retired, in an interview in Huachuca Illustrated, a magazine published by the Fort Huachuca Museum, described the scramble to find an atlas by junior officers of the 10th when they received word that they were moving to Fort Huachuca. No one knew where Fort Huachuca was let alone how to pronounce the name. Things haven't changed much. In the '50s a telephone information operator in Tucson was asked if she knew the name of the fort in southern Arizona that sounded like a sneeze.

In 1914, the 10th Cavalry was assigned to protect the U.S. border with Mexico. Their encampments spread from Yuma on the west to Naco on the east. In 1916, they joined General John J. Pershing on his expedition into Mexico in search of the illusive Poncho Villa. They were replaced by the 25th Infantry Regiment as the main combat unit in 1931.

Today Fort Huachuca is the home of the U.S. Army Intelligence Center and the U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command (NETCOM)/9th Army Signal Command.

An interesting side note: Libby Army Airfield is located on post and shares the runway with Sierra Vista Municipal Airport. It was on the list of alternate landing locations for the space shuttle, although it was never used.

by Nancy L. Brandt

Leading the Way Since 1971

If you lived in Tolleson in 1971 you would have received a letter that began something like this, “February 19, 1971. Dear Citizen of Tolleson: Your neighborhood has been selected to receive Tolleson’s unique containerized collection service.” Residents from the City of Tolleson were about to receive the first ever complete automated garbage collection system in the United States.



In 1971, the City received grant funding from what was known as the Office of Solid Waste Management Program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The funding was for the City to carry out a study on the potential savings of using a non-stop collection system versus the rear end loader method that was currently being used to collect refuse.

This project was completed in 3 phases; Phase I: Demonstrated that the concept of non-stop collection was feasible and could be mechanized successfully; Phase II: Development of a non-stop prototype truck, installation of 53 containers and demonstration of the use of the new truck was completed; and Phase III: Implementation of the non-stop collection system was implemented city-wide. After implementation of the project was completed a survey was administered determining that nearly 99% of system users felt that the non-stop collection was an improvement over the rear end loader method. This project that was conducted in the City of Tolleson demonstrated that communities throughout the entire United States could save thousands of tax dollars.

Now in 2015, the City of Tolleson continues to embark on new ventures and will continue to strive to be in the forefront of positive progress for the community and its residents.

**by Pilar Sinawi, Public Affairs Administrator
City of Tolleson**

Litchfield High Schools 'Kissing Tree' Finds a New Home

Well, it's finally over... our famous Litchfield High School "Kissing Tree", all 3355 pounds, this tree owned and enjoyed by everyone that ever walked our hallowed halls, was placed in its final resting place at 11:33 A.M. on July 7, 2012, at 16522 W. Magnolia St. in Goodyear, Arizona, my home. This was THE KISSING TREE, a mighty olive it was, located on the west side of our gym. It had to go down as the property was needed for additional classrooms. Many hearts fluttered under it and many romances began there. Oh, and a few faces got slapped pretty hard too, mine included, for a quick peck on the cheek of a pretty Litchfield High School lass!

Back in my high school days, 1947 and into the 1950's, students from Goodyear and Avondale had the choice of attending either Litchfield or Tolleson High Schools. I chose to be a Litchfield Owl and became well acquainted with the "Kissing Tree" that served Litchfield High students and teachers so faithfully since the time our gym was built back in 1928. Students gathered under it on very warm days to enjoy the cool shade; during recess and lunch time we talked about whatever kids talk about in those days. Sometimes a young lad could coax his secret girlfriend under the olive tree's silvery leaves for a quick peck on the cheek. Those were the days, no worries and carefree. This tree, located on the northwest corner of our gym, next to the original entrance, was scheduled to be destroyed along with our old Mission style gym dedicated to Paul W Litchfield in 1928. It would be replaced with six class rooms. Margaret Baker and I, along with others, worked hard to save it. But unfortunately we started too late. But the tree, this tree that held so many wonderful memories for you and me during our high school days, must be saved; I was on a mission to save it. I befriended a couple of the destruction company employees and they must have had empathy for me because they assured me they would gently push it over so I could save it for all of LHS! I was only able to save the bottom 10 feet; this massive tree was just too large to move entirely.



And so, this giant, massive, old olive tree would have rather remained where it was planted and spend its entire life in the friendly confines of Litchfield Park. Unfortunately it was not to be, but thanks to good luck and help from above, it cheated a landfill somewhere. It now stands proudly in its new location, ready to renew old friendships. It won't be the same, but nothing ever remains the same. It is and always will be OUR LITCHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL KISSING TREE. You know where it is, AND THE DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN!

On April 20, 2012, thanks to an alumni committee, a big farewell party was held in the old gym. We called it "The Last Farewell, So Kiss Your Gym Goodbye" party. The gym clock was auctioned off that night and was purchased by Peter Mahoney, owner of the Old Pueblo Café. It now resides at his business, where it belongs, in beautiful Litchfield Park.

by Ken Wood

A Sad Farewell to the Centennial Trail

After much discussion, the Board of Directors of Three Rivers Historical Society has withdrawn from the Centennial Trail project at Estrella Mountain Regional Park.

Three Rivers started planning this project in 2009 with partners Maricopa County Parks and Recreation and West Valley Art Council. In 2011 and 2012 approximately 1,000 volunteer hours were spent clearing the site of the invasive salt cedar. 3RHS volunteers were joined by service groups and many community volunteers. It was a joy to see how many were willing to help. Hickman Eggs provided haul away services for all the brush. Estrella Park personnel removed the remaining stumps. By the end of 2011, West Valley Art Council had completed the art work for the trail; they had a change in leadership and the Trail was no longer a priority. In 2013, Estrella Park obtained 230 saplings; more 3RHS hours were donated keeping the saplings watered.

Through it all, a dedicated Centennial Trail Committee met regularly, mapped progress and planned for the future. During the project there were personnel changes at Estrella Park and at the County level which often meant reselling the dream. In April 2014, the Maricopa County Parks Westside Superintendent advised us that we needed a Memorandum of Understanding to clarify the responsibilities of the County and 3RHS. The Society felt we could not make further plans until the County provided the MOU. By November, still lacking the MOU from the County, the Board decided that 3RHS could no longer adequately raise funds and keep the momentum going for the years it would take to complete the project.

A letter to that effect was sent to Maricopa County Parks and Recreation. In January they replied that they regretted 3RHS' decision, and that they will continue to work to develop an interpretive trail in the area.

Funding and expenditures for the Trail project have always been maintained in a discrete account. The Board of Directors is completing a final accounting of the project and will soon be contacting those who donated to this project regarding options for disposition of the remaining fund balance.

New Officers for 3RHS

Three Rivers Historical Society installed new officers for 2015 at the February 17th meeting. Please welcome our new and returning officers: Mark Pelletier, President, Betty Lynch, First Vice President, Laura Kaino, Second Vice President, Sally Kiko, Secretary and David Meese, Treasurer. The Board Members are JoAnn Gongaware, Diane Fekete, Wendy Neely and Al Field. The Board is working hard to find ways to improve our organization, find interesting speakers and increase community participation. Please consider ways we can improve and grow our membership and share those ideas with any Board Member. More importantly, think of ways YOU can help!

Our meeting schedule for the next few months are April 21 and May 19 at 3:00 PM at the meeting room at the Goodyear Library. We will not have meetings in June and July; meetings will resume in August. Look forward to great speakers at each meeting. Our Board meets on the second Tuesday of each month in the Mohave Room at Avondale City Hall.



Oh Boy, There's a Yard Sale...

Is there anyone who does not love to discover a surprise bargain? Early in American history (1800's) there were shipyard sales of unclaimed cargo. They may be referred to as rummage sales out on the docks! Today we have moved closer to home. Storage companies will sell an entire unit of items after people stop paying the rent on it. Sometimes there are auctions on TV and pickers hope to find a hidden item that has value way above the auction price they paid. And they do find them because the original owners had good intentions to keep things they valued. The picker's happy surprise is so inspiring, they bid again and again! It is a gamble they can't resist.

Garage sale, basement sale, estate sale, yard sale, moving sale, patio sale...whatever you call it, they are managed by individuals, and have no regular schedules. Also, no sales tax is collected. Advertising is usually hand lettered signs placed near the location of the sale. Flyers may be passed out and ads placed in newspapers or even on the Internet these days. Count on seasoned buyers to show up before you are ready to open...they recognize the *real bargains* and they grab them. You must be prepared to bargain. Even if you have priced an item very low, someone will want it for less! Sometimes you get rid of an old kitchen gadget and a buyer will say, "I can paint it and hang it on the wall!" You mumble, "Why didn't I think of that?"

Charities like the idea of making money. These sales are called fundraisers and they are very profitable for worthy causes. People donate items they no longer need or want occasionally brand new clothes with the price tag attached. This we call "a steal," which is way better than "a deal." Tools are the main attraction for male buyers. Mothers like children's clothes and toys.

Three Rivers Historical Society (3RHS) has taken advantage of the yard sale opportunities. For one, it creates a friendly activity among members and two, it has a profitable outcome! Peggy and Don Jones provided their large back yard in Avondale for several sales. Members provided a large variety of items, and then volunteers priced them, set up tables and created displays, and sold them. The official treasurer's report shows a gross income of \$688.83 for an October, 2008, sale. This was accomplished in just a few hours. We closed before noon and enjoyed lunch together. Our treasurer, Don Jones, enjoyed counting the money too!

Did you know there is a *National Garage Sale Day*? This big sale day is held the second weekend in August. Many communities will have a neighborhood sale with everyone on a block (or more) having all kinds of "stuff" for sale in their yard, driveway and garage! In July, 2013, it was reported that an estimated 690,000 people make a purchase in a yard sale each week...at the 165,000 estimated yard sales.

Spring cleaning is just around the corner...are you thinking what I am thinking? Oh boy, Yard Sale!



by Gloria King

Boy Scouts of America

Mr. Paul Litchfield, of The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, was a man with many interests. His interest in Boy Scouts began in 1911. He was on a trip to witness the Coronation of King George V and Queen Mary when his ship was delayed for three days by a dense fog and floating ice bergs. This eerie experience was saved by a group of Boy Scouts from Alberta, Canada. The Scouts were cheerful and high spirited and took the ships passengers mind off the situation. Mr. Litchfield was intrigued by the Scouts and asked them a lot of questions about scouting. He had heard about scouting as it had been introduced in the United States.



Colonel Robert SS Baden-Powell of the British Army established the scouting movement in England in 1908. Scouting history tells us that in 1909 an American, William Boyce was lost in London and was aided to his destination by a Boy Scout. He was so impressed that he visited Col. Baden-Powell and returned to America with a trunk full of Scout literature, uniforms and insignia. Mr. Boyce and his friend, Colin Livingston, established the American Scouting Organization located in Washington, DC.

Upon his return to Akron, Ohio, Paul Litchfield began to establish a Boy Scout troop for the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company employees. This was the first industrial sponsored troop and

was established in 1913. Mr. Litchfield liked the idea of giving the boys the training expressed in the 12 Scout Laws, which developed character, physical fitness, clean living and good citizenship. He also liked Scouts activities in woodcraft, camping and outdoor life. He liked that Scouting was open to all boys and emphasized the individual boy. He felt if every nation utilized the basic values of Scouting that boys everywhere would grow up with these ideals and world peace and understanding might be a possible goal. The Brotherhood of Man starts with the Brotherhood of Boys.

Goodyear's first troop was Troop 16, it later became Troop 40 and Mr. Litchfield served on the committee. The first Scout Lodge was built in Akron, Ohio. Over time Scout Troops were chartered worldwide where Goodyear had plants. By 1975, there were 2,168 Scouts participating in 38 troops internationally.

Locally Goodyear Boy Scout Troop 99 was chartered in August of 1943, by the Goodyear Aircraft Corporation. They met at the Goodyear Scout Lodge that was built in 1944, on the NE corner of Western and Litchfield Road. When Goodyear sold to Loral Defense Systems, Loral continued the tradition of sponsoring Troop 99. When Loral became Lockheed Martin Corporation in 1997, The Church at Litchfield Park became their sponsor. The Scout Lodge later became the City of Goodyear's City Hall at which time Troop 99 moved to the Litchfield Park Scout Lodge.

The Boy Scout Troop 99 leadership was primarily employees of Goodyear Aircraft Corporation. The first Scoutmaster was Henry Lowery, Standards and Methods Department, who came with 15 years experience in Alabama scouting and held the Scouter's Training Award. The troop started with eight scouts and quickly grew. Over the years the troop included Avondale boys outside the company. Troop 99 was known for their annual trip to Catalina Island where they camped and hiked. Initially, these trips were funded by Goodyear Aircraft Corporation. Later the troop became known as The Vertical Edge for rock climbing and snow skiing.

Boy Scout Troop 90 was chartered on January 31, 1929 by the Litchfield Park Community. By 1935, the charter was still “a group of citizens” and then in 1939, by the Southwest Cotton Company and in 1944 Goodyear Farms. This troop was for the boys of Goodyear Farms. They met at the school and for a few years at the local corral. It was not until 1954 that the Litchfield Park Scout Lodge was built by the men of Goodyear Farms. The lodge was located west of The Church at Litchfield Park. Mr. Litchfield dedicated the lodge on January 31, 1954. The charter remained under Goodyear Farms until it had new ownership. Litchfield Park was sold to Suncor Development in 1986. In 2011 the troop moved their charter to a nonprofit Litchfield Park Scout Lodge Preservation

Scouts were active in Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company in many ways. They participated in community activities where the company plants were located. The year that Mr. Litchfield was promoting the new Pneumatic Tire for trucks and buses, he selected outstanding scouts from each of the company’s troops and sent them on a motorcade from Akron to New York to test the new tire and give the scouts a cross country trip. The scouts participated in the new era of truck tires.

Even though he never had a son, Mr. Litchfield remained active in Scouting and received many awards. He helped organize the Air & Sea Explorer Scouts to keep older boys interested in scouting. He received the Silver Beaver Award, the highest Council Award, and Silver Antelope for Distinguished Service in the Region and the Silver Buffalo the Highest Award of National and International Service. In 1953 he received his 40 year Veteran Boy Scout Pin and in 1956 was presented with the 15 Millionth copy of the Handbook for Boys in recognition of his interest and work for the Boy Scouts of America.

by Celeste Crouch & Meredith Stucky



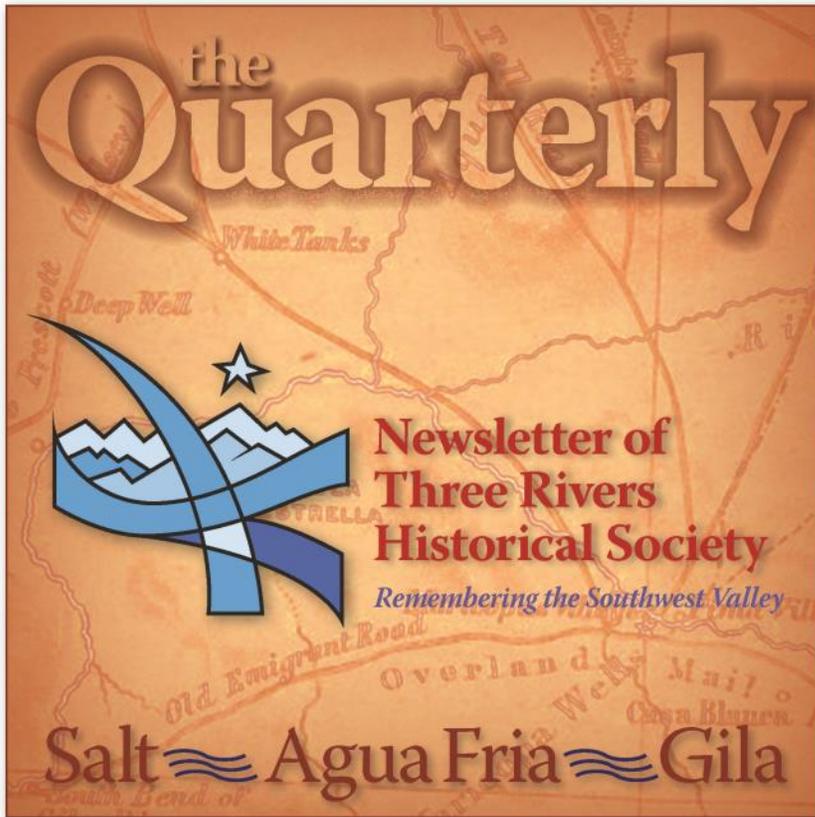
Three Rivers has joined the modern age. Thanks to David Meese, our Treasurer, we now are on Facebook. Be sure to look for Three Rivers Historical Society-AZ as there are other Three Rivers Historical Societies. David and Laura Kaino are in the process of uploading items to our page so we are still a work in progress. We hope you’ll take a minute to visit us and “like” us.



Thank You, Gracias, Danke, Merci!

My sincere thanks to all the wonderful contributors who helped fill this issue with interesting articles. They all generously gave of their time and talent when I most needed them.

Sally Kiko



Yes, I want to join Three Rivers Historical Society!

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student \$5* | <input type="checkbox"/> Single \$15* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$25* | <input type="checkbox"/> Business/Professional \$45* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributor \$100* | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$250* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime \$500 | * <i>Yearly Fee</i> |

Join _____ Renew _____ Call me to volunteer _____

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Check enclosed in the amount of \$ _____
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Make out your check and mail to:

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Three Rivers Historical Society

Remembering the Southwest Valley

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Diane Fekete, Wendy Neely,

Al Field

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The Quarterly

Editor:

Sally Kiko & Diane Fekete

3RHS Meetings

We meet on the third Tuesday of each month at 3pm, at Goodyear Library, 14415 W. Van Buren, Goodyear, Arizona. Notices of date, location and guest speaker are e-mailed. Be sure we have your correct address. E-mail Sally at kskiko@cox.net