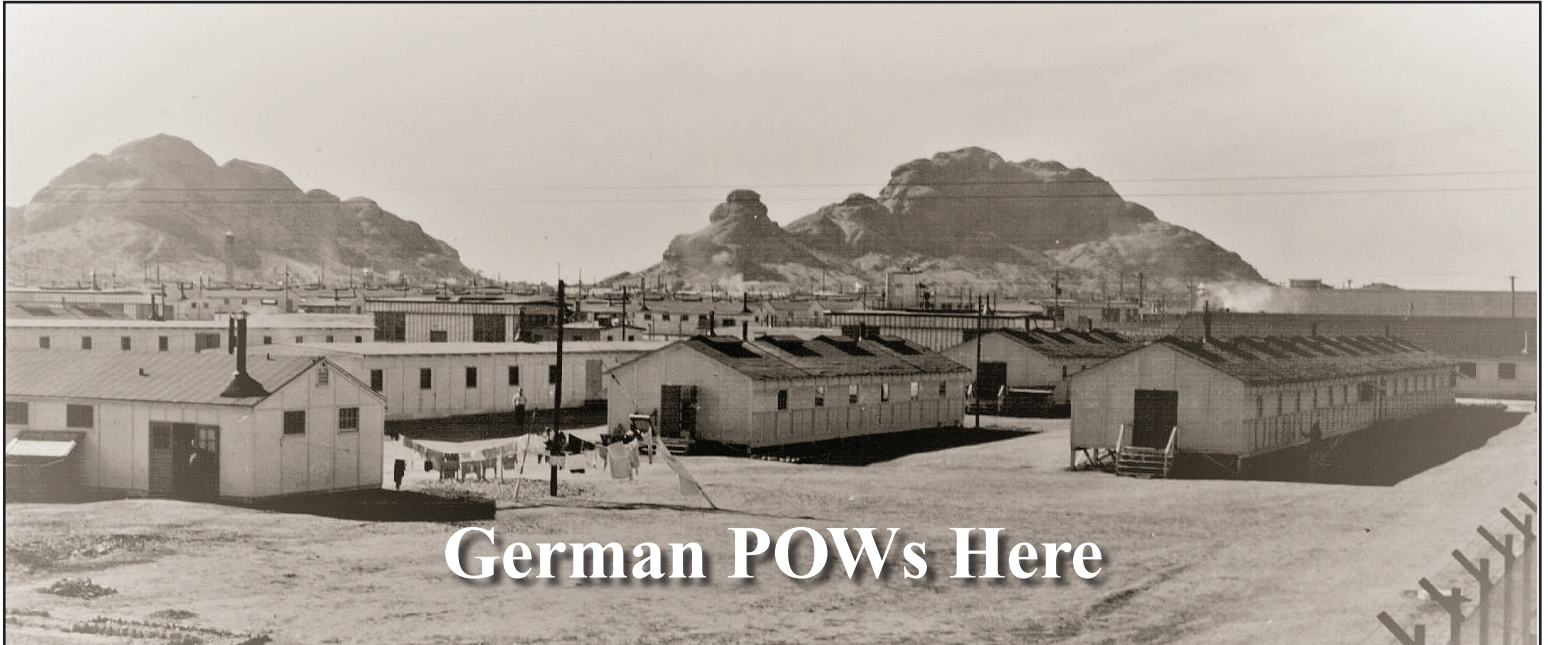


The Quarterly

Remembering the Southwest Valley

Three Rivers Historical Society

Salt • Agua Fria • Gila



German POWs Here

Nearly 400,000 German POWs were brought to the United States during World War II. In our area there were several POW camps that had both German and Italian prisoners. Because so many of our young men were away at war, many of the local farmers utilized those prisoners who were willing to work.

Ken Wood tells about his father, Ronald R. Wood, who was one of the farmers in the Avondale-Goodyear area employing German POWs in the later stages of WWII. Because our young men were off fighting to protect our country, these prisoners were a welcome sight to our farming community. In the 40s, cotton and citrus harvest were the big labor demanding crops. I remember Dad coming in for supper and telling Mom, "It looks like now we're going to have our cotton harvested before the rains begin." Mom was so happy she gave each of us kids a second helping of Jell-O pudding that evening.

The best I can remember, we had about 40 to 50 German POWs working on our ranch and most were bussed in from the Papago Park POW Camp in east Phoenix, although some came from the local POW camps. My sister Margaret was only three or four years old, but my brother

Pug and I were intrigued to see men who only months ago were fighting our troops; now they were working for my Dad! Pug, being the curious boy, infiltrated the working German crew while they were picking cotton and before long made friends with many of them.

Pug and I developed a special relationship with one prisoner. He was assigned to oversee the others, so we called him "The Guard." His name was Franz L. Grutchmen. It wasn't long before Franz noticed that every evening, we had to go down the lane almost a half mile and herd the cows back to the barn to milk them. It was the custom to run cattle on the dirt ditch to keep the weeds under control. Franz had a great love of milk and noticed that we drove the cows past the fields they were working in about the same time each evening. Soon he was waiting for us with his mess kit to fill it two or three times with rich warm milk.

They told us they weren't against Americans as the hard-core Nazi soldiers were, but they were forced into the military against their will. Franz and I communicated a number of times by mail after he returned home to Germany.

The Little Airport That Could

By Laura Kaino

Phoenix/Goodyear Airport's Sister Airport —Deer Valley Municipal Airport was built in 1960 as a private airfield with a single runway; its primary financier was television personality Art Linkletter. This simple facility had no control tower and very limited amenities.

In 1971, the City of Phoenix purchased the 482-acre site to use as a relief airport for Phoenix Sky Harbor. Operations began with a temporary air traffic control tower sitting atop a four-foot mound of dirt. Locals joked that the mobile unit looked more like a hot dog stand. They were not too far off; the aging piece of equipment had been used as a hothouse for growing tomatoes before being called back into service for the airport.

In 1975, a new terminal was constructed, and the FAA began directing air traffic. Moving into a modern control tower, the FAA replaced Deer Valley's four hard-working radio operators with 26 air traffic controllers. The airport also became home to the Phoenix Police Department; police utilized a 12,000-square-foot hangar for their citywide helicopter operations. This airport has evolved into one of the busiest noncommercial airports in the nation.

Phoenix Deer Valley Airport has an observation deck at its terminal that provides visitors with a place to watch airplanes take off and land. Consider going there for lunch at their popular restaurant that also has great views of the airfield.

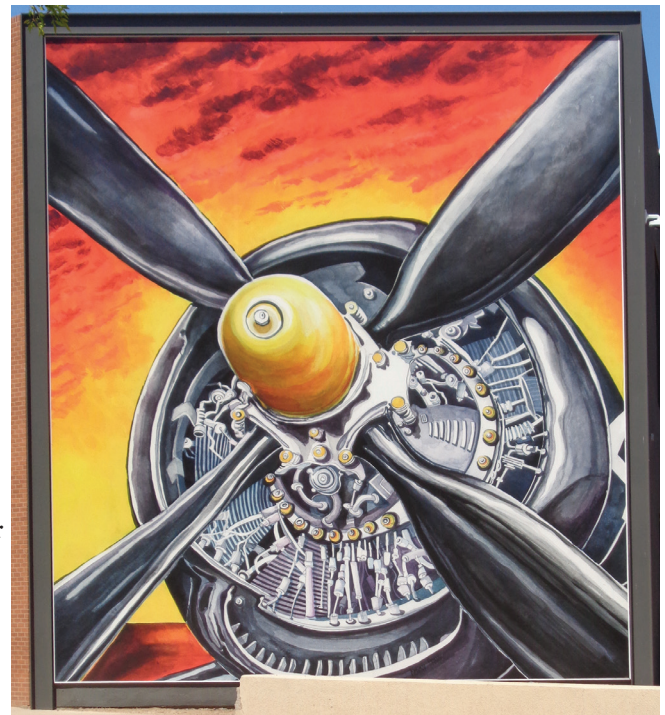
Source: Deer Valley Airport



Sincere Thanks to Flite Center

A tip of the sombrero to D.J. Burton at the Flite Center, formerly Lockheed Martin. D.J. graciously offered us free storage space in one of his buildings. That is a huge savings for us; we were paying rent on three storage units. To top off this wonderful gift, he sent his workers to move the contents of the lockers for us. What would have been a very difficult process was made quite easy thanks to his gracious and strong workers.

Have you seen the beautiful painting on the engineering building, the southernmost building facing Litchfield Road? The image is of a Pratt & Whitney Wasp motor that was used in the F-2G Corsairs that Goodyear Aircraft helped build during WWII here in Goodyear. The Artist is Kimberly Harris. What a beautiful salute to the history of the Flite Center campus. Thank you, D.J.!



The Annexation Wars

By Frank Ross

A little history: Avondale (formerly Coldwater) and Goodyear were both incorporated in 1946. The municipal boundaries were fairly stable for the next 30+ years. Avondale was roughly south of Van Buren, continuing to the Gila River. It was bounded on the east by the Agua Fria River and on the west by Goodyear which roughly lay south of Van Buren and east of Litchfield Road (Note, I use the word “roughly” advisedly because there are plenty of exceptions to the rough boundaries I have mentioned. That stability ended abruptly in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Various city officials along with certain landowners decided it was time for the cities to grow. Never mind that there were no developers standing in line to build in either city. Obviously, there were some who could see the future and decided to make plans for the two cities to have a say in the degree and nature of the coming growth. Hence, the annexation wars began. Before I proceed further, I should tell you how the annexation process worked.



The Statute, (A.R.S., Section 9-471, for those of you who are interested in more detail) specified the procedures that cities had to follow in order to expand their boundaries. The Statute stated that for a city to extend the corporate limits, it would have to begin by filing a petition with the

legal description and a map of territory contiguous to the current boundaries that it wanted to annex. After jumping through some hoops, the city could obtain signatures on the petition requesting annexation. The petitions had to be signed by the owners of one-half or more in value of the real and personal property that would be subject to taxation by the city in the event of annexation. A careful reading of that Statute discloses that a person who owns property worth \$100,000 can sign the petition and force his neighbor who also owns property worth \$100,000 to be annexed to the city without his consent. It gets better. The same property owner who is contiguous to a neighbor who owns property worth \$300,000, can, in effect guarantee that his neighbor will, someday, have to consent to annexation if he wants city services. This is accomplished by doing a survey and drawing a map for the annexation of a ten-foot strip around the more expensive property. The value of the ten-foot strip is

far less than the \$100,000 value of the contiguous property. By annexing the ten-foot strip, the annexing city prevents the property from being “contiguous” to any other city. So, when the \$300,000 land-owner wants city services, he has to consent to being annexed in to the city who annexed the strip. It was through the use of this process that the Litchfield Post Office ended up in Avondale. In order to lock up as much land as they could and block the other cities from annexing land desired by each city, Avondale and Goodyear engaged in strip annexation to the extreme. Strip annexation is the process that resulted in the fact that the two cities’ boundaries are so convoluted.

Back to the Litchfield Post Office. We are all aware that cities play no part in naming or locating a post office. That’s the U.S. Postal Service. The old Litchfield Post Office was on Old Litchfield Road near the intersection with Wigwam Boulevard. Sometime in the late seventies, the Postal Service moved the office to its present location which was not within the boundaries of any city. (Litchfield Park had not been incorporated at that time.) It was in this context that the City of Goodyear and Goodyear Farms (a major landowner) were actively engaging in strip annexation near the intersection of Dysart and Indian School Road. Apparently one of the engineers or surveyors, or somebody, failed to notice a gap in one of their strips. The Avondale engineers noticed the gap and, with the help of a landowner, was able to strip annex through that gap and annex all the property south of Indian School Bypass which included the Litchfield Post Office.

Throughout this time, numerous people and groups were agitating to change the laws so that the number of people who owned land in the area to be annexed, would have a voice regardless of the value of their holdings.

As one might expect, all this head butting resulted in some litigation. The first case was City of Goodyear v. City of Avondale. That case involved most of the property north of Van Buren. Avondale annexed the property. Goodyear found that Avondale had made a procedural error and filed to nullify the annexation. Goodyear was successful and the result is that the property north of Van Buren between Dysart and Litchfield Road is in Goodyear. By the early 80s, the strip annexation activity was slowing down on the west side. The cities were busy trying to fill in the areas that had been stripped. During these years when virtually the entire west side was engaged in the process, it was almost everyone’s (except Avondale) opinion that the Agua Fria River would be a natural eastern boundary for Avondale. It seemed perfectly logical.

The River was a natural barrier. Tolleson was east of the River, and it needed room to grow. However, one substantial landowner east of the Agua Fria, thought that it would be a good idea if he signed a petition to have his property annexed by Avondale. As a result of that decision and the ensuing process, a large chunk of land east of the Agua Fria became part of Avondale. The property included all property that is now Garden Lakes, Westview High School and the Costco Center.

That was not the end of the matter though. The petition for the Garden Lakes annexation was signed in 1981. Goodyear Farms again decided to challenge the annexation process. This time, on constitutional grounds. They filed their lawsuit in 1981, alleging that the law that allowed annexation based upon land value, regardless of the number of people who owned land in the annexed area, was unconstitutional. Their position was that the process violated the Equal Protection clauses of the Federal and Arizona Constitutions. The case was filed in Superior Court, which ruled that the process was constitutional, and that the property had been properly annexed by Avondale.

The next step was an appeal by Goodyear Farms to the Arizona Court of Appeals, which overruled the

Superior Court and ruled that the annexation Statute was unconstitutional as alleged by Goodyear Farms. It wasn't over. Avondale appealed to the Arizona Supreme Court which reversed the Court of Appeals and, in an eleven-page opinion, ruled in favor of Avondale and reinstated the annexation. Still not over, Goodyear Farms, in a demonstration of its determination, filed an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court agreed with the Arizona Supreme Court and ruled that the Avondale annexation of the area east of the Agua Fria was legal and that the statutes that permitted the annexation were constitutional.

The strip annexations began in the 1970s. The Supreme Court decision was announced in 1987. During this time, public attitudes were changing and the Arizona Legislature amended 9-471 to require that annexation petitions would henceforth have to be signed "by the owners of one-half or more in value of the real and personal and more than one-half of the persons owning real and personal property that would be subject to annexation by the city or town in the event of annexation . . .".

Cities and towns are still annexing property, but most annexations are by agreement, not hostile takeovers as they often were in the old days.

Jean Stewart, Artist, Historian, Literacy Advocate

Jean Wooten Stewart was born in Phoenix and raised in the Liberty area. Her education was received from Liberty Elementary School, Buckeye Union High School, Glendale Community College, ASU and NAU. She married Arthur Stewart and they spent some time in Indiana. They had three sons and two daughters. She returned to Arizona and finished her education. She taught on the San Carlos Indian Reservation and in Dateland, AZ. Her next adventure took her to the Philippines as a member of the Peace Corp. She returned to Goodyear and became an active volunteer, assisting many organizations including the Buckeye Valley Literacy Association, the Southwest Volunteer Services, Estrella Toastmasters, Maricopa County United Way, the Southwest Community Network, the Southwest Chamber of Commerce's START program and Leadership West. Jean married Tom Ruth and they traveled to many parts of the U.S. before moving to Prescott. She eventually returned to Goodyear. As a student she had studied art; many murals in the West Valley can be attributed to her. She also taught art in her retirement.

We at Three Rivers treasure her contributions to our organization the most. She was a founding member and served as president. Even as her health decreased, she was always willing to answer questions or guide us in finding the needed information. In 1999 she was the Grand Marshall of the Billy Moore Days Parade. In 2015 she was selected as Southwest Community Networks Humanitarian of the Year. She is the author of "*Jean's Tapestry and Peace Corp @ 62.*" Thank you, Jean, for making our West Valley a better place to live!



Arizona v. California

By David Meese

Part 4 of 4

“Whiskey’s for Drinking Water’s for Fightin’ Over”

A New War on the Horizon

Lake Mead, on the Arizona/Nevada border, is the country’s largest reservoir on water and has now become the center of the next epic Western Water War. Lake Mead is a water savings account for the states of California, Arizona, and Nevada, the so-called Lower Basin States, and is unique because the remaining states in the Colorado River Compact - Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming, have no way to store water. There are no large reservoirs in the Rockies.

According to the United States Drought Monitor, eleven of the past fourteen years have been drought years in the Southwest, some so extreme as to impose mandatory cutbacks for agricultural and municipal water users.

The Colorado River sustains 40 million people, one out of every eight Americans. Population predictions will swell that number by about 10 million more within the next 40 years. An especially dismal snowpack has revived a long-simmering dispute over water rights, splitting people above and below Lake Mead.

Big users of Colorado River water below Hoover Dam, the structure that impounds Lake Mead, including the cities of Phoenix, Los Angeles, and Las Vegas, rely on the reservoir as a lifeline and exist partly at the mercy of what happens in the Upper Basin, an area that encompasses the snowpack states of Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, and Northern New Mexico. Over-reliance on the river’s water has paved the way for rapid population growth from Southern California to Denver, which now ironically poses a threat to the water supply of those same cities.

The big water users in the Upper Basin, Salt Lake City, Denver, and Albuquerque among others are threatening to pull out of the Compact that has governed the “Law of the River” for close to 100 years. Doing so will hasten the emptying of Lake Mead below the theoretical trigger for shared water restrictions, the “1075 Line” that refers to the elevation above sea level of the lake’s water line.

The battle to determine how Arizona handles future water supply cuts is shaping up as a war, because Arizona

is first in line for cuts while neither California nor Nevada take any. Arizona doesn’t believe this is fair and is working with the other states to share the allocations more equitably. Arizona is also working on its own plan to more equitably share water cuts within the state. Called the Drought Contingency Plan Plus, the plan seeks to prevent Arizona’s farmers and the state’s own water bank from shouldering the cuts, while cities and Native American tribes would remain relatively unscathed.

In a worst-case scenario, cities in the Active Management Areas (not all of Arizona is in mandated management areas) will halt the building of subdivisions, the area’s agricultural economy will come to a crashing halt, and the fragile groundwater aquifers will be depleted by a rash of well drilling.

In addition to the potential squabble among the Compact states, Arizona is experiencing its own internal fight between the Central Arizona Project and the Arizona Department of Water Resources.

The CAP believes it can maximize the water Lake Mead gets each year from Lake Powell (keeping it above the 1075 Line) by varying the amount of water that’s conserved in Lake Mead. The Department

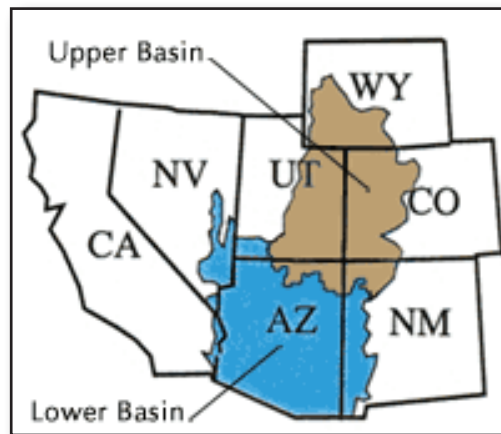
of Water Resources contends that the CAP is manipulating the Lake Mead formula and endangering the goodwill of the Upper Basin states that depend in a large part on Lake Powell.

According to Phoenix’s Water Service Department Director, Kathryn Sorensen, “We must find a way to collectively use less water while respecting the Law of the River. That’s, of course, a very tricky proposition because the Law of the River is the most complex governance instrument ever created by human beings.”

The tagline for this war could be “1075 or fight”. Perhaps the whiskey will flow in time.

Note: This story and much of the information is excerpted from an article in the Huffington Post’s Environ section by Eric Grist, and an Arizona Republic article written by Joanna Allhands.

My thanks to Dave Meese for writing this timely and informative series about Arizona’s water issues.





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