



The Official Newsletter of the

Sun Cities Area Historical Society

Fall 2010 | Volume 19 | Number 2



50

**Sun City residents
celebrate golden
anniversary!**

50th Anniversary Parade Photos
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Inside our fall newsletter ...



Museum adds Backyard Terrace!

Patio expansion provides new opportunities at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.
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Sun City's Earliest Clubs

From the beginning, clubs and recreation have vigorously defined the Sun City Lifestyle.
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McMillin Terrace kicks off museum's effort to boost awareness, raise funds

Generous donation allows creation of patio terrace at Sun City's first model home

By Bill Pearson

One remarkable concept has stood the test of time in Sun City and Sun City West: Residents not only love their community, but they have always been willing to invest both their time and their money to insure this remains a great place to live.

While some lament the current economy and the fact people are changing, the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum has taken an enormous leap of faith in that tenet.

This summer, a fund raising committee was formed. The three principles on it were Kathy Jones, Noel Willis and Connie McMillin. As we bantered about ideas and suggestions, the one glaring weakness in the Museum was our inability to host any kind of event where we could let visitors spread out and be comfortable.

One of the goals of the committee was to look at naming rights and the potential to reach out to residents who understood the importance of preserving the history of our communities.

The uniqueness of how Sun City West and Sun City were built is fascinating and no one has the charge of showcasing the history other than the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.

All of which brings us to the creation of The Terrace. Constance W. McMillin is a second generation Sun Citian. Her parents moved here in 1970 and were instrumental in helping shape not only Sun City but also various other arts and cultural organizations in the West Valley.

Connie visited her parents often and fell in love with the same simple beauty and charm of the community, so much so she moved to Sun City and

Evolution of the McMillin Terrace



carried on in her parents footsteps.

Connie has served the Museum in several capacities. She has been on the board, and served as president, been a docent and to this day gives presentations through the Speaker's Bureau. Her commitment to both Sun City and the arts is ever present. When Museum President Bill Pearson approached her about being the first to buy into the idea of naming rights, she never hesitated.

As a member of the fund raising committee, Connie understood the importance of having adequate space to welcome guests and visitors to the first model home in Sun City.

Having hosted many events of this type, Connie saw the potential and the need for the Museum to increase its size and the Terrace is the perfect setting. It sits just off the new French doors opening to a charming golf course view.

The covered roof with appropriate lighting allows for evening events. The 20-by-18-foot Terrace permits seating for up to 50 and loads of opportunities for group functions. We want to attract others to consider memorializing space, exhibits or rooms within the Museum named in honor of family or friends.

This year has been a banner year

in many ways: Attendance has been exceptional, we are storing and displaying our collection on a great new website, the Museum's exhibits have never looked better and we have a paid office manager with exceptionally good volunteers helping her.

The downside is we have exceeded our budget and are spending reserves to meet our goals.

This fund raising committee can be our lifeline to insuring we can maintain the pace we set this year. We feel it is exceedingly important to preserve Sun City and Sun City West's history. Understanding how we came to be and why we have succeeded is critical to our future. All of us involved with the Museum understand that. Now our goal is to help others see the value in that investment.

Our thanks to Connie for her generosity, not everyone can afford to step up like she has. We know there are any number of residents who will see the value of what we are doing and would love to invest in the future of our communities by buying a piece of the past.

Stop by and see The McMillin Terrace. For those interested in participating in the Museum's exciting new projects, give us a call at 623- 974-2568.

Fall Membership Meeting planned in Sun City

State historian, author Ruth Jordan Van Epps to share tales on Nov. 6

How many Arizona-born folks do you know? Probably only a few, but those who attend the Saturday Nov. 6 SCAHS Membership Meeting can add Ruth Jordan Van Epps to their lists.

Ruth, now of Sun City West, will share her early life in Sedona, and on the Hopi Reservation with members and guests from 1 to 3 p.m. Nov. 6 in the Oakmont Recreation Center auditorium at Del Webb Boulevard and Oakmont Drive.

Her pioneering great-grandparents came by covered wagon in 1875 to settle in the fertile Verde Valley. Their grandson Walter Jordan relocated to Sedona as a large orchard grower and raised his daughter Ruth there. She earned a degree in education at the University of Redlands and master's degrees in education and counseling at Arizona State University.

Ruth and her first husband lived

SCAHS Fall Meeting

When: 1-3 p.m. Nov. 6

Where: Oakmont Recreation Center auditorium, Sun City.

Program: Ruth Jordan Van Epps will present a program on "Early Arizona."

Admission: Free. Open to the public. All SCAHS members invited.

on the Hopi reservation in Northern Arizona, and she used her social work skills with both the Hopi and Navajo tribes. Later she formed Tsegi Tours offering customized tours featuring Arizona history, ancient cultures and the Navajo and Hopi reservations. Other programs included contemporary Southwest Native American cultures and crafts and Early Arizona.

In addition, Ruth was an educator at many levels and conducted seminars and training classes. She helped develop the Mesa, Ariz. First Offender Shoplifting Program, which was used

in Gilbert and Mesa Public Schools, Maricopa County Head Start and at Patricia Stevens Career College.

As Ruth grew up listening to stories of the early days in the West, she became interested in preserving history. She collected stories told by her father to add to those of other old timers and used her great-grandfather's journal of his 1875 wagon trip as the basis for her book, "Following Their Westward Star." It is illustrated by an aunt, and Marshall Trimble, Arizona's state historian, wrote the foreword.

"The title of her program for the Sun Cities Area Historical Society is 'Early Arizona,'" says Ed Cirillo, chairman of the membership event.

"And of course we will have refreshments at our meeting," he added. (Ruth also came out of retirement to be the tour guide for the Nov. 4 SCAHS History Jaunt to Fort Verde and her family apple processing building and homestead/museum in Sedona.)

The Nov. 6 meeting is one of two held annually. The spring meeting is in Sun City West.

Lifelong Learning lecture presents story of Del Webb

Ed Allen will give an illustrated talk on the life of the amazing Del Webb – an original American success story -- at the next Lifelong Learning presentation planned Nov. 8.

Needing to help support his family when his father's business went under, the young Webb dropped out of school to work as a carpenter. He followed jobs up and down the west coast, his sole criteria being "Do you have a baseball team?"

He never received that call to the big leagues, but years later owned the best team of them all – the New York Yankees. Self-taught through correspondence courses, Webb learned all facets of construction, and slowly built a construction business during the depression of the 1930s.

World War II brought new opportunities as the Phoenix area was selected for several pilot training facilities – and Webb's company would be involved in all of them.

Post-war, Webb expanded into hotels and casinos in Las Vegas, stadiums in Kansas City and Los Angeles, more than 30 hospitals, Madison Square Garden, shopping centers, and finally residential construction.

Initially skeptical about a community solely for retirees, Webb encouraged his people to do the research, and what they learned caused Webb to decide the nay-saying experts were wrong.

Sun City proved Webb right, and was the first of more than 60 active adult communities around the nation

A program offering a look at the life of Del Webb will be held 7 p.m. Nov. 8 at Bell Recreation Center in Sun City.



today.

There's much more about this remarkable man, his interests, and the company he built. Join us on November 8 at Bell Recreation Center Social Hall to hear the full story, complete with photos from his colorful past.

Doors open at 6 p.m. for a social hour. The program begins at 7 p.m.



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The Sun Cities Area Historical Society is certified by the Arizona Historical Society



The Sun Cities Area Historical Society is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the preservation and presentation of the records and artifacts for Sun City, Arizona, (the world's first Active Adult Retirement Community), and its sister city, Sun City West. The Society's headquarters are located in the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, in one of the five original Sun City model homes.

Museum Hours: 1-4 p.m.
Monday - Friday
Or by appointment
Office Manager: Judy Baerg

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Message from the President

We've only just begun ...

One year ago outgoing President David Verble wrote his final message entitled, "A new vision ..." and six months after that I wrote my first article as president with the header "A new era begins..." Little did I know how prophetic both those columns would be.

Being involved with the museum and holding the position of president has proven to be far more than I expected. I knew there would be some work involved; I understood I would put in some hours; and the commitment to try and create some excitement over what some see as boring would be a challenge.

That said, I have absolutely no regrets about saying yes to becoming involved in the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum. I suspect I have found exactly what every other board member that got hooked on our history has found; it becomes a labor of love.

There is so much that has been captured by so many and now that people are seeing it up close and personal, it is as rewarding as any task I have ever engaged in. For example: We stayed open all summer and it was slow. Three of us pulled almost all of the docent shifts and while there were days no one showed, there were others where we heard the stragglers come through the doors ecstatic they were able to "finally get in and



Bill Pearson
 2010 President, Sun Cities Area Historical Society

see us."

The museum is that darn good. Virtually every one entering leaves with an entirely different perspective; they almost never expect to be as entertained as they are. Those who built the museum and the collections are to be applauded; now our job is to bring folks in to see them.

The great news is it's working. Since November of 2009 we have had more than 2,000 visitors, a total greater than the past three years combined. Obviously the impetus came from Sun City's 50th anniversary celebration, but we look at that as nothing more than a jump start.

In the next year, our plans are off the charts from a planning perspective. Just to give you a brief look, simply page through this issue and you will see an agenda filled with forward movement.

■ Late in November

we will be opening The McMillin Terrace, which will be available for groups to use for meetings and to tour the museum.

■ Around that same time we will be unveiling the long awaited and much needed Sun City West Display. There will be an opening night special by invitation-only gathering on Nov. 18 with the display open to the general public the following day. You won't want to miss this.

■ We have launched a new website with the obvious URL www.delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org and new items from our collection are added daily. On the backside of that site is a blog entitled Sun Cities Today and will feature articles and musings on the community and our history. It's a great place to ask questions and have fun learning in an interactive setting.

■ We have created a fund raising committee that will deal with every option of getting financial buy-in from residents. Whether it is membership drives, naming rights, silent auctions, giant galas, small intimate parties, bequests or endowments, we will be looking at ways for you to get involved.

Let me just close by saying thanks to all that have visited, joined or donated items. The history of our two communities is very special and the only place to see it is at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.

Support Your Sun Cities Museum!

Join the Sun Cities Area Historical Society and help us preserve, protect and showcase the history of Sun City and Sun City West!

Your generous donation goes a long way:

- Supports the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum -- the "official" headquarters of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, housed in one of the first five model homes built in Sun City!
- Funds educational programs that share the history of the world's best-known active-adult retirement communities.
- Underwrites a number of special activities planned in 2010 to celebrate Sun City's 50th anniversary!
- Continues the effort to collect, archive and preserve Sun Cities artifacts.



Stop by today and receive a FREE gift!



Visit the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, and we'll give you this special 50th anniversary commemorative publication:
Reshaping Retirement in America, absolutely free, as our appreciation for your support.

Sun Cities Area Historical Society Annual Membership



Yes, please accept my membership application! My annual contribution is enclosed!

Check one:

- Individual (\$10)
- Family (\$15)
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New Renewal

Return check, payable to:
Sun Cities Area Historical Society (SCAHS)
 10801 Oakmont Drive, Sun City, AZ 85351



From the first moment Sun City opened in 1960, residents have always had a wide variety of activities to choose from. Upper right, the Sun City Women's Club Chorus, later the Sun City Women's Chorus, performs at the first Easter Sunrise Service in the Greek Theater next to Town Hall Center (Fairway) in 1961. Lower right, ladies of the now-defunct Mosaic Club show off their projects in 1960 in their club room in the Community Center (Oakmont.).

Sun City's first clubs & organizations

Abundance of early activities helped define active-resort lifestyle

Time for hobbies and sports is one of the goals of retirement, and to this end, clubs have always been important in the Del Webb "active way of life."

Within the first year, besides, forming men's and women's golf associations, shuffleboard, swimming, croquet, exercise and lawn bowling clubs, there were the Kaffee Klatch, Canasta and Bridge Clubs, Ballroom and Square dancing, Stamp, Clay Modeling and Ceramics, Agricultural, Arts, Mosaics, Needle Arts and Knitting, Camera, Leathercraft and Woodworking clubs, plus the Women's Club, Rose Society, Republican Club and the Reading Hour.

The Sun City Chorus sang on the patio at Oakmont at Sun City's first

Christmas celebration and in the Sun City Amateur Players May, 1961, Minstrel Show. As soon as the Town Hall Center (now Fairway) was built in early 1961, along came the Sun City Players and the Lapidary Club.

The first service club was the Greenway Lions, which met in the Greenway Drug store in the Safeway shopping center, followed by the Kiwanis, Masons, Elks and Moose Lodges. The Sun City Civic Association, which became the Recreation Centers of Sun City, Inc., was formed in late 1960, as was AARP Chapter 4 (the first chapter opened earlier in the year in Youngtown).

In the beginning, "Jubilee (the history book written by the fledgling Historical Society in 1985) states there

were 32 clubs organized; in 1985 there were over 150 chartered clubs: six art, 28 card, 36 crafts, 17 dance groups, seven musical groups, three national, 18 "other" groups, five service, 11 social and 25 sports clubs.

Today, Sun Views lists 21 sports clubs, including pickleball, plus three jogging/walking area and boating and fishing opportunities; six fitness centers; four tennis courts; two each horseshoe and bowling facilities; and billiards in three centers.

There are nine exercise clubs, 35 arts and crafts clubs, nine bridge clubs, and 11 other card and game clubs plus a weekly bingo game; 15 dance clubs, 12 music and drama organizations; four educational groups (including two computer clubs), two national clubs,

eight social groups (including the new Next Gen Club) and two photography organizations.

The “other” clubs include a Best Friends Dog Club, two garden groups (heirs to the Agricultural Club) and the Rose & Garden Club, the Handi-Capables, Mineral Museum, Model Railroad and Museum, Stamp Collecting, Rockhounds, RV and 50th Anniversary



Sun City's first service club: Greenway Lions, which organized in 1960.

organizations.

Service groups include Civitan, Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary, Altrusa, Optimist

and Soroptimist International, Sun City Elks, American Legion, Marine Corps League and a host of

other civic and humanitarian organizations.

Now in Sun City 50th year, all activities take place in one of six spas or eight pools, at one of seven recreation centers or on seven golf courses, or at nearby restaurants. Some groups now meet in the evening to accommodate newer residents still in the work force.

The formally organized chorus of the **Sun City Woman's Club** held its first rehearsal in the Community Center (Oakmont) in September of 1962.

They had plans to sing at the Arizona State Fair on Nov. 5 and for their second Christmas program and one in February. The 22 singers, plus their director and accompanist are first pictured at the Arizona's Golden Jubilee State Fair on the Plaza Stage, where they were invited back for 1963.

Soon they were singing for every special event in the new retirement community under the name, Woman's Chorus of Sun City.

They joined the Arizona Federation of Music Clubs and held concerts with the Hand Bell Ringers (12 of them) and some with the 60-member Male Chorus. By 1971, there were 50 singers.

The Sun City Women's Chorus held its 50th anniversary concert last December for about 500. With the return of the snowbirds, the group of 70 ladies will prepare for its Dec. 5 annual Christmas Concert at Sundial. Tickets are \$5. They also have a concert each spring.

The group meets from 8:45 to 11 a.m. Thursday in the second floor music room at Fairway.



Town Hall Art Club was organized in August 1961 with eight members, seven ladies and one gentleman.

The following May, at the urging of Tom Austin of the Webb Corp., the group joined with the Community Center Art Club in a social hour and made plans for combined activities. Soon they were joining visiting other artists around the West and holding art shows



Originally there were two art clubs in Sun City, one in each of the two rec centers. And here, one of the artists hopes for a critique of the painting he is finishing in 1962.

together.

Membership and number of instructors grew from year to year, and equipment was purchased with funds from sale of members' art. By 1971 the group had eight instructors and daily classes were offered.

Today there are art clubs at two recreation centers: Classes at Lakeview are offered from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, and from 1 to 4 p.m. Thursday and Friday. Open painting is from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday.

The Palo Verde Art Club is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays at Sundial. Other clubs in Sun City offer classes in stained glass, weaving, calligraphy, leathercraft, woodcarving and woodworking, ceramics, porcelain and china painting, quilting, knitting, sewing, silvercraft, metal, photography and lapidary.



It was Walt Disney, a longtime friend, who persuaded Del Webb to build a lawn bowling green and it was ready when 5,000 people visited the new Sun City on Jan. 1, 1960. It was the first green in Arizona,

and residents had to get help from a Youngtown resident to learn about the sport.

Before long, there were 60 members of the **Sun City Lawn Bowling Club**. Early bowlers built the building which housed the Oakmont club with materials furnished by Webb. Sprinklers were paid for by the club.

A year later, a second green was added at the new Town Hall Center.

Players played in street clothes until the ladies were forced to wear regulation white ankle-length skirts when they entered national and international competition in the 70s.

At its highest point in the 80s, there were 1,400 members and Sun City was often called the Lawn Bowling “Capital of the World.” Championship matches for America and the world are frequently held here with more than 1,000 spectators.

Sun City has had, and continues to have, its share of lawn bowl champions; currently five of the world's lawn bowling champions live in Sun City. There are 400 members in clubs at Bell, Fairway (now at Mountain View), Mountain

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Happy Birthday Sun City!

Clubs, organizations, residents and businesses celebrated in grand style the community's 50th anniversary with a massive parade held March 13. Thousands of spectators lined the parade route to cheer on the participants.



Sun Cities Area Historical Society President Bill Pearson with Jane Freeman, founder of the SCAHS and co-author of "Jubilee: The 25th Anniversary of Sun City," published in 1985.

Sun City's biggest and best parade ever marks 50th birthday



1. The Sheriff's Posse of Sun City. 2. The El Zariba Shrine Temple 3. The Civitan Club's "Peace Float." 4. A resident proudly proclaims her pride as a "third generation" Sun Citian. 5. United Church of Sun City, the first church established in Sun City. 6. The Dysart High School Marching Band. 7. Sun Cities Poms 8. Church of the Palms. 9. Bocce Club of Sun City. 10. German American Friendship Club.

SCAHS Celebrates Del E. Webb's birthday!

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society celebrated the 111th birthday of the community's founder with a special event May 16 at Oakmont Recreation Center.

Over 200 people attended the program, which featured complimentary cake, recollections of the early days of the community by several former Del Webb Development Co. employees, and a special biography on the life of Del Webb as told by Jim Gatscher of the Sun City Players.

By the end of the day, 450 slices of cake were served and 215 people toured the Del E. Webb Sun Cities Museum located next door to Oakmont Recreation Center.



Photos: 1. Jim Gatscher of the Sun City Players portrayed the famous builder in "The Life and Times of Del Webb." 2. Jane Freeman, founder of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, and Bill Pearson, SCAHS president, prepare to cut the ceremonial cake honoring the 111th birthday of Del E. Webb. 3. Bev Dryer Stewart, founder and second coach of the Sun City Saints, shared stories about the community's national championship women's fast-pitch softball team. 4. A number of former Del Webb employees attended the event to share their memories and recollections of Del Webb and the early days of Sun City. Jerry Svendsen served as the director of public relations for Sun City. 5. Six members of the Wagers/McDonald family attended the program. The McDonalds were the first to live in the home now occupied by the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.



SCAHS unveils revamped Website

It's been debated the Museum should remain true to its calling and focus on collecting and preserving the Sun Cities history. No one can argue, those who founded the Sun Cities Area Historical Society did an awesome job of doing just that. We have a collection that is fabulous.

This year, the board felt we needed a better online presence. While we have had a website, we had bought software a couple of years back that was specially made for museums. While it is not the most user friendly, it has capacity as a data base and anyone who knows creating one is incredibly expensive.

We hired a graphics artist-turned-web developer to assist in building the site and she did a great job. It is visually attractive and better yet, we have enormous storage capacity. Slowly but surely we are getting our collection stored and displayed. Currently there are about 600 images from our archives; we have the potential to place 10,000 pieces on it. Best of all, it stores them off site.

Attendance at the Museum this year has been exceptional but we all understand the ability to reach even greater numbers is almost unlimited when using the World Wide Web. Opening our doors to millions is far better than opening our doors to thousands. It is a slow process, but in Sun City, we have the time to devote to building that foundation that will expose our collection to all who may be interested.

The site itself is unique: There are lots of interactive options that allow visitors to see us in several different formats. You can take a tour of the Del Webb room, read oral histories, view pictures, listen to comments or search the data base. We also have the last couple of issues of our newsletter online so if you missed them, they



are there in living color. You can even view the movie "The Beginnings."

If that's not enough, we also have a Word Press Blog called Sun Cities Today. It gives readers the capacity to ask questions or get involved with an ongoing dialogue. In most instances we use the history of our communities to talk about the issues we face today.

We have also added another tool to reach members and those who are longing to learn about the Sun Cities. I-Contact gives us the capacity to reach anyone who has given us their email address to reach them at a mo-

ment's notice. If you haven't supplied us with yours, just drop us a line at staff@delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org and we will add you to our email list.

Check us out; we know you will be fascinated. We know that because every time we upload a new article or piece we find ourselves drawn into the vortex of a historical journey that is mystical. Log on, join in and we'll have a ball together. Visit Delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org and let us know what you think.

Delwebbsuncitiesmuseum.org

Major new Sun City West exhibit opens in November

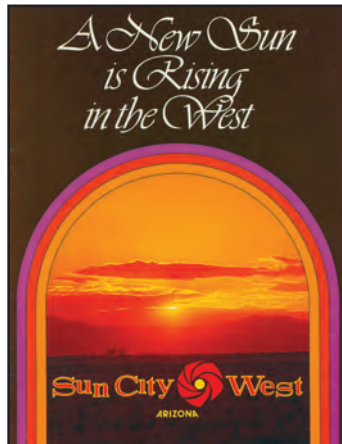
Remodeling of the Jane Freeman Room at the museum has resulted in additional wall space for an expanded exhibit on the history of Sun City West. It will feature the “architect of SCW,” John Meeker and his vision for a “New Sun Rising in the West” that built on the success of Sun City.

The story is told of how Meeker’s wife was in the hospital as the initial land survey was completed. An oversized, preliminary map was delivered to Meeker, and he began to sketch in the new community as he spent hours at the hospital to be with his wife.

Examining the topography, Meeker declared, “At its center, I’ll dig an open pit mine. In it we’ll create an emerald valley with lagoons, brooks, and white sand bunkers.” That was the beginning of the Hillcrest Golf Course, which when it opened in 1979 was cited as one of the three most challenging courses in Arizona.

Meeker had similar thoughts about building the “largest recreational complex in the southwest” – today’s R. H. Johnson Recreation Center.

For years, thousands of Sun City residents had brought their lawn chairs to hear stars like Bob Hope and Rosemary Clooney at the Sun Bowl, and Meeker wanted to accommodate them indoors in air-conditioned comfort



A new, permanent exhibit featuring the history of Sun City West opens in November at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum. The new display’s opening coincides with the opening of the new McMillin Terrace. The display will be unveiled during a special event planned Nov. 18 at the museum. The exhibit will focus on the efforts of John Meeker and his vision for a “New Sun Rising in the West.”



in the new community. Hence, the 7,000-seat Sundome – “the nation’s largest theater on a single level.”

There’s much more to the story of Sun City West, including the colorful Lizard Acres – home to as many as 40,000 head of cattle. A “Lizard Acres” sign still stands along the railroad tracks along Grand Avenue at the

site of the old loading pens. The Sun City West Metal Club has fashioned a 6-foot-tall replica that will stand at the beginning of the new exhibit.

Installation of the new exhibit will start in early November and be completed by mid-month.

Speakers available for free to area groups and clubs

If you belong to a group that invites outside speakers, recommend the Historical Society’s Speakers Bureau.

From January through May, our speakers addressed 27 different groups, telling more than 1,300 people about our local history.

Among the most popular talks are:

- “From Cotton Bolls to Golf Balls,” which traces the earliest attempts at taming the desert through the grand opening of a community for active retirees – one the experts claimed was doomed to fail.

- “The Remarkable Del Webb” – the story of a high school dropout

who went on to build one of the most successful construction companies in America.

- “From Lizard Acres to Lush Oasis” – the story of Sun City West, originally planned to be a city of more than 70,000, and its evolution into today’s smaller, yet complete, community.

- NEW in Fall of 2010: “The Boswell Connection.” A local hospital bears Walter Boswell’s name and Jim Boswell owned ranches underlying today’s Sun City and Sun City West -- yet little is known about them.

Few realize that Jim Boswell was

the largest farmer in America, or that the Boswell Empire stretched from vast holdings in California to Arizona to Oregon to Colorado to the outback of Australia. In building it, he bent nature, government agencies, and politicians to his will -- yet never forgot his humble roots, often referring to himself as “just a cowboy.”

Talks can be adapted to the audience’s interest and time available. Contact the Historical Society at 974-2568, or call Ed Allen at 975-1815 to schedule a speaker. The talks are provided at no charge as a service to the community.

Clubs

Continued from Page 7

View, Lakeview (closed for repairs) and Oakmont.



The new Town Hall (Fairway) 800-seat auditorium was unveiled on Jan. 29, 1961 providing a home for performing groups: Sun City Chorus, Sun City Merry Makers combo, dancers and actors. The stage had dressing rooms and there were completely equipped arts, crafts and hobby shops in the spacious recreation center.

The Town Hall Lapidary Club was organized in the fall. Operating funds of \$195 were donated by members who were paid \$10 by the Webb Corp to demonstrate for weekends for five months.

Original equipment included four sets each of grinders and sanders, one each slab and trim saws, polishing and buffing units and a dopping wax arrangement.

Silversmith equipment was brought in later. There were 20 members after the first 18 months. The club boasted that Del Webb and Sen. Barry Goldwater “proudly” wear bolas made in our shop. ...”

By 1973 membership, now including some women, was 396. And the club requested additional space from the Recreation Centers of Sun City, Inc. The club with only 144 members was de-chartered in 1999 by the RCSC Board to make room



Members of the Lapidary Club polish stones in the second of Sun City's Recreation Centers, Town Hall Center (Fairway) during the 1960s.

for the hundreds of Computer Club members.

Today, there are lapidary groups at Oakmont, Bell and Sundial centers; the group at the new Fairway is now called Sterling & Stones.



Following the financial success of the Sun City Amateur Players Minstrel Show presented by Sun City citizens and the Sun City-Youngtown Kiwanis Clubs in May 1961, the Sun City

Players Club was formed that fall.

Financial success had come from the sale of \$1 tickets and production of a 24-page large-format souvenir program with a red and blue cover. It contained a list of all Sun City clubs and organizations and current officers, churches, hospitals, information on nearby Youngtown and ads from businesses serving the two West Valley communities.

More than \$750 was raised and donated to the Kiwanis Club, which bought oxygen equipment for Sun City and Youngtown doctors and the Rural/Metro and Peoria volunteer fire departments.

The Players Club of 30 members soon doubled while holding monthly meetings at the Community Center (Oakmont) and productions in the 800-seat Town Hall Center. The group moved to Mountain View Recreation Center in



Sun City Agricultura Club, circa 1960.

1974 when the 640 members outgrew Oakmont.

Beginning with one production annually, they added another in 1967 and eventually a third each year so they have the option to produce two plays and one musical annually.

The club changed its name to Sun City Players Community Theater so as not to be confused with a group of athletes. A decade ago, the Readers Ensemble was formed, and it now has its own charter and identity within the Players umbrella, which recently absorbed the Sun City Choraliers.

Remembrance

Dorothea MacDonald Wagers, lifelong SCAHS member

To our Sun Cities Area Historical Society/Museum Friends:

It saddens us to inform you that Dorothea MacDonald Wagers, a lifelong member of SCAHS, passed away, in Colorado, on Sept. 23, 2010.

Dorothea was the daughter of John and Chloe MacDonald. The MacDonalds were the first residents at 10801 Oakmont Drive, one of the first five model homes built in Sun City and

the building which is now home to the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.

Throughout the years, Dorothea provided us with the history of the house and the surrounding area. She and her family visited Sun City on numerous occasions during the 1960s and 1970s.

Therefore, as we designed and redesigned the home/



Dorothea MacDonald-Wagers

museum, Dorothea's knowledge and memories were instrumental.

During her visits to the house, Dorothea shared stories about what life was like in Sun City's infancy. And she sent us many pictures that are today exhibited in the museum.

We were very honored to have Dorothea attend one of our 50th Anniversary Celebrations, the Del Webb Birthday Party in May.

She will be missed.

Bill Pearson,
SCAHS president

Historical Society/Arcadia Publishing to release ‘Images of Sun City’ in 2011

Book to be sold nationally; sales benefit SCAHS

Arcadia Publishing has partnered with the Sun Cities Area Historical Society to produce “Images of Sun City,” a book showcasing the history of Sun City as told through photos.

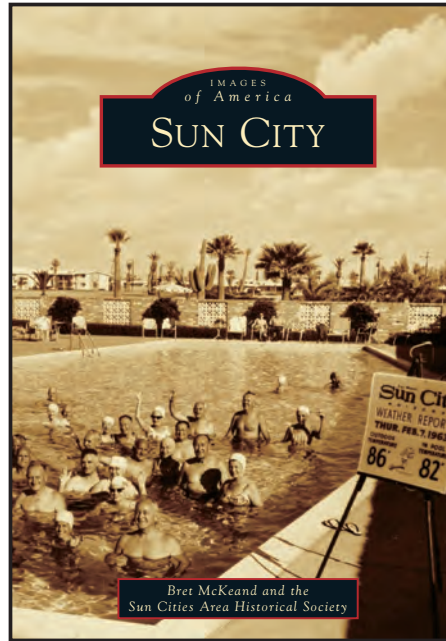
The book is expected to be released nationally in January 2011 as part of Arcadia’s popular “Images in America” series.

All author proceeds from sales will go directly to the Sun Cities Area Historical Society.

The book was coordinated by Bret McKeand, a member of the SCAHS Board of Trustees. Mr. McKeand was editor and publisher of the Sun Cities Independent for over 20 years and is presently vice president of operations for Independent Newspapers, Inc.

“Images of Sun City” is the first historical book in Arcadia’s inventory to focus on a retirement community. The book will include nearly 250 photographs.

Nearly all of the photographs depicting the first three decades of



Sun City’s history were taken by the marketing and public relations team at the Del E. Webb Development Co. The photographs were turned over to the SCAHS in the 1980s and are now in the permanent archives located at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.

Photographs from the archives of the *Sun Cities Independent* were used to supplement the history of the community during the past two decades.

The photographs from the Independent’s archives were loaned to the museum for this project.

“Many of the photographs included in the book have never been published before, or at least not for many decades,” says Mr. McKeand.

The book, says Mr. McKeand, isn’t meant to tell the history of Sun City.

“People will certainly get a sense of Sun City’s history, but the photos are really meant to depict the famous ‘Sun City Lifestyle,’ and why people moved to Sun City and why it was then -- and remains -- a popular place to retire.”

The book is expected to sell for \$21.99 and will be available at all major book stores and online at amazon.com and arcadiapublishing.com, as well as at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.

Arcadia Publishing is the leading history publisher in the United States, and is committed to making history accessible and meaningful through publishing books that celebrate and preserve the heritage of America’s people and places.

A sample of some of the photographs included in “Images of Sun City”



A look at Marinette, the town that once existed where Sun City now exists.



Celebrating milestones have always been popular fun in the nation’s first active-adult retirement community.



Sports, recreation and fabulous state-of-the-art amenities served to attract thousands to Sun City.



Volunteers needed for computer work, other museum tasks

Now that the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum is again on full hours (1 to 4 p.m. weekdays), docents to greet and assist visitors are needed, especially since some of the regulars are still vacationing.

In addition, Office Manager Judy Baerg could use more computer literate people to digitalize the archives. This summer, volunteers Julie Glass and Bev Thome worked with Judy on different mornings, but it is a gargantuan task, and she could use more assistance.

Other jobs for volunteers include preparing and copying materials for the files and helping with social and fund raising events scheduled this fall and spring.



Staff photo Volunteer Julie Glass, right, works in the Museum office helping Office Manager Judy Baerg with the digitalizing of the archives. Judy would like more assistance with this project, which is a morning task.

Those interested are invited to call Judy or Docent

Coordinator Karen Bunnness at 623-974-2568.

Sun Cities Area Historical Society November Calendar

- Nov. 4 – HISTORY JAUNT
Bus day tour to Camp Verde and Sedona fort and museums.
- Nov. 6 -- Fall Membership Meeting
Ruth Jordan Van Epps will give illustrated talk on "Early Arizona" with light refreshments – 1 to 3 p.m. in Oakmont Auditorium
- Nov. 8 -- 50th Anniversary
Lifelong Learning Lecture
Edson Allen presents the talk; 6-7 p.m. light refreshments; 7 p.m. lecture in Bell Social Hall
- Nov. 15 -- SCAHS Board Meeting
4 p.m. at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum
- Nov. 18 -- Grand Opening of McMillin Terrace/Sun City West Exhibit
5-7 p.m. at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum
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Thanks to the folks at Booth Built. The new McMillin Terrace is better than we could have imagined. Partnering with you to bring it to life is a testimony to your commitment to the community. One of the reasons Sun City and Sun City West have flourished is because of businesses like yours who care about the residents and are willing to give back to the community to keep them vibrant and growing.

Bill Pearson, President
Sun Cities Area Historical Society



Dear Mr. Pearson:
Just a personal note of thanks from Tom and I for choosing Booth Built Patio Products to build your new patio addition at the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum. It's a great feeling for us to give back to the community that's given to us for the past 20 years. On behalf of Tom and the staff ... thank you again.

"Looks great! We have enjoyed our patio cover immensely"

"We had a great experience with your company and couldn't be happier with our patio cover"

"Booth Built did three jobs for us, all involving patio covers. I appreciate Tom's time in designing these jobs so that the finished product looked good and was what we had envisioned"



DEL WEBB SUN CITIES MUSEUM PATIO COVER PROJECT

Chris Booth



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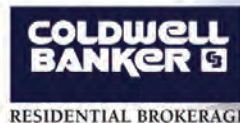
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we live here
we play here
we work here
we volunteer here
and
we help people buy
and sell their homes here



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