



Glendale Arizona Historical Society

"preservation of the past"

FEBRUARY 2021 NEWSLETTER

Volume 42, Issue 2



ALL TOURS, MEETINGS AND WEDDINGS ARE STILL CANCELLED!!!

IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!!!

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

Whitney Salgado

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HOW THE COURY FAMILY CAME TO GLENDALE

John Coury recorded an oral history with Jerry Abbitt in 1991. John, who came to Glendale in 1940, provided an interesting story relating how the Coury family got to America, Arizona and Glendale.

The Turkish War started in the middle 1800s. Lebanon, which was not created as a country until 1930, was still part of Syria and had Catholics living in that part of the country. The invading Moors killed the Christians. John's folks were Armenians as well as Christians. John's father and mother, Elias Thomas and Gaeta (Daou) Coury, had just been married. When some of their relatives were killed, it was time to leave the country. Elias's



brother-in-law, Mansour Daou, went to Canada. Elias followed but decided the weather was too cold in Canada. John's uncle, who was living in Morenci, Arizona, told them how nice the weather was there. In 1906, Elias started the journey to Arizona using a stagecoach and trains. In the spring, he got to Morenci where he found people from Lebanon living there who were merchants.

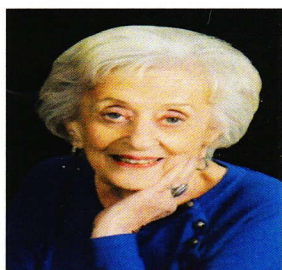
John explained why there are so many different spellings of the name Coury. Since the immigrants wrote in Arabic, the admitting officer would listen to the name and then spell it as it sounded in English. In John's father's case, the immigration officer was an Irishman. He spelled Coury with a C. John's dad did not think it made any difference in the new country. Another Lebanese immigrant was George Koory. He was the grandfather of Fred Koory, Jr., who ran for governor and was a friend of John.

John's father, Elias, went to Ray, Arizona, but in 1912 the whole town burned down. He moved to Mineral Creek and started a grocery store. John's uncle, Mansour Daou, moved to Glendale and opened a dry goods store south of the park. Others that came from Ray and Sonora were the Koorys. John had graduated from University of Arizona and bought a little grocery store on Glendale Avenue from the widow of James Scully and was there for 21 years. Then, he bought the Ryder Building, remodeled it, and moved in. The Tom Coury Building was built in 1940 for \$3,911. It was rented to Smart and Final Wholesale for \$50 a month. The building is located at 6829 N. 58th Drive.

DOROTHY J. (EMERICK) RUCKER PASSED ON OCTOBER 8, 2020

Long-time active member of the Glendale Arizona Historical Society Dorothy Rucker recently died. Dorothy graduated from Glendale High School in 1951 and was in school with another long-time member, Carol St. Clair. In 1953, she married Harold L. Rucker. Dorothy is survived by Harold; three children: Michael, Karen (Kramer) and Darold; six grandsons; and one great-granddaughter. The family will be donating several editions of the Glendale High School yearbook to the Glendale Arizona Historical Society in Dorothy's honor.

CELEBRATING A LIFE OF SERVICE



One of the highlights of the Manistee Ranch tours has always been the kitchen area. Our super guide, Peggy Vise, delighted visitors with her explanations about the old and new kitchens. A docent since the tours first began, Peggy not only knew about the appliances and unique items, she was also knowledgeable about the construction and restoration of the buildings. She knew the history of not only the property but also the history of Glendale. Peggy had worked closely with Chuck and Carol St. Clair who were the guiding forces for the restoration of the property. When we didn't have visitors, the Manistee Ranch docents would relax on the front porch and share their knowledge and ask questions. Those were special times that strengthened the friendships among the docents. Whenever there was a need for help, Peggy would volunteer. For many years, she got volunteers for refreshments at the monthly meetings. She helped during the summer with the Manistee Monday Work Project and with reorganizing the items in the kitchen. The Glendale Arizona Historical Society will miss our dear friend. Peggy passed away on November 25, 2020. She is survived by her three daughters and their husbands, four grandchildren, and four great grandchildren who were very dear to her. Her life was filled with happy times with family, friends, church activities, travel, and volunteering wherever she was needed.



Peggy and society members at museum



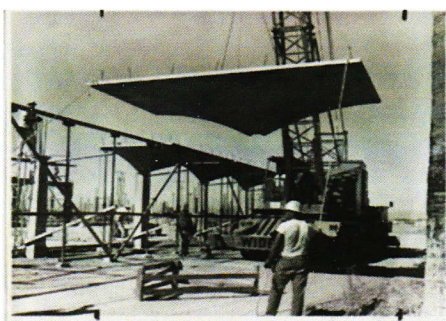
1965 artist rendering of GCC campus



1964 aerial of GCC site



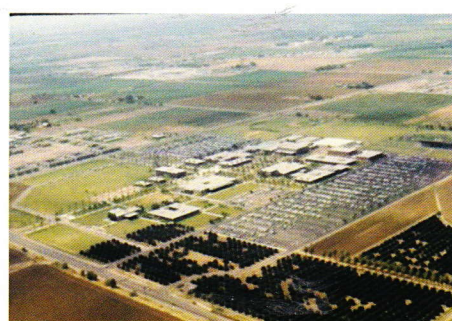
1965-66 construction of GCC



1965-66 construction of GCC



Gov. Sam Goddard dedication



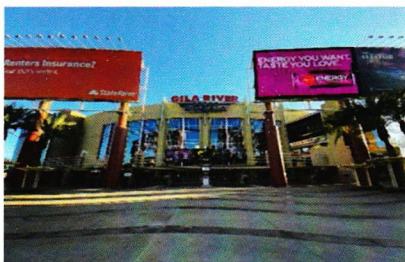
GCC campus in the 1970s

GLENDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT

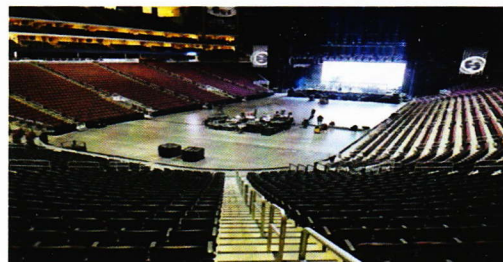
On April 12, 1965, Glendale Community College (GCC) was established by the Maricopa County Community College District Governing Board to serve the higher education needs of the West Valley. Prior to that date the project was referred to as "Northwest Campus". The design of the 147-acre campus was created by Varney, Sexton, Sydnor Associates Architects. Groundbreaking took place on April 27, 1965 in an agricultural setting. The dedication ceremony took place on October 16, 1966 with over 3,000 visitors. Governor Sam Goddard was the main speaker. He said "Education is our magnum opus..." Two notable graduates of GCC are Governor Jan Brewer and Vince Furnier, better known as Alice Cooper.



Westgate Entertainment District 2020



Gila River Arena at Westgate



Gila River Arena interior

GLENDALÉ ARENA HISTORY

The Phoenix Coyotes hockey came to Phoenix in 1996, playing for seven years in the America West Arena, an arena not desirable for ice hockey. The team was sold to developer Steve Ellman who signed a lease agreement in 2001 with the city of Glendale to play in a new ice hockey arena. Construction began on April 3, 2002, and the arena opened on December 26, 2003 with a lacrosse event. The next evening the Coyotes played their first game at the arena before 19,052 fans. Originally called the Glendale Arena at Westgate, the arena has had two subsequent name changes: Jobing.Com Arena and currently the Gila River Arena. The Coyotes have had a difficult ownership and financial experience in Glendale. The arena has hosted basketball, volleyball and wrestling in addition to many entertainment events.

The City of Glendale paid for the arena in 2003 by borrowing \$180 million. In 2006, the city council borrowed \$85 million to build a media center, parking garage and hotel conference center. The Super Bowl was held in the new stadium in 2008. The same year the city council borrowed \$200 million to build spring training baseball fields at Camelback Ranch. During the recession the city's general fund budget went down to \$136 million. The city was faced with an insurmountable \$465 million bonding debt for the sports and entertainment facilities. For two years the city provided the Coyotes \$25 million dollars from the utilities enterprise fund to manage the arena. The money borrowed is being repaid to the enterprise fund.

The management staff changed, as did the city council. Under the financial guidance of Tom Duensing, Finance and Technology Director, and with strong belt tightening and financial decisions of the city council over the years, the city regained a strong and secure

REMINISCING

ABOUT SAHUARO RANCH AND THE SOCIETY



Ruth Byrne



John Akers



Sahuaro Ranch Main and Guest Houses

On November 16, 2009, John Akers, Historic Education and Outreach Coordinator for Glendale Parks and Recreation and Library Services, conducted an oral history with Ruth Sparks Byrne. She had been President of the Glendale Arizona Historical Society. Ruth died on October 16, 2016 at age 94.

Ruth lived in Glendale for 13 years before she got married in 1943, moved away for 30 years and returned in 1973. Ruth said growing up in Glendale, she was aware that Sahuaro Ranch was there but had little knowledge of it, although when she worked as a bank teller, George Williams, the ranch manager, would come into the bank.

The City of Glendale bought the ranch in 1977 and Ruth attended a groundbreaking event there. The society and others with tractors came there and helped clean up. The society's involvement with the Ranch began in earnest when, in October of 1985, the city arranged for the society to use the Guest House. Ruth said former mayor Byron Peck was involved as liaison with the ranch's owner, Dick Smith, for the sale. Max Klass, when he was mayor, obtained the funding, and Sterling Ridge, as mayor, helped. Subsequently, George Renner was mayor when the city started to develop the ranch. In 1985, work started on restoring the buildings. The first building to be restored was the 1887 adobe house with help from the Phoenician Women's Club. They furnished the building and donated the trees along Mountain View Road. Thelma Heatwole helped to prepare the application for the National Register of Historic Places. Jim Woodward, a historic preservation consultant who had learned that the original owner was William Henry Bartlett, conducted workshops on the lawn for the society members explaining the ranch history.

The society gathered the collected ranch artifacts and moved in and by spring were doing tours. The society would tour up to 200 people on Sundays. In 1986 a young couple asked the society if they could get married in the rose garden, a setting that has since proven to be very popular. The society has facilitated over 2,000 rose garden weddings to date. The society conducted tours of the Guest House, Adobe house and Foreman's house, but the main house was not restored yet.

Mayor Quentin Tolby suggested setting up a foundation to raise money and run the house and ranch. The Tractor Association came to a town picnic at the ranch, and the tractor show tradition continued at the ranch. The main house was restored in 1996, and the Sahuaro Ranch Foundation was helpful in the design of furniture, rugs, drapes and carpeting. The foundation was later disbanded and the City of Glendale Parks and Recreation Department provided tours of the main house and school tours, working in cooperation with the society.

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*The Glendale Arizona Historical Society is
designated as a Certified Historical Society by*



PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

February 2021 is still mask-wearing time, but the vaccine to protect the population is here and being distributed. The Board has not scheduled a society group meeting at this time. The Board has reduced expenses as much as possible. The big expenses of staff, insurance and telephone are a given, and other expenses are being adjusted to a degree. The newsletter is the society's major way to communicate with the membership. The exquisite help from Nelda Crowell, Catherine Morgan, Jessica Koory and Marty Cole gets the job done.

J. B. Espinoza, contractor, with considerable help from John and Paulette Geurs and Bill Greb, made much needed repairs and improvements to Manistee Ranch including: repairs to the arbor, wooden fence around the agricultural exhibit, and picket fence; office painting; garage repairs and painting; granary side replacement and painting; outhouse painting; and construction of a concrete barrier around the house to prevent cat access. Thanks to all that have provided donations for operations and maintenance of Manistee Ranch. Your financial assistance, volunteering and general support is bringing the society through a difficult period of our history.