HISTORY OF ARROWHEAD RANCH

Presented by:
JON FROKE, AICP
Monday, April 27, 2020 at 7:00 pm
Manistee Ranch
5127 W. Northern Avenue
(enter from 51st Avenue)

Arrowhead Ranch area had a long history before becoming one of Arizona's premier master planned communities. It was an Indian village with a canal from New River and burial mounds. Later it was the ranch of Danny and Francis Isbell. A series of developers with their plans, eventually developed the Arrowhead Ranch of today. As a young planner for Glendale he was tasked with coordinating the subdivisions of Arrowhead Ranch. Jon understands the story and history of perhaps the largest development in the city's history. Jon left the city for the private sector for several years. He came back to Glendale as Planning Director and retired a few years ago. Jon knows Glendale history and the whole story of Arrowhead Ranch. Invite a friend to attend this presentation. Refreshments will be served.

The End of Movie Magic

The El Rey Theater opened December 17, 1937 as a state of the art modern theater. It opened with a movie, "Back in Circulation" and a stage show. The manager of the theater was Edward E. Ham. In February of 1943, L.R. Eaglin became the manager. He later became the district manager of the Community Theaters, Inc. which opened the Glen Theater in 1949 and the Rancho Drive-in in 1951. Mr. "Pop" Eaglin died in 1953. By 1957, the El Rey Theater was showing Spanish language movies only on the weekends. It ceased operation. There are no more movie theaters downtown. Within the Glendale city limits, there are large multi-screen theater complexes, and the only remaining Arizona drive-in theater thrives in Glendale.
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I do research in oral histories, articles, publications, letters and documents, it is amazing to learn what wonderful, giving, smart and highly accomplished residents lived here. It is heartwarming also to read about people with limited education or funds who shared what little they had with others and made a huge difference in the lives of Glendale residents.

Their stories and lives are in the huge collection of historical materials in the Glendale Arizona Historical Society Library and Research Center in the Guest House of Sahuaro Ranch. Also, the Society has over 25,000 historical photographs from family albums and other sources that have been digitized. The society is committed to bringing forth the stories of people, buildings and places in Glendale through the monthly society newsletters and research reports.

Glendale is a special place in this nation. Come visit the Library at the Guest House and have our secretary explain what documents are available for view.

Good, Good Neighbor
Mother Teague

Over and over on the Society Facebook page and in conversations, long-time residents remark about how Glendale was a close-knit community with neighbors caring for each other. The Glendale News even ran a column pointing out different residents and telling their good deed stories. The editor of the Glendale News in the March 20, 1953 edition commented “Peace can be brought about through understanding our neighbors...a smile, a firm handshake, sharing a friendly act...the spirit there can be a seed that will spread to other localities.” In that edition of the newspaper, Mrs. Etta Leslie Teague was named the weekly good, good neighbor of the week. She was 75 years old at the time of being honored. Known as Mother Teague, she mothered all and especially the sick and shut-ins visiting every Sunday and taking them jelly and gifts. Etta and her husband, Ira Connel Teague came to Glendale from Oklahoma in 1918, operating a small ranch until Ira died in 1948. Etta moved into town. Harold Smith, long time Glendale Elementary School Superintendent, was Etta’s brother. Velma Teague, long time Glendale librarian, was Etta and Ira’s daughter-in-law. The first Glendale Public Library was named in Velma’s honor. Mother Teague was active worker in the First Methodist Church helping to build the church. She was an active collector and creator of over 200 dolls. She won first place prizes at the state fair for her rag dolls. The Glendale Arizona Historical Society has some of her dolls in our accessions. They were donated by Dr. Craig Trueblood. She was small in stature, but big with her sharing loveable characteristics of a retiring personality and a great deal of humility.

THE RED, RED, ROBIN COMES BOB-BOB-BOBBIN’ ALONG in Glendale

In his retirement, from 1945 to 1970, Harry M. Woods was a Glendale resident living on a small ranch near Glendale. Before then, he composed some of the best and well-known songs of all time. Harry was born November 4, 1896 in North Chelmsford, Mass. His father was a member of a popular male singing quartet and his mother, a well-known concert and operatic singer. The family lived on a small farm. After graduating from Colby Academy, he attended Harvard College, where he organized his own dance band in college. He started his own musical career by playing the piano for movies and dances even with a deformed left hand. Then, he went to New York City and Tin Pan Alley and played for food and writing songs for fun. Al Jolson sang Harry’s first published song “I’m Goin’ South” for which Harry got paid only $200. In 1928; his hit “Four Leaf Clover” was a flop. Then in 1948, band leader Art Mooney recorded the song which sold a million records in the first four months. He wrote “Pa’odlin’ Madelin Home” while riding a train and listening to the rhythm of the train wheels. “Red, Red Robin” was inspired when Harry looked out the window at the farm and saw a flock of red robins. He also composed “I’m Looking Over a Four Leaf Clover” and “Side by Side”. Harry went to Hollywood and wrote songs for several films. He joined the Coast Guard Auxiliary. He traveled to entertain American troops during WWII, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. He wrote over 360 songs during his career, including the hit “Try a Little Tenderness.” Harry died when struck by a car in front of his own home in Glendale on January 14, 1970 at the age of 73. He is buried in Center Cemetery, Pembroke, Mass.
Karl Dennison grew up in Glendale and graduated from Glendale High School in 1957. He went on to get a PhD Degree career as a marriage and family counselor and an accomplished concert pianist.

At 80 years old, Karl looks back to his memories of Glendale. John and Lena Colvin, early pioneers were Karl’s grandparents. His grandfather, John, invented a continuously poured concrete pipe that brought water to Isabell Ranch, what is now Arrowhead Ranch. John and Lena’s cotton ranch is now Phoenix International Raceway.

His grandmother, Lena, was the innovator of the school lunch program in 1935. She prepared school lunches on a wood stove. Karl remembers growing up in Glendale in the 1940s and 1950s, a time of unusual community unity and camaraderie, where we all were neighbors and friends. He has strong memories of riding the water truck with Roy Sell and sprinkling the dirt streets. As a kid, he would ride his bicycle along old Lateral 16, near 29th Avenue, to Glendale High School. The challenge was to enter Grand Avenue from Bethany Home Road and race to Webster’s Creamery before traffic caught up with him while, at the same time, outrunning dogs and winning. Some may go out for a nice dinner to celebrate making it to 80, but not Karl Dennison. He and his son Brad peddled a 225 mile bike trip in Glacier National Park and Canadian Waterton National Park going up 10,000 feet in elevation gain including the 15 mile climb “Going to the Sun Road”. For Karl, the bike ride celebrated over 115,000 miles on a bicycle. Karl completed his summer 2019 bike ride also with a Canadian ride from Spokane, Washington known as the Selkirk Loop, another 280 miles of quiet, peaceful, bicycling in mind bogging serenity.

Glendale is fortunate to have had many men and women like Karl who have made great accomplishments and made their community proud.

Glendale City Hall is not yet 50 years old, nor is it ready to be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, but it is a significant building in the city’s history. The City of Glendale, Arizona hired native son Robert Sexton, who was president of the firm Varney, Sexton, Lunsford Aye Associates to design a civic complex that would cost $14.87 million. Robert played in Murphy Park as a child and his grandfather grew wheat near Glendale. City leadership wanted a new city hall to exhibit what Glendale is and what the city should be. The city administration wanted to coordinate city services into the building and complex that would act as a focal point for downtown development and redevelopment. Mr. Sexton’s objective was to keep the building southwestern in character and not a high-tech look. The municipal complex would consist of a 90,000 square foot municipal office building; adjacent 180,000 square feet four level parking garage; 18,000 square foot council chambers and a grassy amphitheater for 350 people. The complex was designed to fit on the one square block site with the office building at a diagonal to be parallel with Grand Avenue. The southwestern character of the office buildings included stucco over steel with copper-clad aluminum roof, double pane sliding glass windows, sun-shades, and two levels underground. The color scheme was sandstone pink and steel blue, accented by copper. A shepherd’s crook appears as detail on the building interior and exterior. The Assistant City Manager, Martin Vanacour, said the building could support two more floors and the parking garage another level. The complex was officially opened on December 4, 1984 when Glendale had a population of 111,590 and was the sixth largest city in Arizona.

Glendale City Hall, constructed in 1984
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Easter Sunday is April 12, 2020. This blessed time of the year is perfect for treating your family, friends or yourself to the peace and tranquility of Glendale’s unique historic treasures of Sahuaro Ranch and Manistee Ranch. The City of Glendale Parks and Recreation staff at Sahuaro Ranch offer free tours of the Main House. The Glendale Arizona Historical Society conducts tours of historic Manistee Ranch from October to May.

SAHUARO RANCH 1895 MAIN HOUSE, 9802 N. 59TH AVE, GLENDALE, AZ
- Free Tours of the Main House September-July: Fridays & Saturdays: 10 am to 2 pm.; Sundays: 2 pm to 4 pm. (Closed August and on holidays, Thanksgiving weekend, December 24, 25, 31 and January 1.) Please call 623-930-4201 for group tours of 10 or more.

SAHUARO RANCH 1898 GUEST HOUSE & 1887 ADOBE HOUSE, 9802 N. 59TH AVE, GLENDALE, AZ
- Free Tours of the Guest House October – May: Sundays: 1 pm to 3 pm. (except holidays and during weddings).
- Free Tours of the 1887 Adobe House during festivals and with prior arrangements. Call 623-435-0072 for more information, or for group tours.

1897 MANISTEE RANCH, 5127 W. NORTHERN AVE (enter from the parking lot on 51st Ave).
- Tours are conducted by the Glendale Arizona Historical Society docents from October through May: noon to 4 pm (last tour starts at 3 pm). Fees: Adults $5, Seniors $4, Veterans, $4, and children ages 6-16 $1. GAHS MEMBERS ARE FREE. The 2019-20 tour dates are the 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month. Scheduled tour dates remaining this season are: April 4 and 18, 2020, and May 2, 2020.