Glendale Arizona Historical Society

"preservation of the past"

MAY 2020 NEWSLETTER **Volume 41, Issue 5**

UPCOMING EVENTS
at a glance
Please Save These Dates

MONDAY, MAY 18, 2020
The History of
GLENDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT #40
2:00 pm, Manistee Ranch

Check out our website all summer long for updates on our fall programs and other activities. Stay safe, and have a wonderful summer!

No ranch tours are conducted during June, July or August. We had hoped to keep the office in the Sahuaro Ranch Guest House open for limited hours this summer, but the Coronavirus Pandemic may have changed that, at lease for now. However, your phone calls and e-mails will be returned promptly.

!! WANTED !!
Photo Archivist Volunteer for Manistee Ranch
Call 623-435-0072
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Check out our Updated Website:
http://www.glendalearizonahistoricalsociety.org

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RESCHEDULED FROM MARCH 2020

The History of Glendale School District #40

Presented by **DAVITA SOLTER**

Monday Afternoon, May 18, 2020 - 2 PM

HISTORIC MANISTEE RANCH

5127 West Northern Avenue, Glendale, Arizona

Please enter from 51st Avenue

This program was scheduled for March 23, 2020 at 2 pm at Manistee Ranch. That meeting was cancelled due to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

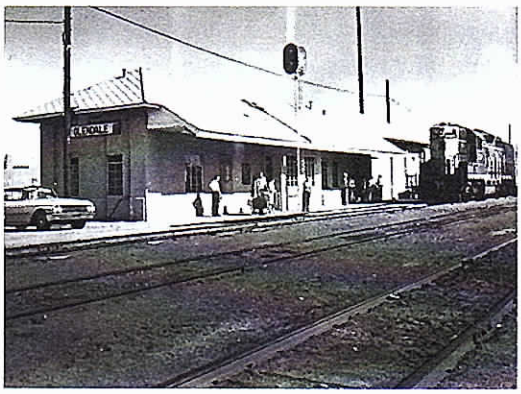
This is one of the program meetings at **2:00 PM** to allow those who find night driving a little unnerving. The Glendale Elementary School District #40 has been an integral part of Glendale's history, growth and success from nearly the beginning of the community.

Davita Solter is one of Glendale's dynamic and tireless volunteer, who has devoted her career to the education of the area children and today is a part-time Wellness coordinator in the Glendale Elementary School District #40. Davita will provide the audience with an interesting and educational review of the district's progress through the years.

Please grab someone - well not just anyone - but do bring a relative or friend to enjoy this important presentation. Refreshments will be served.

Bye Bye, Train Depot

In 1965, a major step was taken to improve traffic flow on Grand Avenue by widening it to a four-lane divided highway between Maryland Avenue and the Peoria underpass. The State Highway Department, Santa Fe Railroad and the City of Glendale worked together to resolve major problems. The highway commission had two options: 1) taking 27 feet for needed right-of-way from the east side, costing $1.2 million of expensive developed property, and 2) going to the west side and removing the train depot and lowering Glendale's "Berlin Wall", the Santa Fe tracks, an average of two feet from Glendale to Orangewood Avenue. The lowering of the tracks cost $457,540. The train depot was torn down and rebuilt at Grand Avenue and 58th Avenue. The track lowering made it easier to see from Grand Avenue to intersecting streets, improved signalization, reduced emergency response times added flood control, while making it easier to reach fires and emergencies.



Ron Short, President
Glendale Arizona Historical Society

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Group activities of 2019-2020 will be ending soon. It has been a very active and unusual year for the society. The Coronavirus Pandemic disrupted society programs and activities. Our weddings were cancelled as well as meetings. Programs have been rearranged. The board appreciates the donations, new and renewed memberships, volunteers, docents, presenters at the program meetings, the field trip to the Sanderson Auto Museum, the great picnic, Christmas party, and the annual potluck. Thank you to those of you who provided refreshments for the meetings. They were delicious and welcome. Depending on the Coronavirus Pandemic, summer office hours at the Guest House will be limited. This does not mean society activity will stop. The society will be inventorying documents, doing research for next year's newsletters, assisting with inquiries, planning meetings, and continuing repairs on Manistee Ranch. In August, the Board will have a retreat at Manistee Ranch to plan the Glendale Arizona Historical Society 2020-2021 year. Enjoy your "cooler" trips or enjoy Glendale's summer h. If you do stay here, get out and check out the historical buildings and districts in Glendale.

The Couple Who Restored MANISTEE RANCH

5127 W. Northern Avenue was once the home of one of Glendale's most famous and important families - the Sands'. The Sands family, after 89 years of occupancy, found that ranching was not economically feasible. They sold off or donated pieces of the ranch, until all that was left were the house, garage, office, granary, date trees and adobe house.

Instead of removing the historic structures for a shopping center, the Sands worked with the city of Glendale and the Glendale Historical Society to save all but the adobe house that was located at the corner of 51st Avenue and Northern Avenue. The society received ownership of Manistee Ranch through a state grant, and the city gained ownership of the date palm area in 1996.

Carol St. Clair, President of the Glendale Arizona Historical Society, and her husband Chuck took on the leadership role in the restoration of the historic buildings. They lived in Casa Grande and drove daily to work on the restoration.

Financially, the restoration was realized though a major donation from Louis "Buzz" Sands, and a second state grant. Seventy society members and non-members donated $19,000 to save and move the granary. The house is 7,000 square feet with a basement and three stories. The Queen-Ann Victorian-style house has four bedrooms, a living and dining room, a kitchen, pantry and three bathrooms. The living room, now used for society meetings and gatherings, has artifacts from the past, and beautiful paintings and photos. Each bedroom has its own character. One bedroom has a closet with stairs. The kitchen was updated in 1947. There is a third story "sky parlor" that was used for a classroom, for parties, and for observing the ranch and seeing the lights of Phoenix were held. The basement had a pool room and band practice room.

In 2001, the Hollywood movie "Eight-Legged Freaks" was filmed at Manistee Ranch. The office, which was restored, has one of the two working round "Cannon Ball" safes in Arizona. By 2004, the St. Clairs had the house fully restored to its unique grandeur.

The society provides for 90 minute tours of the house and office from October through May, on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month, from noon to 4:00 pm with the last tour at 3 pm. Admission is by donation— $5 for adults, $4 for Seniors and Veterans, and $1 for children 6-16. Society members free. Enter off of 51st Avenue and drive to the house. Experience an amazing trip back over 100 years.

Past GAHS President, Carol St. Clair and her husband, Chuck St. Clair

Where Do Glendale Avenue and the Downtown Fit into Glendale's Future?

Is there a future for the historic downtown Glendale and Glendale Avenue? Over the past several decades, excellent physical improvements have been made, and many wonderful plans and visions have been proposed by residents, professional consultants, and ASU students. The historic downtown is the nostalgic vision of the 1950's when the downtown was the focus of community life and everyday activities. It was fun, exciting and invigorating and a look forward place to go. People lived downtown and met their friends and neighbors there. Now, we have terrific restaurants that serve local and valley residents, plus specialty retail stores. Glendale serves as a banking center and is the seat of city government. What is missing are townhomes and apartments that would attract young professionals as well as retirees. They would be a big boost for downtown.

HAROLD W. SMITH "MR. EDUCATION" OF GLENDALE

Mr. Education, Harold W. Smith, Superintendent of Glendale School District #40

Harold W. Smith devoted 39 years as Superintendent of the Glendale School District #40, and with considerable achievements, became known as "Mr. Education".

Harold was born on November 29, 1895 in Fannin Co, Texas. At 15, he was superintendent of Sunday school class. Then, in 1913,at the age of 19, he got a certificate and taught part-time in a one room schoolhouse in Oklahoma for $60 a month. In 1915, he graduated from Texas Normal College. Then he took a three year job with an annual salary of $1,200, as the teacher superintendent in the Philippine Islands. He established 20 schools.

In 1921, Harold's parents moved from Oklahoma to Glendale, where Harold taught history and physics for a year at Glendale High School. He was offered the principal position at Pendergast Elementary School and was employed there for two years.

He married Mamie Hutchison in Glendale in 1921. They had three children — Harold Jr. (1922), William (1926) and Deanna Joy (1938) In 1925, Harold was appointed superintendent of the Glendale school district; he retired in 1964. Starting out, he had to be secretary, keep the books, and serve as nurse for the 600+ student body. A major concern was the considerable amount of grass around the buildings and yards. They brought in a few horses to graze, but that didn't work well. Next, they tried to get sheep owners to bring their herd to school, but that did not work either. Thirdly, they asked Ray Lehman of the Board of Trustees to bring his mowing machine, pulled by horses, to cut the grass. It worked, except what was left was stubble, Johnson grass and sand burrs. Harold finally hired Norman Nursery to lay out a plan for grass and landscaping, which was implemented.

Harold Smith and the Board of Trustees bought ten acres for $600 and built the Unit II, Isaac Imes School as a WPA project (Works Progress Administration). In 1942, they constructed ten classrooms, a nurses' office, a principal's office and an auditorium for $55,000. Unit III school, Harold Smith School, was opened in 1952. Harold used the knowledge from his masters degree from the University of California to develop Unit III at $6.25 per square foot. The land cost $500 per acre. The next school project was the development of the William Jack School. John Long wanted the district to buy a large parcel he had set aside for a school in the master plan for $35,000 per acre. Harold found 28 acres west of the John Long development and bought that for at $25,000 an acre. The John Long property became a park.

Harold Smith was very active as president of both the Arizona Education Association and the National Education Association. In fact, he served as a member, chairman or president of 35 different civic organizations. In 1991, at age 97, Harold boasted about his 62 years of perfect attendance at the Rotary Club, and talked about his many years of writing poetry (since 1944).

His niece, LaWanda Altherr, gathered his poems and published a 147-page volume of them all. They're available in the society library and research center at the Sahuaro Ranch Guest House.

W. J. and Laura Murphy Live On . . .

Frances Rogers (L) from Colorado, and Jane Treatheway (R) from Washington State, pictured with the donated pump organ

W.J. Murphy was responsible for building the 44-mile Arizona Canal between 1883-1886. The canal provided a source of water, Mr. Murphy then sold land and later filed subdivision plats for the Glendale townsite in 1895. While building the canal, Mr. Murphy was gone much of the time finding financing for the canal. His wife, Laura, lived in a tent with their children to oversee the canal progress. Mr. Murphy felt sorry for her and bought a small pump organ, which she played for her children and the workers.

On March 3, 2020 Frances Rogers from Colorado (left in the photo) and Jane Treatheway, from Washington State (right in the photo) and ten of their relatives visited the Guest House to look once more at that little pump organ, which Dana Treatheway, Jane's son, had donated to the society. Frances and Jane are the great-granddaughters of Laura and W.J. Murphy. The small pump organ is in the middle of the photo and can be viewed at the Guest House at Sahuaro Ranch. Laura and W.J. pictures are hanging on the wall.

This newsletter is a publication of the
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The Glendale Arizona Historical Society is designated as a Certified Historical Society by the Arizona Historical Society.

Our next membership event will be held at Manistee Ranch Monday, October 26, 2020. Watch your e-mail and check our website often for details.

Please enter the driveway to Manistee Ranch from 51st Avenue, just south of Walgreens. Proceed through the parking lot, and continue through the open vehicle gate. Then keep right, and park along the dirt driveway.

What a great time to talk to your friends and family about the many GAHS Member Benefits.

Ask them to join you at our October 2020 program meeting.

We'll see you there!

Glendale Arizona Historical Society
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2020 HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH

America is celebrating its wonderful heritage and honoring historic places and buildings. Glendale has 461 buildings and ten historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Go to the society's website and find the list of historic buildings and districts. Visit these sites and learn about Glendale's history. The City of Glendale Parks and Recreation staff at Sahuaro Ranch offer free tours of the Main House. The Glendale Arizona Historical Society also conducts tours of historic Guest House at Sahuaro Ranch and Manistee Ranch from October through 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: 1 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 us at 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 each month. Just one tour remains for the 2019-2020 season: May 2, 2020.

Sahuaro Ranch Adobe House

Sahuaro Ranch Guest House

Sahuaro Ranch Main House

Manistee Ranch House