



Winter 2004

Volume 13 No. 1

SUN CITIES AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Society Hosts February 28 Annual Open House

It's Open House time once again! We've painted the front door, put a new gray trim color on the house, and installed new signs in both the front yard and the back yard (so golfers on the North golf course can see). All we need now is for *you* to come see.

Our doors will be open from 9am to 2pm. Exhibits of Marinette (the town that preceded Sun City), Sun City, and Sun City West are ready for viewing. Memorabilia of the Sun City Saints, the Sun City PRIDES, and the Sun City Poms are all on display. Historical pamphlets and books are waiting to be purchased and read.

Two very special Sun Citians, **Emil Fischer** and **Max Gimpel**, will be making guest appearances at this year's Open House. Artist-architect **Emil Fischer** is one of the Society's founders and designer of its logo (above). He illustrated the 1985 book, *Jubilee The 25th Anniversary of Sun City, Arizona*. He is profiled in our "History 101" column on page 5. From 10am to 11am Mr. Fischer will be signing copies of a book he authored and illustrated titled, *Churches of the Sun Cities*. **Max Gimpel** created the logo for both the 1985 Silver Anniversary of Sun City and for its 40th anniversary in 2000. He incorporated the Del Webb pinwheel into both designs. His commemorative coin with the 25th anniversary logo and the Del Webb statue is available at the Society. Max Gimpel designed Beth Emeth

Congregation in Sun City West as well as several of its large stained glass windows and the bronze doors of the Holy Ark. He is the 2002 recipient of the Beryl Morton Jewish Heritage Award given to him by the Arizona Jewish Historical Society. He will greet visitors from 1pm to 2pm.

Tours of the Society will be conducted throughout the day, and cookies and refreshments will be on the kitchen table.

We hope you can join us on Saturday, February 28.

April 14 Spring Meeting Focuses on Cultural Arts

"Cultural Arts in the Sun Cities" is the theme for this year's Annual Spring Meeting at 1pm in the Quail/Coyote Room of the Sun City West Foundation, 14465 R.H. Johnson Blvd.

Nancy Gilkeson Root will be the guest speaker. Mrs. Root is a long-time devotee and supporter of the Arts in the Sun Cities, including Theater Works, the Sun Cities Chamber Music Society, and the Butterfield Musicales. She is on the Board of the Business Volunteers of the Arts in Phoenix. She and her husband, Bob, are on the West Valley Fine Arts Council Advisory Committee.

10801 Oakmont Dr.—Sun City, AZ—85351

Open Hours—1:30 to 3:30 pm Tuesday—Wednesday—Thursday—Friday

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Message from the President

January marks both an ending and a beginning. It's a time when we look back with satisfaction on our accomplishments, and look ahead with anticipation to the work that remains to be done.

The year 2003 marked the completion of the Sun City West history project. In work for over two years, the 270-page book was published in time for the community's 25th anniversary. The book provided increased exposure for the Society, and provided us with many opportunities to tell the story of how yesteryear's Lizard Acres became today's lush oasis.

As we look to 2004, we see several challenges. One is to build the Society's membership in both Sun City and Sun City West. We are planning several events in the months ahead, and have an active public relations program to bring the Society to the attention of residents. Mark your calendars for our **February 28 Open House** and the **April 14 Spring Meeting in Sun City West**. You can help us by inviting a friend to join you at these events, and by encouraging others to join.

A second challenge for the new year is to increase our volunteer base. We have an ongoing need for hosts and hostesses for the afternoons that we open our home to visitors. We need people who will help us preserve documents by transferring them to special acid-free paper, and others to create new exhibits. Gathering oral histories offers a special opportunity for those skilled in interviewing. We have many "pioneers" still among us—people who have made significant contributions to our communities and organizations. They won't be with us forever, and we need to capture their stories on tape while we still can.

I'm excited about the prospects for the year ahead! Why don't you make it your resolution to help the Society by bringing in a new member and/or serving as a volunteer?

Hope to see you at our home on Oakmont!

Edson Allen
President, Board of Trustees

Web site Launched!



Along with our new look and our new trustees, the Society has a new Web site. Board members Jo Ruck and David Verble have been busy since last fall setting up and designing the site, and continue to update it on a regular basis. When you can't visit us in person, just log on to **www.scazhistory.org** and "visit" us via the Web.

Jan Dallai...is a relative newcomer to Sun City, moving here two years ago from Connecticut where she had a career as a pharmacy technician. Jan quickly became involved with the Society as a volunteer hostess and is generous with her time in spite of being employed.

James R. Green...Another second generation (his Mother lived here), hails from Ohio. His background there (Lake Erie College), and here (Sun Valley Lodge), was in resource development and fund raising. He has been active in community affairs, having just retired as President of the Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Sun City Rotary Club. He is currently chairman of the Sun City Community Fund/United Way and serves on the West Valley Art Museum Board of Directors.

Eugene Jensen...Prior to coming to Sun City in 1979, “Gene” lived in Kansas, where he put his engineering degree to work. He has been active in Public Health and water resources. As a Registered Professional Engineer in Arizona, he is recognized for his knowledge and expertise in water and waste water issues. He also keeps an eye on land use and wilderness.

Shirley E. Jesberg...Since moving to Sun City in 1983 from Minnesota, Shirley has been active in the Symphony and Art Museum Guilds and “fell into owning a bookstore,” which was a delight and complete change from her career in nursing, neurology and psychiatry in Minnesota.

A Special Thanks

The Society wishes to extend a special thanks to Mary Hawthorne and Virginia Simmons for serving as Board members. We welcomed their expertise and hope they visit us often.

Hosts, Hostesses Welcomed, Thanked

The Society welcomes its newest hosts and hostesses: **Paul Wolfe, Jan Dallai and Ruby Wells.** Each brings his or her own unique style and charm to the job of welcoming visitors and guiding them on tours of the first model home built by Del Webb.

We would also like to acknowledge and thank our continuing host and hostesses, who do a superb job of telling the story of the Sun Cities to their listeners. Thank you to: **Sale Randle, Connie McMillin, Ruth Morton, Phyllis Street, and Jeanette Volkman. Rita Wright,** long-time hostess at the Society, recently “retired” from her hostessing duties. Rita was given a Certificate of Appreciation at our Annual Fall Meeting last November. Thank you, Rita!

If you would like the enjoyment of being a host or hostess, please call the Society and we can set up a training program for you. Become a guide, and then help us tell the fascinating story of Del Webb’s Sun Cities to visitors from near and far.

Society’s VP Enters Hall of Fame

SCAHS VP Paul Graff “bowed us over” with the news that he will be inducted into the Sun City Bowling Hall of Fame on February 28. His superior performance won him the award. Bowlers must carry a minimum 170 average for at least five consecutive years to earn induction in that category. Newspaper clippings about Graff’s achievements will be transferred to acid-free paper and put in the Society’s vertical file under “Personalities,” a category reserved for Sun Citians with outstanding achievements. Congratulations, Paul!

SC Poms Celebrate 25th

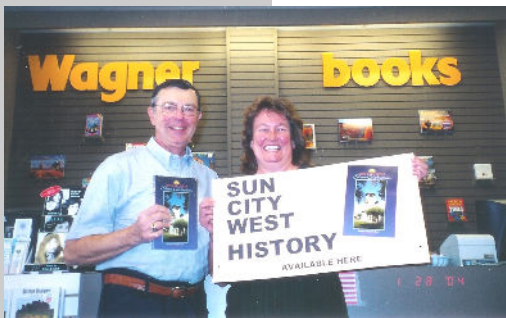
The Sun Cities Area Historical Society is pleased to announce that it will host an afternoon tea in honor of the 25th anniversary of the Sun City Poms on Wednesday, April 21 from 1:30-3:30pm at the Society's headquarters.

The Poms are an internationally acclaimed acrobatic pom/dance group and marching unit. They originated out of the Sun City dance classes taught by former professional dancers, the late Corena and Ray Leslie. They made their debut at a community softball game in 1979.

More details will be coming in the spring newsletter. Mark your calendar now and help us help the Sun City Poms celebrate their silver anniversary in style.

SCW Book Now Available at Wagner Books

Sun City West Silver Celebration, the Society-sponsored history book detailing the first 25 years of Sun City West, can now be purchased at Wagner Books in the Promenade Shopping Center at 99th Avenue and Bell Road in Sun City. The book is also still available at the Sun City West Visitors Center, 13823 Camino del Sol or at your Sun Cities Area Historical Society, 10801 Oakmont Drive in Sun City.



Edson Allen (l), board president and editor of the SCW Silver Celebration book, sets up a display of the book with Wagner Books' manager, Denise Keaney.

Steve Meade Gives SCW Book to His Realtors

Steve Meade, president of Ken Meade Realty, gave each of his 335 SC and SCW sales representatives a year-end gift of a copy of the SCW history book. He feels it is important that those selling locally have an understanding of the community's past. He also encouraged them to use these books as gifts to home purchasers to introduce them to the community, as well as give them important information on how SCW is governed.

Speakers Bureau

Our Speakers Bureau started off the New Year on **January 8** when Ed Allen gave a presentation about Sun City West called "From Lizard Acres to Lush Oasis" to about 30 members of the Sunrise Lions Club. On **January 15**, Phyllis Street joined Ed at the Newcomers Reception for new SCW residents. They set up a table and displayed posters and materials dealing with SCW's early years. The pair mixed historical anecdotes with an invitation to join the Society. The Phoedalian Women's Club came down for a tour of the Society on **January 20**. Phyllis Street greeted club members, who came from Phoenix, Peoria, Sun City, and Glendale. After viewing the exhibits, the group relaxed around the conference table while Mrs. Street told them how the Boswell Cotton Company became involved with the Del Webb Corporation. If you would like a speaker for your club or group, please call the Society at 623/974-2568.

For our winter 2004 issue we would like to profile artist-architect **Emil C. Fischer** of Peoria. Mr. Fischer retired in 1975 as Dean of the College of Architecture and Design at Kansas State University. He and his wife, Ruth, moved to Sun City in 1976. Since then Mr. Fischer has put his many talents to work here in Sun City, and, at 97, continues to do so.

On Friday, November 14, 1986 at 12 noon Emil Fischer joined eleven other people at the Suntuowner Restaurant (later JB's and now New China Super Buffet) on Grand Avenue at 108th. The Charter Membership Meeting of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society was about to begin. Besides Fischer there were Loise Copes, Burton Davis, Amanda Durand, Jane Freeman, Dorothy Koehn, Wesley Matthews, Lester Merydith, Paul Morrill, Helen Randall, Glen Sandberg and Rita Wright. As one of the Society's 12 founders/incorporators, the occasion marked just one more way that the New Jersey-born artist-architect would play an important role in the history of the Society and in Sun City itself.

The new Society needed a logo, so Fischer set about designing one. He wanted "something that reflected Arizona." His first design, enclosed within a circle, started with a cowboy hat in the middle. The final design replaced the cowboy hat with a cotton boll, had a spade on the right to represent farming, a pick on the left to represent mining, and sun rays radiating from the cotton boll to represent Arizona's numerous days of sunshine.

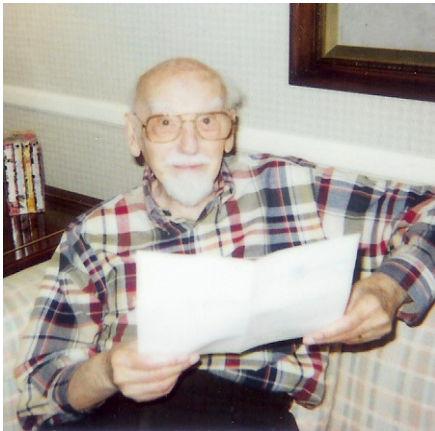
Even before 1986, though, Fischer had been busy at work on several projects involving the Sun Cities. His pen and ink sketches of the churches of the Sun Cities began appearing in the *News-Sun* in 1982. By 1984 he had begun a three-year project sketching the 37 churches of the Sun Cities that would culminate in the 1987 book, sponsored by the Society, and titled, *Churches of the Sun Cities*. The project included driving to the different churches and then going back with sketches and revisions.

"I was always sketching and drawing," says Fischer, so it was only appropriate that he should also do the illustrations for the 1985 book, *Jubilee The 25th Anniversary of Sun City, Arizona*.

Fischer's talents haven't escaped the watchful eyes of his neighbors.....the residents at Marriott's The Forum at Desert Harbor in Peoria. They requested a blank note card be designed for sending greetings all year long. In 2001, at age 94, Fischer created a pen and ink illustration of The Forum's fountain entrance. The picture was put into greeting cards and framed with a gold border.

Whether it's an historical logo, pen sketches of churches, illustrations for an anniversary book, or a pen and ink illustration for greeting cards, his work reflects his genius and blends the precision of the architect with the creativity of the artist.

Emil Fischer retired to Sun City because he wanted a place that would permit him to continue using the knowledge and skills he had accumulated after 31 years of life on academic campuses. He found that place in Sun City and has left his talented and enduring mark on a community that has allowed him to do what he loves best.



Thanks for Renewing

Many thanks to those who have already renewed their memberships for 2004.

Keep in mind that your annual membership contribution is tax deductible and that these funds make it possible to meet the monthly bills of maintaining our house/museum, purchasing supplies, and supporting the daily activities required to preserve the extensive volume of historical artifacts of the Sun Cities.

Help us preserve your Sun Cities Area Historical Society and the artifacts showing Del Webb's innovative concept of "active retirement communities." If you haven't already renewed your membership, please send your renewal today to the address below. And come visit us soon!

*Get a Friend Involved
Be a Volunteer*

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIPS

JAMES GREEN

ESTHER KIDWELL

ALBERT & RUBY WELLS



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