

THE Quarterly

Remembering the Southwest Valley

Three Rivers Historical Society

Salt • Agua Fria • Gila

The Long Road to Arizona Statehood



Arizonans had longed for statehood. Their first glimmer of hope came in 1863, when President Lincoln split the New Mexico territory in two, making Arizona a

separate territory. A call for a constitutional convention by the Sixteenth Legislature happened in 1891. Delegates were elected and the convention assembled in Phoenix, the new capital. The proposed constitution was adopted by Arizona in December of that year.

In 1889, the Fifteenth Arizona Territorial Legislature called for a constitutional convention. The people of the Arizona Territory wanted statehood. However, the territorial governor quashed the convention.

In 1892, Arizona's delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives, Marcus A. Smith, proposed legislation to make Arizona a state. The bill passed the House but failed the Senate. An identical bill passed the House but failed the Senate in 1893. Arizonans didn't let that discourage them; they continued to prepare for statehood.

The territorial legislature voted to build a capitol in Phoenix in 1897. The structure was completed four years later. In 1902, Congressman Smith again introduced the Arizona statehood bill and it again passed the House but failed to generate even a hearing in the Senate. That same year, Congress considered legislation to admit Arizona and New Mexico to the union as a single state. The Arizona Territorial Legislature informed Congress that it was not in favor of that move. In 1906, Congress set up elections to allow the citizens of Arizona and New Mexico to vote on the issue. Arizona voted 5 to 1 against combined statehood. New Mexico favored the referendum 2 to 1. Since both territories did not approve the referendum, the combined statehood failed.

President Theodore Roosevelt urged Congress to consider separate statehood for Arizona and New Mexico in 1908. The Arizona statehood bill passed in the House and later in the Senate. The rest of that year, delegates to a new constitutional convention, worked out a state constitution. Voter approved the constitution by a vote of three to one. In August 1911, President William Taft vetoed the Arizona statehood bill because of a measure in the constitution that allowed voters to recall or remove from office, elected judges. Taft agreed to admit Arizona to the Union if voters would remove the judicial recall from the constitution. In December 1911, the Arizona voters did just that. On the following February 14th, the president signed the proclamation that admitted Arizona to United States of America.

On that same day, W. P. Hunt took the oath of office as Arizona's first governor. Nine months later, voters approved a measure that would restore judicial recall to the state constitution.

The capitol building that Arizona built 1898-1901, now serves as the Arizona Capitol Museum. Additions were constructed in 1918 and 1938 to accommodate the state's growth. These additions served as home to the legislature until 1960, when the current House and Senate building were completed. The executive Tower with the governor's office was added in 1974.

The economic downturn in 2010 prompted the state to sell the Capitol's surrounding buildings to private investors. The Old Capital Building, which is listed on the Nation Register of Historic Places, was not included in the sale. In 2019, Governor Ducey announced the buy-back of most of the buildings.

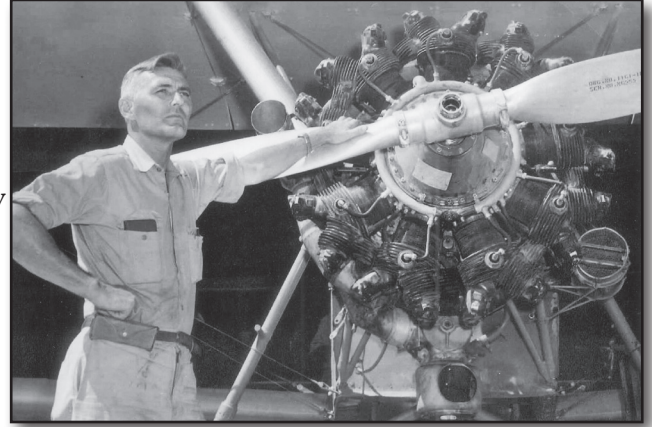


Crop-Dusting in the West Valley

Crop dusting also known as aerial application, began in 1921. It was developed under joint efforts of the U.S. Agriculture Department and the U.S. Army Signal Corp at McCook Field in Dayton, Ohio. A military Curtiss JN4, modified to spread lead arsenate to kill catalpa caterpillars, was piloted by John Macready. The first commercial applications were begun in 1924. Crop dusting slowly spread across the country. The name originated here because the first applications were a dust product.

One of the local crop-dusting families was **Max Shears** and sons, **Greg** and **Beryl**. Max earned his pilot's license in 1937. He was a commercial pilot and flight instructor. When WWII began, he was told he was too old for the Army Air Corp, but he did eventually serve the corp as a flight instructor. Following the war, he began crop dusting. At that time all crop dusters were based at Sky Harbor. Max was one of the first to move his airplane and business to Fram Field at about 99th Ave., south of Glendale Road.

There were several companies that did aerial applications. Marsh Aviation was originally based at the Litchfield Park Airport. The Country Boy Crop Dusting started by Bob Leverton in 1951 was at 115th Ave and Van Buren. Pierce Aviation had a field in Buckeye, Cal Mothershead's field was near the Glendale power plant, Dick Cutsinger was at Cotton Lane and the railroad tracks, M&J was at Olive and Dysart, McNeely Aviation was at Dysart and Waddell, Valley Sprayers was located at Bell Road and El Mirage, and Mosely Aviation was near Jackrabbit and Camelback Roads. There were thousands of acres of farmland in those days to keep all the pilots and airfields busy.



The crop-dusting year began in about March with the citrus crops needing an aerial application. There was some work doing applications of a preemergent herbicide. Cotton crops in the early years required 8-10 applications a season of pesticides. As the chemicals improved, fewer applications were needed. Just before harvest, a defoliant was applied to facilitate the job of cotton picking.

In the 1970's and 80's more night applications were done. This gave the chemical time to do its job before the sun came up.

The first crop dusting planes were military planes, many of them the Stearman biplane. There was also the Travel Air biplane and the New Standard biplane built in 1925. The New Standard was the plane Max Shears used. It had a larger cockpit with room for a pilot and 4-5 passengers. Without passenger seats the front section had plenty of room for the chemicals.

In 1951 an aeronautical engineer, Leland Snow, designed and developed aircraft specifically for agriculture. His first airplane was called Air Tractor. He had a factory in Olney, Texas which he later sold to Rockwell Standard. In 1972, after resigning from Rockwell he designed the first turbine model Air Tractor. Other aircraft manufacturers began making agriculture aircraft. Grumman made the Ag Cat, Piper made the Pawnee and Cessna made the Ag Wagon. Now helicopters are involved in aerial application, too.

Crop-dusting captured my imagination as a kid. At that time Goodyear was surrounded by agriculture, mainly cotton. All summer, any direction you went, you were bound to see a crop duster at work. I was fascinated by the skill of the pilots. They flew so very low over the crop; up over the power lines, swoop down and release the dust, turn off the dust and climb steeply, turn around and repeat.

I am grateful to **Greg Shears** for sharing his knowledge and love of airplanes, crop-dusting and now forest fire suppression. He was the source of all the local information. Another smart and talented alumnus from Agua Fria Union High!

From Stagecoach to Spacecraft

If you missed the grand opening of the exhibit at the Litchfield Park Historical Museum entitled "From Stagecoach to Spacecraft", do not despair. This exhibit tells the history of Avondale and Goodyear and will be on display until fall. The museum is open every Wednesday through Friday from 10 AM to 4 PM. It is located on the northwest corner of Camelback and Litchfield Roads. Admission is free; however, donations are happily accepted. They also have a great gift shop.

Farewell, Coach Fulton



The West Valley mourns the loss of O.K. "Coach" Fulton. He served the communities in so many ways, but primarily as a teacher and coach. His Aqua Fria Owls won Three State Basketball Championships; he was named National Athletic Director of the Year; he was President of the Arizona School Administrators Association; and ASA Principal of the Year.

His career included two years at Round Valley High School in Springerville and 36 years at Agua Fria Union High School as teacher, coach, athletic administrator, assistant principal and principal and three years as principal at Wickenburg high School. He served on the Governing Board of the AFUHS district for 16 years and served on the on the Goodyear Town Council and the Litchfield Park City Council for six years each. He was the "Voice of the Owls" for 55 years, as he announced the football games each season.

All these accomplishments testify to his self-discipline, strong work ethic and his competitive nature. His most important contribution to our communities was the love, respect and devotion he had for the young people he encountered. You didn't have to be a basketball player to know that he truly cared about you and wanted you to succeed more than you did.

We Love Old Photos

As an historical society we are always looking for your old photos of the West Valley communities and your families. We also collect and preserve historical memorabilia and documents. In the past, we have put out a call for photos for a specific project we were working on, but we are always happy to receive photos, documents and memorabilia. Remember, that when we pass on, our families who clean out our belongings may not know the significance of some of your treasured belongings. It always bothers me to see old family portraits in antique stores knowing that those people had a story and were part of the community in which they lived.

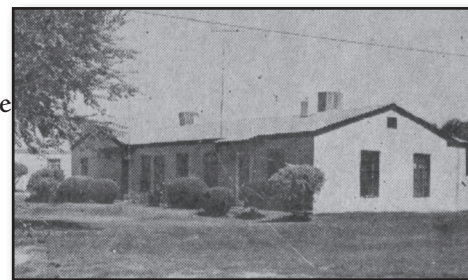
They may have been the mayor, or the firefighter who saved a child. Think of us when you are cleaning out old boxes or downsizing. We welcome your memorabilia.

Westwood Manor Park Shadows

The Westwood Manor apartment complex was built by P.W. Womack in 1944, to ease the shortage of housing. That year, Goodyear Aircraft was running three shifts of 6000-7000 workers to keep up with the demand of World War II's need for airplanes.

The community of homes consisted of 69 buildings of either two or four apartments. Each apartment had 2 bedrooms, one bath, an evaporative cooler and a space heater in the living room. Since it was built during the war when metals were used only for defense purposes, the bathtubs were constructed with ceramic tile. They rented for \$57 per month, water included.

At that time, workers at Goodyear Aircraft had preference in renting the homes. When the war ended and the plant closed, the rentals were available to anyone.



Many young couples started housekeeping in Westwood Manor. It was an attractive community with parking areas behind the apartments and lots of trees and green grass.

Years later, the complex changed owners and became Park Shadows. The apartments have been upgraded with real bathtubs, central air conditioning and heat. Modern kitchen cabinets and appliances have been installed and each apartment has a small, private patio. They even have a pool. This historic neighborhood is still home to many families. This type of small individual apartments is now popular again as many similarly styled complexes are springing up around the West Valley.

JoAnn Gongaware, President

At the annual membership meeting on January 14, 2020, of the Three Rivers Historical Society, a new slate of officers was elected by acclamation. They are, President-JoAnn Gongaware, Vice Presidents-Len Dyer and Mark Pelletier, Secretary-Sally Kiko and Treasurer-Haylie Hewett. Continuing to serve on the Board of Directors are Wendy Neely, Stephanie Karlin and Stan Ashby.

We have a board member position that needs to be filled. Please consider serving; we need your ideas and input to grow our organization. Please contact JoAnn at jogong@msn.com or Mark at diego689@cox.net. If you are willing to serve on the board.



Sponsors of The Quarterly

Year round we encourage membership in the *Three Rivers Historical Society*. We offer a unique opportunity to our communities, membership as business/professional or contributors. These memberships qualify for being listed as Sponsors in each edition of *The Quarterly*. These and all membership dues are tax deductible. The following are current sponsors:

Contributors **Goodyear Arts and Culture Commission**
 Celeste Couch
 Len Dyer

Business/Prof **City of Litchfield Park**
 Stan Ashby
 Frank Ross

**Thank you for your membership at
any level, your support is appreciated!**

Yes, Student \$5* Business/Professional \$50*
I'd Like Single \$20* Contributor \$100
to Join! Family \$30* Lifetime \$500

* Yearly Fee

Join _____ Renew _____

Call me, I want to volunteer _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone (Day) _____

(Evening) _____

Cell _____

Fax _____

e-mail _____

Check inclosed in the amount of \$ _____

A receipt will be issued to you.

Make your check payable to:

Three Rivers Historical Society and mail to:

Three Rivers Historical Society

P.O. Box 7251

Goodyear, Arizona 85338

Three Rivers Historical Society

Remembering the Southwest

P.O. Box 7251, Goodyear, AZ 85338

JoAnn Gongaware, *President*

Len Dyer, Mark kPelletier, *Vice Presidents*

Sally Kiko, *Secretary*

Haylie Hewitt, *Treasurer*

Board Members

Stan Ashby, Wendy Neely, Stephanie Karlin

The Quarterly

Editors: Sally Kiko and Diane Fekete

Graphic Design: Ron Talley

Printed by: BMD Printing

Three Rivers Society Meetings

We meet on the third Tuesday of each month at 5pm.

Check website for location of meetings.

Be sure we have your correct address.

Email Sally: kdkiko@cox.net



Visit us at www.3rhsaz.org