

Historical
High Tea



at

"This Old House"

If Teacups Could Talk

Life is a cup to
be filled, not
drained.

Anonymous



Menu

Sandwiches

Cucumber, Egg, Watercress

Cream Cheese-Tomato Basil

Chicken Almond

Cream Scones-Raspberry Jam

§ Kiwi §

Lemon Poppyseed Muffin

Zucchini-Chocolate Tea Bread

Cream Puff

Tea

**SUN
CITIES
AREA
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**



**10801 Oakmont Ave.
Sun City, Arizona 85351
(602) 974-2568**

SCW Trustees Seek Historical Items

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society will hold its spring meeting Monday, April 13, at the Sun City West Community Service Center at 1 p.m. for social hour and 1:30 p.m. meeting.

Speakers are Margaret Finnerty, author of "Del Webb - A Man, A Company," and Martha Moyer, Webb public and community relations manager, on "Del Webb, Today and Tomorrow".

The SC's Historical Society now has SCW Trustees on its Board, Althea Curfman, Martha Moyer, Sandy Goldstein, Maurice Street and Al Driscoll.

The Sun City West

Trustees negotiated for space in the Sun City West Community Services Building for collecting and preserving the historical data of our community.

Sun City West will be celebrating their 14th anniversary in October and will start collecting memorabilia now. Most of the families who would have in their possession the many thrilling records of Sun City West's past would be members of the "Pioneers" Club.

As the Society grows, its Board of Trustees will be able to expand its service so that the color and excitement of days gone by may be enjoyed by present and future

generations.

You are needed as volunteers in the office in the Community Service Center. Will you please join in preserving the history of Sun City West? We need family pictures, construction pictures of your home, your neighborhood, your golf course, or other Sun City West construction, the Trustees said.

Please accept our 1/2 price membership offer of only \$5 for singles, or \$7.50 for families, for the year 1992 for first time members. We will be looking to receive your membership this month. One need not be a member to devote historical

memorabilia. Contact any of the Trustees for information.

The office at 14465 R.H. Johnson Blvd. will be open on Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. This is an opportunity to see photographs and news clippings taken during the "getting started" period of Sun City West. You may see yourself in some of these photos.

The office is a central point for collecting memorabilia, photographs, old restaurant menus, copies of old activity calendars, etc...items that constitute the history of Sun City West. Now is the time to

TRUSTEES

Continued on Page 3

THE WESTER APRIL 9-15, 1992

TRUSTEES
Continued from Page 1

begin assembling the items before they are discolored and discarded. This will become a record of the agony and ecstasy of your move. Sun City West that you and your neighbors made from the seventies to date.

We would like your help in preparing a "Honor Roll" of each person who has contributed to early development in Sun City West. Perhaps you can supply the names of the early occupants of Sun City West, early performances of the Sundome, founders and early presidents of organizations. When was your church built and who was the leader? Were you involved with PORA, the Fin District, LPGA golf tournaments, Luminaria programs, Community Fund, Lending Hands, Posse, Prides, Bingo, Monte Carlo?

History group starts SCW memorabilia search

Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY WEST — Local residents don't want to wait 27 years before they start collecting historical memorabilia in Sun City West.

"We will be celebrating its 14th anniversary in October and we believe we must start collecting memorabilia now," said Al Driscoll, a member of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society board of trustees. An organized effort to collect Sun City memorabilia began in 1987, 27 years after the community was developed.

"Now is the time to begin assembling these items before they are dis-

colored and discarded," Driscoll said.

In an effort to involve more Sun City West residents in preserving the history of the community, the society is inviting the public to a spring membership meeting Monday.

Refreshments will be served at 1 p.m. and the meeting and program will begin at 1:30 in the Sun City West Community Center, 14465 R.H. Johnson Blvd.

Margaret Finnerty, author of "Del Webb — A Man, A Company," will be the featured speaker, along with Mar-

tha Moyer, Del Webb manager of public and community relations.

Those who attend the meeting and other Sun City West residents are also being given a chance to support the collection of historical data by becoming a member of the society.

A half-price 1992 membership of \$5 per person and \$7.50 for couples for 1992 is being offered.

The five Sun City West residents on the society's board of trustees have negotiated for space in the community services building for collecting and preserving the historical data of the

community.

The office is open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday and will serve as a central point for collecting memorabilia, photographs, old restaurant menus, copies of old activity calendars and other items of Sun City West's early years.

The historical society's main office is at 10801 Oakmont Drive in the first model home built in Sun City.

Residents in Sun City have donated many of the items in the office and now residents in Sun City West are being asked to help.

The society welcomes information such as the names of early occupants, early performances in the Sundome, founders and early presidents of organizations and church construction dates.

In addition, the society needs family pictures, housing construction pictures of your neighborhood, golf courses or other Sun City West construction.

"As the society grows, its board of trustees will be able to expand its service so that the color and excitement of days gone by may be enjoyed by present and future generations."



SUN CITY

SAINTS

RECOGNITION DAY

SUNDAY MAY 17, 1992 2:00 - 4:00 P.M.

SUN CITIES AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

10801 OAKMONT DRIVE

SUN CITY, ARIZONA



WELCOME COACHES THELMA KEITH & GERALD STAPLEY

RENEW FRIENDSHIPS WITH TEAM MEMBERS

SEE SPECIAL DISPLAYS - MEMORABELIA

ENJOY TROPHIES - 32 OF THEM

FURTHER INFORMATION

974-2568

April 21, 1992



SUN CITIES AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

April 21, 1992

Dear Sun City SAINTS Booster,

Re-live the good old days on Sunday, May 17, 1992 when we plan to recognize the Sun City Saints. Further details are available on the back of this letter.

We have talked with former coaches Thelma Keith and Gerald Stapley and they will try to contact some of the players. We have asked the ARIZONA REPUBLIC and PHOENIX GAZETTE to run an announcement in the sports section asking former Saints players to contact Thelma, Gerald or Alice Messick. If you, as a former booster, have kept in contact with any of the players, please let them know about our program. Also, please do the same for any boosters you may remember. We have a skeleton list but it is far from complete.

We plan to have publicity in the local papers closer to the date, May 17th. Hopefully they will print it...you can't ever tell these days.

In our files we have programs for the years 1971 through 1983.

Can you supply any of the missing years? Also, any other memorabilia?

Let's have a good turn-out, see you the 17th! If you have any questions please call and leave a message at 974-2568 or my home, 974-5377.

Cordially,

Jane
Jane Freeman
Archivist

OVER

10801 Oakmont Dr. • Sun City, Arizona 85351 • (602) 974⁴-2568

OVER

B2 Sports Wednesday, April 22, 1992 Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz.**■ SIDELINES****Former Sun City Saints players sought for reunion**

SUN CITY — The Sun Cities Area Historical Society has planned a reunion on Sunday, May 17, to honor former Sun City Saints players.

The Society will have 32 team trophies and team memorabilia on display during the event, which will be conducted from 2 to 4 p.m.

Players should phone Thelma Keith at 246-8890, Gerald Stapley at 964-8579 or Alice Messick at 977-5745.

For information, phone Jane Freeman at 974-2568 or 974-5377.

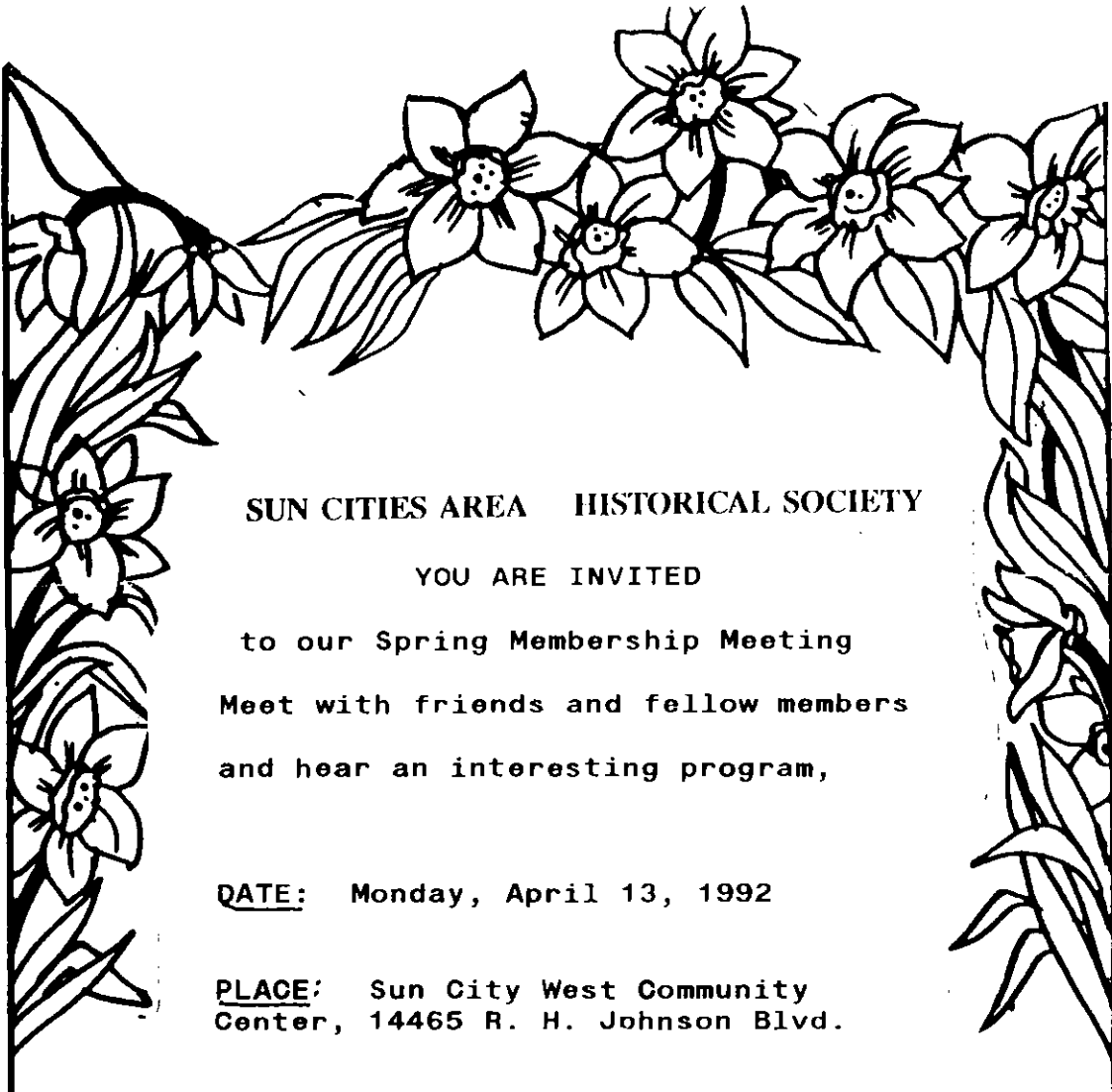
8 The Arizona Republic/THE PHOENIX GAZETTE Fri., April 24, 1992

**Sun City Saints
players to gather**

Former Sun City Saints softball team members will be honored by the Sun Cities Area Historical Society from 2 to 4 p.m. May 17.

Players are asked to contact former coaches Thelma Keith

(246-8890), Gerald Stapley (964-8579) or Alice Messick (977-5745).



SUN CITIES AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

YOU ARE INVITED

**to our Spring Membership Meeting
Meet with friends and fellow members
and hear an interesting program,**

DATE: Monday, April 13, 1992

**PLACE: Sun City West Community
Center, 14465 R. H. Johnson Blvd.**

**TIME: 1 :00 p.m. Social -refresh-
ments served. MEETING; 1:30 -
3:30 p.m.**

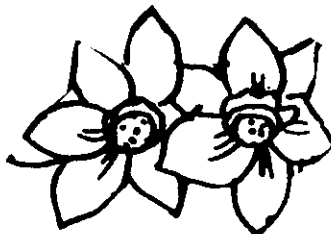
**SPEAKER: MARGARET FINNERTY, Author
of "Del Webb --- A Man, A Company"**

and

**MARTHA MOYER, Manager of Public and
Community Relations.will talk on
"Del Webb - Today and Tomorrow"**

**Many Sun City Pioneers and Sun City
West Pioneers will be present.**

**Sun Cities Historical Society
10801 Oakmont Dr.
Sun City, Az. 85351**



The hometown team

Special event pays tribute to Sun City Saints

By **BRET McKEAND**
Sun Cities Independent

Sun City Stadium has hosted a number of professional ballteams over the years and has seen the likes of such greats as Henry Aaron, Rod Carew and Reggie Jackson.

Ballteams have come and gone over the years, but the most popular team to ever grace the Sun City diamond may have been a team of female softball players, the Sun City Saints.

It's been almost 30 years since the Saints played their first game in Sun City. According to local historians, the community's fondness for the Saints continues as strong as ever.

The Sun Cities Historical Society will conduct their first Sun City Saints Recognition Day on May 17. The event will be held 2-4 p.m. at the society's headquarters, 10801 Oakmont Drive, Sun City.

According to Jane Freeman, president of the society, letters have been sent to several former Saints players and organizers are hopeful many will be on hand for the event.

The team was organized in 1966 and was known as one of the



In addition to playing softball, members of the Sun City Saints often became involved in various fund-raising activities. It was not uncommon to find Saints players roaming the stands before a game, selling kisses for \$1 in an effort to help a local charity.

strongest female softball teams in the nation. During their 18-year-run in Sun City, the Saints won numerous championships, raised a tremendous amount of money for local charities and were seen by thousands upon thousands of loyal fans.

"They were very popular and well-supported by Sun City," says Mrs. Freeman.

According to "Jubilee," a book detailing the history of Sun City, the Saints were the offshoot of the Phoenix Ramblers, a women's softball team which disbanded in 1965.

Team members were lured to Sun City in 1966. A local newspaper published a survey, "Should Sun City have a women's softball team?" and the response

was overwhelmingly positive.

On May 7, 1966, the team played its first game in a new stadium constructed on the corner of Grand and 108th avenues, where JB's Restaurant now exists.

The first stadium seated 1,000 fans and sellouts were the norm, not the exception. A local boosters club was soon organized and, in addition to tickets, money was raised through concessions and team merchandise.

Retha Beveridge, one of the founders of the Saints Boosters Club, recalls how "everybody just loved the Saints." Attendance was always solid — 1,000 people would be considered "poor attendance" back then.

"They were kind of like our daughters," she says. "And there were no problems raising money. Everyone would pitch in."

Mrs. Beveridge remembers one particular game where the Saints battled their opponents for 36

See SAINTS, Page B4

innings. "Everyone stayed until the end and we didn't get home until about 3:30 a.m."

The Saints were scheduled to play the very next morning and, when she and her husband got to the ballpark, "there were several hundred people who remained at the stadium."

Bev Dryer-Stewart, the original owner and first coach of the team, says the closeness of the community at that time was one of the reasons behind the team's popularity.

"(Sun City) was a small community then and most people felt the Saints were their ballteam," she says.

The team quickly became "part of the community" and, through their participation in community activities outside of softball, they

grew close to many of their most loyal fans.

"We felt like we were their daughters," says Ms. Dryer-Stewart.

"The girls made themselves available. After the games they would go up and talk to many of the fans.

" They would attend events in the community. The people got to know (players) by name and there was definitely a close relationship," she adds.

Like many people, Mrs. Beveridge was disappointed to see the team leave in 1984. "It was a shock to everyone when we found out they weren't coming back," she recalls. "It wasn't for lack of support or attendance."

The stadium was sold in 1984 and the future status of the ballpark

was uncertain. The Saints, unable to afford the increased rent and unsure of their future, left for Phoenix.

The history of the Saints will be relived through various displays of uniforms, old programs and other memorabilia at the May 17 Recognition Day.

The Saints exhibit will remain on display at the Historical Society throughout the summer. Starting next fall, Mrs. Freeman says the organization plans to feature a different organization each month.

The Recognition Day and open house are being held in conjunction with National Historic Preservation Week and, coincidentally, happens to fall on the birthday of Del Webb, founder of Sun City.

The public is welcome to the event. Refreshments will be served.

Sun City Saints highlights

- 1965 — Phoenix Ramblers disband
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- 1966 — Saints, consisting of several Ramblers players, begin play in Sun City.
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- 1974-75 — Saints notch two consecutive Pacific Coast League titles.
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Source: Sun City Historical Society

Sun Cities Independent May 13-19, 1992 Sec. B



Evelyn Parry, a Sun City Pioneer, proudly displays various Saints memorabilia and awards which are on display at the Sun Cities Historical Society. The society will host a Saints Recognition Day, 2-4 p.m May 17..

Heavenly

Saints reunion set for this Sunday

By ANN T. DALEY
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Former Sun City Saints Coach Thelma Keith remembers playing softball the night that astronaut Neil Armstrong took the first steps on the moon on July 20, 1969.

"We were playing against the astronauts landing on the moon and we

Softball

still had about 270 fans sitting in the stands at the old field at 107th and Grand (avenues)," Keith said. "That's dedication."

Former Saints players and coaches will join Keith in reminiscing at a reunion hosted by the Sun Cities Area Historical Society this Sunday. Fans and boosters are invited to attend the reunion from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, 10801 Oakmont Drive.

Refreshments and souvenir Sun City Saints hand-held cooling fans will be available.

SCAHS archivist Jane Freeman has been collecting Saints memorabilia to display at the reunion. Among the items are 32 Saints trophies, autographed balls, uniforms and game programs spanning the team's inception in 1966 through their final season in 1984. In 1990, the team regrouped and played in the national



Stephen Cherek/Daily News-Sun

Buttons and other Saints memorabilia will be on display this Sunday.

tournament, but moved to Phoenix in 1991 when players opted to change leagues.

Freeman said the reunion will highlight the society's celebration of National Historic Preservation Month and Sun City founder Del E. Webb's birthday.

"We wanted to feature one group from the Sun Cities each month and I thought there would be a lot of inter-

est in the Saints," Freeman said.

Through a 25-year history in Sun City, the Saints finished as Amateur Softball Association National Champions in 1979 and three-time champions in the Olympic Sports Festival.

"This is wonderful," Keith said of the reunion. "Who knows, it might generate some interest. (Sun Citizens) adopted us and we were a big part of this community for a long time."

"It left a big void in the community and in my life and my heart when the team disbanded."

Although the Saints have disbanded, Keith, Freeman and former Coach Gerald Stapley have contacted and received commitments from a number of former players.

Among players expected to return are pitcher Billie Harris, shortstop Ginger Kurtz, shortstop-outfielder Susie Gaw, second baseman Karen Fellenz, outfielder Val Troxcel, shortstop Woody Woodcott, first baseman Gay Turley and mother-daughter third base duo Rosie and Helen Andrade.

"I was surprised when I got the phone call and a couple of letters," Stapley said of the reunion. "I talked to some of the kids and they're planning on riding out with me."

"It should be a lot of fun."

OVER



Stephen Chernek/Daily News-Sun

Jane Freeman of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society takes a swing with a Sun City Saints toy bat. The society will play host to a reunion of fans, boosters and former players this Sunday.

Fri, May 15, 1992 The Arizona Republic/THE PHOENIX GAZETTE 3

Saints honor day scheduled

By Julia Jones
Staff writer

SUN CITY — A Sun City Saints Recognition Day is planned for 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday at the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, 10801 Oakmont Drive.

The celebration honoring the now-defunct women's softball team is a highlight of the society's observance of National Historic Preservation week. Sunday happens to be the anniversary of the birth of the late Del Webb, founder of Sun City, said Jane Freeman, a member of the Historical Society and of the Saints Booster Club.

On hand for the celebration will be Saints coaches Thelma Keith and Gerald Stapley, plus several team members and a special display of memorabilia.

The first Saints home game was played at the field at 109th and Grand avenues on May 7, 1966; the Sun City Stadium at 111th and Grand avenues opened July 4, 1971.

Although no team members, who ranged in age from 16 to 26 years, ever lived in the Sun Cities, support for the "home team" was wholehearted, said John Davisson, former president of the booster club.

During the Saints' glory years, in the 1970s, the team won two Pacific Coast League championships, toured South Africa, Rhodesia and Australia, won two national tournaments and was runner-up in international competition. Four players on the 1979 team were named to the All-American Team. They were Lynn Mooney, Marilyn Rau, Paula Noel and Suzi Gaw.

But the team faced the beginning of the end, when the International Women's Professional Softball League Association was formed in 1976, and most of the Saints' opponents fled to be part of the first professional women's team-sport enterprise.

Because of a lack of qualified opponents and increasing stadium operating costs, the Saints folded in the mid 1980s. A brief flurry toward reviving the team was made in 1990, and the team, in fact, finished eighth out of 38 in national competition, but the team folded again at the end of the season.

The celebration and display will be arranged in the Historical Society headquarters in the first home built in Sun City. The house sold for \$8,500 in 1960, Freeman said. Information on the Society and the celebration is available at 974-2568.

"Preservation Brings History to Life" is the theme of this year's National Historic Preservation Week.

The hometown team

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Source: Sun Cities Historical Society



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SPORTS

Recognition Day at Historic Society

by Ruth Borchardt

Not a "heavenly body," but a group of the greatest girl softball players ever. Join the fun! Come to a wonderful "package deal" on May 17 at 10801 Oakmont...Sun City honoring the Saints, Del Webb's birthday and National Historic Preservation Week. All this is put on by the Historic Society of Sun City.

Jane Freeman has been working diligently to bring this to fruition... enjoyment guaranteed! Surrounded by nostalgic memorabilia and beautiful trophies, you may spot former coaches Thelma Keith and Gerald Stapley. Also some of the team members.

One of the players, Marilyn Rau who eclipsed many of the national players, hoped to come



Jane Freeman

but since she can't make it, mention should be made that she won the All American title 11 times and was voted into the Hall of Fame for lady softball players.

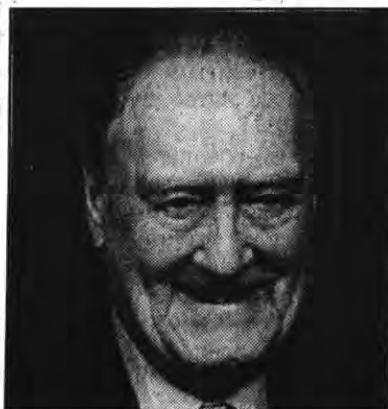
"Off and running" in 1966, the first Saint's home game was played on Grand Avenue.

On July 4, 1972 the stadium opened. In 1974

and '75 there were two Pacific Coast League Championships. 1975, away they went to South Africa and Rhodesia. Lucky seven! 1977 found winners and runner-ups in national and international tournaments; also beat Tokyo twice. 1979, the team garnered first place in the Nationals in Houston. AND, a red letter day the same year the Pom Pon Girls' first appearance under the guidance of Corinne Leslie.

1983, the end of an era. The stadium was sold to the Bade Boyes of Glendale and the Saints played no more until 1990 when they played in the Sun City Stadium and elsewhere on week-ends; also playing in the National in California, where they finished 8th out of 3 teams! A remarkable record for an accomplished team!

Retired in style



Glenn Sanberg

Take me out to the ballgame

Do you remember our great championship softball teams that brought sports fame to Sun City? The Sun City Saints are coming back for a nostalgic visit Sunday afternoon at the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, 10801 Oakmont Drive.

Besides sharing those good times with team members and their coaches, Thelma Keith and Gerald Stapley, you can enjoy interesting displays of action pictures, trophies and other memorabilia, reminiscent of the golden days of Saints fast-pitch softball, according to Jane Freeman and Rita Wright co-chairs of the committee. It will be a fun time you won't want to miss. The public is invited, 2 to 4 p.m.



Monday, May 18, 1992 Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz.

Rick D'Elia/Daily News-Sun

Harriette Kanel of Sun City, left, a fan of the Sun City Saints, a women's fast pitch softball team, chats Sunday with Billie Harris, a former Saints player who pitched for the team from 1970 to 1975. The Sun Cities Area Historical Society sponsored the Saints Recognition Day in the society's headquarters on Oakmont Drive.

Memorabilia wanted

Historical group seeks items about Sun Cities area from before 1960

By Betty Latty
Special Contributor

SUN CITIES — This summer, the Sun Cities Area Historical Society is reaching out to untapped sources such as Waddell, Litchfield Park, Peoria, Glendale and Wickenburg in hopes of finding memorabilia of the ranching countryside that became the Sun Cities.

Jane Freeman, chief archivist for the society — which is housed in one of Sun City's first model homes at 10801 Oakmont — has made a "want list" in the hopes that summer closet cleaners might come up with some pre-Sun Cities items — such as newspaper clippings, photographs (identified, please,) and maps — that deal with the period from 1920-1960.

"We would love anything related to the early years of Grand Avenue," she said. "We need more history of Marinette, the little town that preceded us, and we would love to interview people who may have worked for Boswell Ranch or have photos and recollections of its cotton gin."

The society has a few photographs from the 1930s, she said, but "we could use a lot more."

"There used to be tent cities for migrant workers and cabins for those who worked year 'round," she said. "Those cabins were later moved. Somebody must have pictures from back then."

Freeman said she dreams of finding a photograph showing the old Santa Fe Railroad sign at Marinette, which was still standing when she moved to Sun City. "I kick myself now because I didn't take a

picture of it," she said.

Freeman, who with Glenn Sanberg co-authored "Jubilee," a chronicle written for Sun City's 25th anniversary, said she wrote to the railroad several times for material but never received a reply. Among her summer projects is another attempt to obtain information from the railroad.

Some information sought by the archives committee might come from Litchfield Park, Freeman said, because the Boswell Ranch operations were centered there.

Early telephone directories from the surrounding communities, especially Peoria and Glendale, also are on the "want list." The archivists seek news articles and information about local residents, past and present.

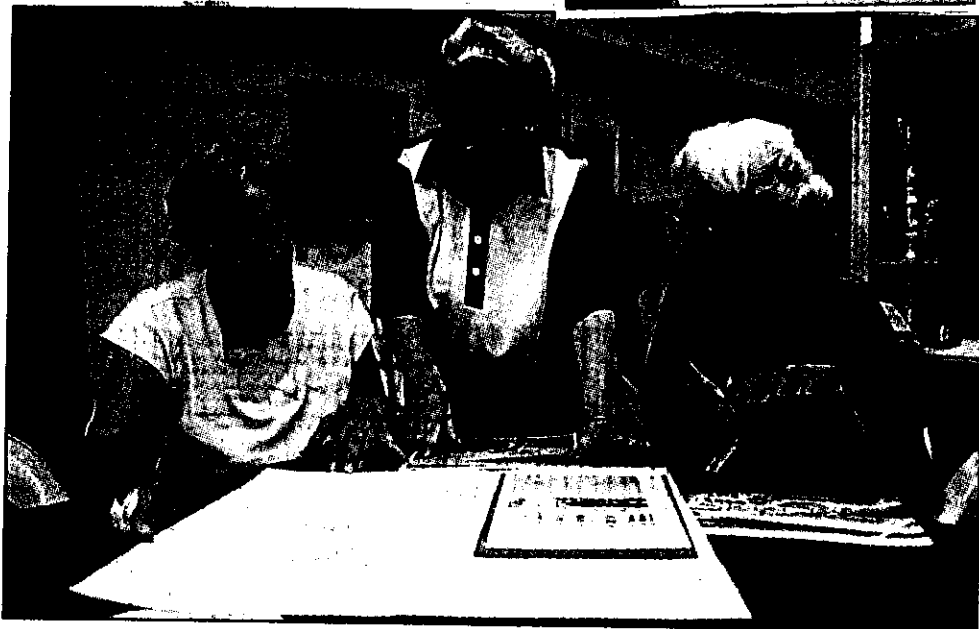
A recent gift was a coffee mug produced to honor retired U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Robert (Bob) Scott on his 84th birthday April 12.

Scott, author of the World War II best seller "God Is My Co-Pilot" and 15 other books, and a former commander of Luke Air Force Base, lived in Sun City for 16 years. He is affiliated with the Museum of Aviation at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia.

"If anyone has clippings or photos they don't want to part with, we will gladly make copies and return the originals," Freeman said.

Along with volunteers Agnes Fansler and Rita Williams, Freeman plans to spend her summer months sorting photographs, copying and cataloging.

The historical society will be open by appointment only during June, July and August, Freeman said. Visitors and those hoped-for donors may leave messages at 974-2568, and calls will be returned.



Tom Tingle / Staff photographer
Looking over an old map of what later became Sun City are (from left) Agnes Fansler, Jane Freeman and Edna Ploeser. The Sun Cities Area Historical Society is looking for donations of items dealing with the period 1920-1960, such as this mug. It was produced to honor retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Robert Scott, author of "God Is My Co-pilot" and a former Sun City resident.

Auxiliary to aid historical society

Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — The Sun Cities Area Historical Society is forming an auxiliary to assist in preserving and cataloging thousands of photographs, newspaper clippings and other memorabilia from the community's early days.

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A display case of Sun Cities area memorabilia will also be installed in the Sun City West Foundation Community Building, 14475 R.H. Johnson Blvd.

Rose Larsen, secretary of the historical society, said she hopes about 50 local residents volunteer.

"It's just tremendous to think about all the things we have. We need the community's help to preserve them in the best way possible," Larsen said.

For more information about becoming an auxiliary volunteer, call 972-8028.



Francis Chastain/Daily News-Sun

Edna Ploeser, a hostess at the Sun City Historical Society, browses through photographs from the 1920's.

PAGE 2 -- SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT -- NOVEMBER 11-17, 1992

Historical Society slates fall luncheon

The Sun Cities Historical Society will hold its fall membership luncheon Nov. 17 at Palmbrook Country Club in Sun City.

Guest speakers for the event will be Burt and Ursula Freireich, original owners of the *Daily News-Sun*.

Admission is \$11 and checks should be made payable to the Historical Society and sent to 10801 Oakmont Drive, Sun City.

Former Daily News-Sun owner to share memories

The original owners of the Daily News-Sun will share their memories of the early days at the newspaper at the Sun Cities Area Historical Society luncheon Tuesday.

Burt and Ursula Freireich made a \$1,500 down payment and became publisher of the monthly tabloid-size News-Sun in July 1960. In 1984 the paper was sold to Ottaway Newspapers, a subsidiary of Dow Jones and Co.

The public may attend the Historical Society's Fall Membership Luncheon, which begins at noon at the Palmbrook Country club, 9350 Greenway Road.

The cost is \$11 per person. Send a check to the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, 10801 Oakmont Drive, Sun City, 85351.

Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz. Thursday, Nov. 12, 1992



SUN CITIES AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED

to the Fall Membership Luncheon and Meeting

DATE: Tuesday, November 17, 1992
PLACE: Palmbrook Country Club
9350 Greenway Rd., Sun City
TIME: 12 Noon, Luncheon, followed by
Business meeting and reports
PRICE: \$11.00 per person
SPEAKERS: Burt and Ursula Friereich (first
Owners & Editors of Sun City News--
Sun Newspaper)

Please plan to come and enjoy fellowship with friends and fellow members and hear an outstanding program.

Your Reservation is your check for \$11.00 per person, made payable to SCAHS and sent to 10801 Oakmont Dr., Sun City, AZ., 85351 by November 10, 1992.

SEE YOU THERE!



Wednesday, Nov. 18, 1992 Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz.

Former publishers recall early days in Sun City

By JACQUE PAPPAS

Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — About 32 years ago, a young sports reporter bought the community's first newspaper with a \$1,500 down payment.

Burt Freireich, who worked at the Phoenix Gazette for 10 years, had always dreamed of owning his own newspaper.

In 1960, Freireich and his wife, Ursula, bought the Youngtown News and Sun City Sun from Sid Lambert, who founded the tabloid-sized, semimonthly paper in 1957.

On Tuesday, the Freireichs shared their newspaper memories with about 40 local residents at a Sun Cities Area Historical Society luncheon.

"One thing that stands out in my mind is that fire at the Lakes Club," Burt Freireich said of the massive blaze in 1972. "I ran the photo five columns on Page One. Ever since then I'm sorry that I didn't run it six columns because it was such a good picture."

Freireich said he covered a number of "controversial issues" from the time he published his first issue on July 22, 1960, to 1984 when he sold the newspaper to current owner Ottaway Newspapers Inc.

The News-Sun covered the Youngtown incorporation election, the attempted incorporation of Sun City and what Freireich called the "Berlin Wall controversy."

"In the early years, it got so members could only use the center near their home so those who belonged to Oakmont Center could not use Fairway Center. Eventually, everything merged into one and peace reigned," Freireich said.

The first year the Freireichs owned the paper, Burt did most of the reporting, writing and photography while Ursula took care of personnel, circulation and advertising.

"Burt was acting like an expecting father. ... He was so excited to have his own newspaper," his wife said.

In April 1961, the Freireichs got a small office at Grand Center and eventually moved to another office on Coggins Drive. As the staff grew with the community, the Freireichs moved to a two-story building on Santa Fe Drive in 1978.

In 1988 the Daily News-Sun moved into a new building just down the street at 10102 Santa Fe Drive.

"At times I thought we were running a chamber of commerce. People would call and ask all sorts of questions," Ursula said.

"I enjoyed the years we had at the paper. I enjoyed writing and miss all the people."

"I remember one day the press stopped and we were not able to go to print. The phone lines went crazy. It was then when I realized how important it was to people."



Frances Guarino/Daily News-Sun

Ursula Freireich speaks to the Sun City Historical Society Tuesday at Palmbrook Country Club. Freireich and her husband, Burt, are former owners of the Daily News-Sun.

Nov. 21, 1992 Daily News-Sun Sun City, Ariz.

Auxiliary to aid historical society

Daily News-Sun staff

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For more information about becoming an auxiliary volunteer, call 972-8028.



Frances Guarino/Daily News-Sun

Edna Ploeser, a hostess at the Sun City Historical Society, browses through photographs from the 1920's.



Greetings from Sun City!

An exhibit of Sun City postcards and Christmas greetings is currently on display at the Sun Cities Historical Society, 10801 Oakmont Drive. Fifty-two postcards dating back to 1961 are included in the display, as well as eight varieties of Del Webb Christmas cards. The holiday greetings were given to residents between the years of 1960 and 1970 and the society is in search of two missing years. Residents wishing to donate items for the display are welcome to call 974-2568. Above, Glenn Sanberg reviews the exhibit.



Sun City house still a model for living

Residential demo is now a museum

By Barbara Deters
Staff writer

It's an unassuming home on a quiet street off Grand Avenue. But in its day, it was quite the phenomenon. A two-bedroom, one-bath masonry home with a covered patio selling for \$8,500. Add \$600 for air conditioning and \$1,250 for a golf-course lot.

On New Year's weekend 1960, more than 100,000 people from all over flocked to see the home, one of five models that Del Webb had built for the grand opening of Sun City, the nation's first active-adult retirement community, complete with recreation centers, golf courses and swimming pools.

Today, people still traipse through the house at 10801 Oakmont Ave.,

not to see what's new in home interiors and designs, but to remember what's old.

The house, home to the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, is now a museum where visitors can learn about the area's history and the roots of Del Webb's Sun City concept, which has grown to 11 communities in five states.

"Most of the other developers thought Webb had flipped," said James Hawks, president of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society. "Why would anybody want to go six miles past Peoria into a cotton field to live?"

But the homes sold themselves. Del Webb employees took orders for 237 homes on that four-day weekend in 1960. Today, there are 26,000 homes in Sun City.

"What brought the people out here was that

they'd never heard of a home on a golf course at that price," said Albert Foster, the historical society's treasurer.

More than 7,000 people have visited the museum since it opened in 1989. Most of them are winter visitors or new people who have just moved in, Hawks said.

But the museum is becoming a research center for students of architecture and for foreigners, mostly government officials from Japan, Germany, France and South Korea who are looking for ways to house their elderly, he said.

The 662-square-foot house on Lot 1, which backs up to the ninth fairway of the North Golf Course, stayed a model home until 1962. Then N.C. "Jack" and Marie Wagers, who owned a home across the same ninth fairway, bought it as an investment.

The Wagers sold it shortly afterward to their daughter-in-law's parents, Chloe and John MacDonald, who lived in the home until their deaths, in 1971 and 1983, respectively. Jean Painter lived in the home from 1984 to 1988, and the historical society acquired it for \$41,500 in 1989.

But it was the MacDonalds, transplants from Denver, who gave the home character and gen-

erated most of the memories associated with it.

They added a third bedroom and a second bathroom and enclosed the porch as an Arizona room sometime in the 1960s.

"I can remember getting my finger caught in the sliding door (of the Arizona room)," said Susan Miller, one of the MacDonalds' grandchildren, who lives in the Denver area. "It was new to us to have sliding doors."

The MacDonalds also built a small partition in the kitchen to separate the eating area from the stove and the refrigerator with the shiny-pink aluminium accent.



A photograph on display in the museum shows the crowds that flocked to the model house on New Year's Day 1960, when Del Webb opened the Sun City development.



Nancy Engebretson/Staff photographer

Albert Foster (left) and James Hawks, the historical society's treasurer and president, respectively, show the house's kitchen.

Home once again a model for living

— HOME, from page B1

The MacDonalds kept the pink exterior paint job and the pink-tile countertops in both the first bathroom and kitchen, which to this day have few cracks or gouges.

"It was just so neat to see that hadn't changed at all," said Barbara Wagers, another MacDonald grandchild.

Wagers discovered that her grandparents' home is now a museum during a visit in December.

The historical society has tried to restore the house to its original design. That meant taking out the second bathroom and removing the walls that separated the bedroom and Arizona room. The kitchen partition also was removed.

Many of the family's memories center on Christmas in the Sun City house, and the way residents treated them.

"Everybody was very warm, friendly," Miller said. "As kids, we were very welcome."

For Miller, probably the biggest kick of Christmas in Sun City was that she and her siblings could swim on Christmas Day. She also remembers taking the official Christmas in Arizona picture on the brick wall in the MacDonalds' back yard.

"It was just really an awful lot of fun," she said.

"Outside of my hometown, I probably have the strongest memories of Sun City. That was like a second home to me."

Monday, September 23, 1996 The Arizona Republic/THE PHOENIX GAZETTE



Nancy Engebretson / Staff photographer

A flag with plenty of history

An American flag that had flown over the state Capitol was presented to the Sun Cities Area Historical Society by the office of U.S. Sen. Jon Kyl last week. Placing Old Glory on a pole Wednesday at the society's headquarters were members of the society and Craig Wismer of Kyl's office.



Steve Chernak/Daily News-Sun

Grace Nix, a volunteer at the Sun Cities Historical Society, examines photos in the room that was the Del Webb Company's original sales office, at the society's headquarters in the first Sun City model home, 10801 W. Oakmont Drive.

1st SC home becomes community museum

By MICHAEL P. HEGARTY
and IAN MITCHELL
Staff writers

10-21-95

SUN CITY — The first home built in this retirement community now houses the history of the nation's first and largest active retirement community.

The two-bedroom cream-colored masonry home at 10801 Oakmont Drive serves as the museum for the Sun Cities Area Historical Society.

From 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. every Tuesday through Friday, visitors are encouraged to take a nostalgic tour through Sun City's first home, with its original pink-tiled kitchen and bathroom and period decor.

"The purpose of the house is like stepping back in time," said James Hawks, president of the historical society. "We can't show the home that was originally presented, if it isn't a home."

"We make available the house that was shown to people who came on Jan. 1, 1960."

During the grand opening holiday weekend, more than 100,000 people drove the six miles from Peoria through the cotton fields to the site. The home, one of five models built

for the opening, sold for \$8,500. Air conditioning was an extra \$600 for the 697-square-foot home that includes a carport and outside storage area. "I wish I would have bought a dozen of them," Hawks joked.

In 1989, the historical society paid \$41,500 for the home, and "we got a little bit of help from the owner," Hawks said. The historical society is funded entirely by donations and dues from its 200 members.

Each year, about 500 visitors walk through the home, looking at the historical photographs and maps on the walls displaying the growth of Sun City, a literary history of the area and an obituary and newspaper clip file that is updated daily.

The house also stores and displays Sun City West historical artifacts, Hawks said. The society is continuously accepting donated items, he added.

"Anybody can throw it away, so why don't you give us a chance?" Hawks urged. "We take just about anything that is related to the real estate where Sun City is now located."

Hawks said the society can only

take items that can be filed, not objects. "We have boxes and files and drawers full of materials," he said.

The wealth of information attracts attention.

"It's not like a McDonald's, but we get lots of inquiries," from students doing research on retirement communities and local groups who want to learn about their history, Hawks said.

The society takes its show on the road to educate more people about Sun Cities history.

"If people don't come in, we'll go to them," Hawks said.

Society members are available to speak to local clubs and organizations, he said. The presentations can be tailored to the interest of the audience and focus on a particular aspect of the area's past, such as athletic, business or residential history.

Hawks said the society is seeking more volunteers to staff the house and people willing to serve on its 15-member board of directors.

It's difficult to find volunteers, he said. "People are very busy out there."

For information on the house or the historical society, call Hawks at 933-2979.

Daily News-Sun

Tuesday, May 17, 1994

Grant helps group nail down new roof

Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — "This Old House," the Oakmont Drive home-turned headquarters for the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, has a new roof, courtesy of some American heritage advocates.

The Palo Verde Chapter of the Questers, one of nearly 30 local groups that study and collect antiques and support museums, obtained a state historical grant and donated the money to the historical society for a new roof.

The rehabilitation, costing about \$3,000, began Friday under the direction of the Questers and Wally Britton, building maintenance supervisor for the historical society.

The society is housed in Sun City's first model home at 10801 Oakmont.

Mary Shanks, a member of Palo Verde Chapter 540 of the Questers, oversaw the chapter's grant application efforts on behalf of the histori-

cal society.

Restoration and preservation of historically significant places in local communities is a primary aim of the Questers International, Shanks said.

Questers members learned the local historical society's office needed a new roof via the society's newsletter and from interaction between Questers and society members.

Shanks led a Palo Verde Questers committee that met with society members and reviewed some of the needs.

"We felt that it (the roof) was a very worthwhile project," Shanks said.

"We hope in the fall to create a larger interest with other Questers chapters and take care of other needs the historical society has," she said.



Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun

Workers remove the old roof from the Sun Cities Historical Society building on Oakmont Drive. The new roof was completed over the weekend.

Residents hail festival

By J.J. McCORMACK
Daily News-Sun staff

Jim and June Bair blazed a trail across the Northwest Valley Friday, traveling from shopping center to shopping center to catch local entertainers whooping it up for Grand Old West Fest.

The Daily News-Sun caught up with Sun City newcomers Jim and June Bair as they sat in the courtyard of the Village at Surprise shopping center listening to the Harmonicaes harmonica band.

A courtyard fountain provided seats and towering cottonwood trees ample shade for the 25 harmonica music fans who sang along to classic tunes like "God Bless America" and "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

June Bair's alto soprano voice rose above the crowd.

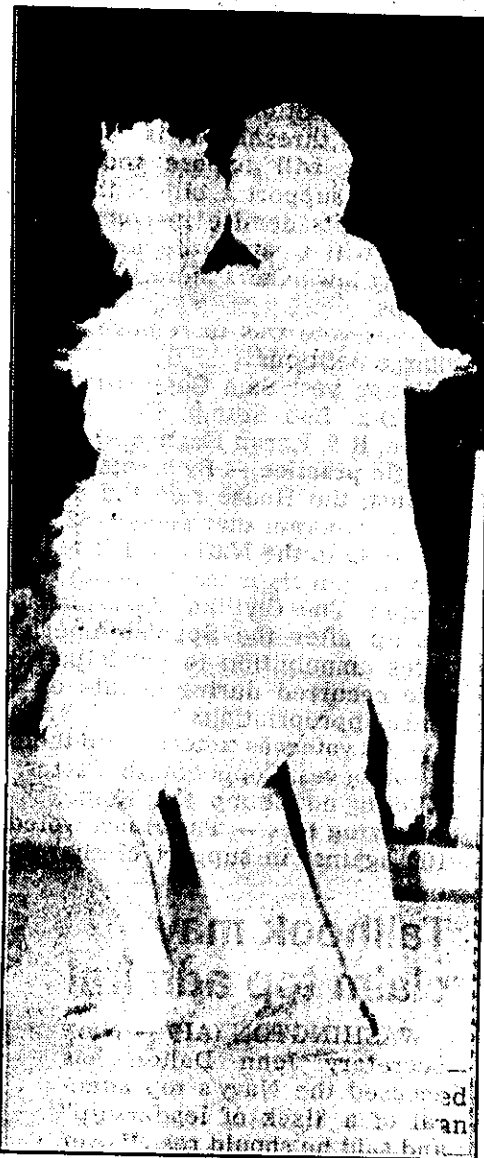
"We've never heard a harmonica band so we wanted to hear it," Bair said, explaining how the Harmonicaes performance got on their Grand Old West Fest itinerary.

"I've always wanted to play the harmonica. I might try it one of these days," Jim Bair said.

Earlier Friday — the first day of the two-day community celebration — the Bairs attended Tom Tanner's crowd-pleasing bagpipe performance at King's Inn Center and visited with early residents during a Sun City Historical Society open house. Their next stop was an organ concert at Bell Camino Center. Friday evening they made tracks for the Sun Bowl and the sunset variety show.

"This is our first year here so we're kind of taking in everything,"

See Festival strikes, A5



Frances Guarino/Daily News-Sun

Lou and Elmer Gross perform a duet at the Sun Bowl during the Tip Top Dance portion of the show.

Festival strikes gold

From A1

ne Bair said. "We're trying to get acquainted."

Love of music had Maggie and Joseph Casby of Sun City west following the West Fest trail of entertainment across the Northwest Valley Friday well.

The Casbys caught the Cannon Sisters at Mercado del Sol, were in the audience

the Harmonicaes performance and were headed to the Bell Camino Center for a organ concert.

"It was wonderful to see people so interested in music at a not loud and boisterous," Maggie Casby said.

Sported a red bandana necklace, denim skirt and hair bow, Maggie Casby said she especially enjoyed singing along with local musicians.

"Even before they asked you (sing), you felt like singing," she said.

Western apparel was the fashion choice for entertainers, audience members and merchants on the first day of the West Fest. Many retailers displayed the latest in cowboy and cowgirl duds in their store windows.

Western clothes are high fashion and hot sellers these days, thanks in part to the popularity of country-western music said Keiko Van Horn, owner of Kay's fashions. She was expecting a number of last-minute sales to women planning to attend the street dance tonight at the Sundome Center of Performing Arts in an City West.

Some of the most colorful duds were modeled by associates of the Ken Meade Realty office at Greenway Terrace in Sun City.

Patty Meredith and her female colleagues donned saloon dresses and cavorted around a "Dodge City Saloon" set up outside the real estate office. Cowpokes played poker and swigged whiskey throughout the morning.



Stephen Chernen/Daily News

Sun City Pioneers Bertha Myers, left, and Florence Sears look at a display of photographs from Sun City's beginning at the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, housed in the first model home, 10801 Oakmont Drive. Sears and Myers have both lived in Sun City since 1960.

"I've had more fun," Meredith said. "You know it (the dress kind of changes your personality.)"

Realtor Stan Podlasek, a retired mortician, paraded around in an old-time black funeral director's suit and tie.

"There's been lots of action (in Dodge City)," Podlasek said.

Meredith and her fellow saloon girls tried their hands at square-dancing with the Westerners square-dance club. "I liked it well enough I think I'll give it a whirl sometime," she said.

Lucy Hays wore her 45-year-old glitter embellished cowgirl boots while performing Friday morning with the Senior Serendipity Doo Dah band at the Sun Bowl Plaza.

"I used to really ride a horse in those boots," she said.

Maxine and John Turnbull of Sun City and about 30 fans of singer Hays brought their own lawn chairs to hear the group, which featured two guitars, two banjos, a clarinet and bass. The audience smiled, clapped and tapped their toes to the country-western and pre-rock era classics.

Reminiscing, not music, drew about a dozen Sun City pioneers to the Sun Cities Area Historical Society headquarters Friday. The pioneers — Sun City's first residents — were honored at a tea in the retirement community's first model home.

Berth Myers, Mildred Told-

rian, Florence Sears, Evelyn Parry and others who moved to Sun City in 1960 and 1961 chatted about the good old days when, they said, Sun City was a "close-knit town."

The pioneers talked of how they would gather for holidays like Thanksgiving, for a strawberry festival or Mother's Day and a root beer bust on Father's Day, all on the patio at Oakmont Recreation Center; how they would drive by their first Sun City homes to see how they had changed; and how they dealt with "cotton bugs" and dust and dust from nearby cotton fields that would blow into their homes during storms.

"We were always clean. If it wasn't bugs it was dust," Sears said.

Scholars dig into SC roots

By EVELYN BARBER
Daily News-Sun columnist

The image of Sun City has remained much the same since its inception in 1960 and the Sun City lifestyle that has evolved is known the world over.

But this is not a static community; in fact, it is in a constant state of change, Arizona Humanities Council Director Dan Shilling said Wednesday, speaking at the annual fall meeting of the Sun Cities Historical Society.

Shilling described the council's "Communities in

Transition" project, which over two years will focus on the understanding of "community" in Arizona.

Sun City is one of 10 archetypal communities that will be part of the project. The 10 were chosen as representative of the five qualities that give Arizona its identity: agriculture, ethnic diversity, high technology, retirement and tourism.

"Sun City, of course, is an international symbol of the planned retirement community," said Shilling.

See Retirees come, A5

"To know history is to know where your ideas come from and why you happen to believe them, to know the source of your moral and aesthetic sensibilities."

Dan Shilling
Arizona Humanities
Council Director

Retirees come here to start over

—From A1

A team of five ASU scholars will work with community liaisons, Shilling said, "to research not only the history, but the ideas that underlie the development of the 10 sites" through oral history as well as research in each community.

The project will be concluded in early 1996 and a manuscript for publication will be completed before the summer of 1996.

Shilling cited the rootlessness of America's communities today, the loss of the ability to be a community, as contributing to a poverty of values and to the "collapse of the ritual, ethical and spirit-

ual practices that define a community."

History, he said, contributes directly to community building. "To know history is to know where your ideas come from and why you happen to believe them, to know the source of your moral and aesthetic sensibilities."

Just as Phoenix gets its name from the bird of myth, reborn from its ashes, so many people see their move to Arizona as a chance to start over, Shilling said.

"It is not only those who come searching for jobs that accompany a constantly increasing population; it is also those who retire to places like Sun City — retire, that is, to a

'new life.'"

Arizona cities, like the state itself, have gone through tremendous transitions in the last several decades in order to survive, Shilling said. And it is the "transitioning" the council project will focus on in the 10 communities.

"Communities in Transition" began with the goal of addressing the concerns of community as a deliberative dialogue, not as a "debate" of public policy where participants square off with opposing views that never involve the kind of talk that leads to common ground.

"We are aware that our efforts should not duplicate town halls, city council meet-

ings or similar models. Further, we are not a political or advocacy group, or an organization with answers. We have enough of them," Shilling said.

"Let us encourage open, community-grounded dialogue (rather than debate), dialogue that addresses modern America's tendency to obliterate tradition and make rootlessness a virtue. Let us, instead, reappropriate tradition and nurture the roots that strengthen a community's social ecology, that help ground and locate us in ways no map can."

Evelyn Barber is the former editorial page editor of the Daily News-Sun.

Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz. Monday, March 22, 1993

Historians mark city's 33rd year

By ROSA De SIMONE
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Aside from free cookies, interesting facts about the first house built in Sun City were served during the Sun Cities Area Historical Society's open house Saturday.

And while the aroma of grilled hot dogs from next door's Oakmont Recreation Center Fun Fair was tantalizing, so was the smorgasbord of history available inside the first house built in this retirement community.

Old pictures and brochures were displayed in the 33-year-old house at 10801 Oakmont Drive. The original sales office, about the size of a typical walk-in closet, was transplanted from its home across the street to the

side of the 33-year-old house.

The sales office was restored, allowing visitors to enter and read about a new community called Sun City.

"So many people aren't aware of all the interesting things that have been collected over the years," said Evelyn Parry, a member of the historical society.

Sid Barrick was interested in an old brochure in the sales office advertising the prices of Del E. Webb's homes in 1960:

"Ranging from \$8,500 for the Basic Small Home to \$13,400 for the largest house with several optional features," a brochure read.

"I'd buy a house for \$8,500," Barrick was quick to say.

See Displays impress, A5



Stephen Chernek/Daily News-Sun

Iria Geehan of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society hands out brochures Saturday to a visitor to the society's headquarters in the first home built in Sun City at 10801 Oakmont Drive.

Displays impress Sun City visitors

—From A1

Barrick and his wife Betty are visiting for the winter.

"He (Webb) had the foresight back 30 years ago to build a house that's handicap accessible," Barrick said.

Samuel and Muriel McCullough, who bought their Sun City home 10 years ago, were equally impressed with the historical society's displays.

"I think it's marvelous," Muriel said. "They've brought together all the different eras (of information) very nicely."

Samuel, a retired farmer, especially liked the black and white photos of farms from the 1920s "with all the mules"

that thrived in Marinette, the community that preceeded Sun City.

The open house also attracted Gladys Schroeder — a 17-year-resident who had never visited the historical society office.

"With the Oakmont fair next door I thought this was a good chance to see it," Schroeder said. "I think anything that's historical is important."

History in the making

Historical Society preserves community's past, records the present

By ANNE RYMAN
Sun Cities Independent

One local organization believes in saving everything associated with the history of the Sun Cities.

Since 1985, the Sun Cities Historical Society has collected and preserved historical information about life in the two retirement communities.

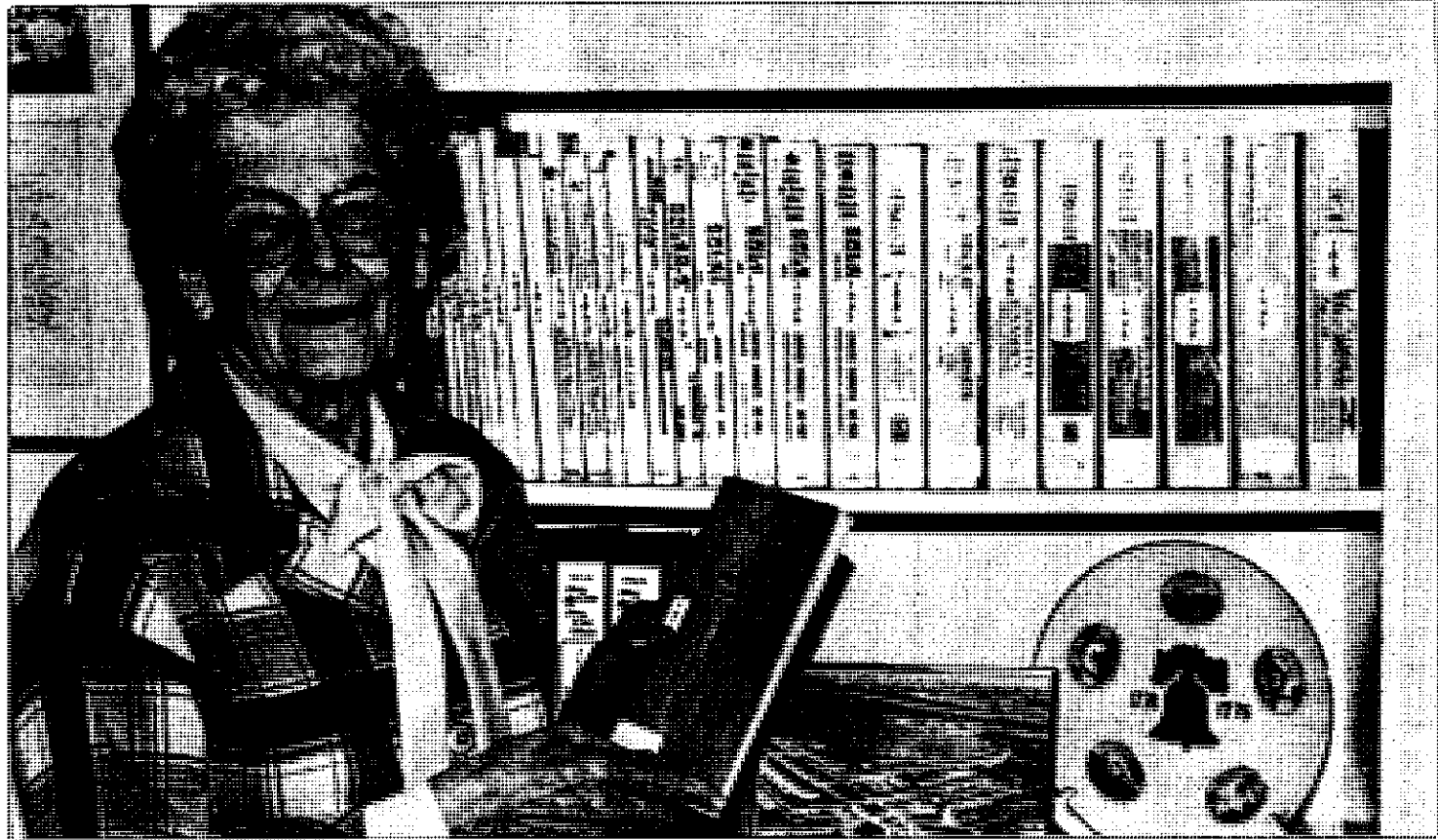
The society, located at 10801 Oakmont Ave., Sun City, collects newspaper clippings, photographs, maps and other memorabilia from Sun City's 33-year history and Sun City West's 15-year existence.

"We're also interested in present-day things, too, because 50 years from now it will be history," says Jane Freeman, society archivist. This includes information about new buildings, community services and day-to-day events.

The Sun Cities Historical Society was organized in 1986 after a group of residents got together to work on a book about the history of Sun City, "Jubilee: The 25th Anniversary of Sun City, Ariz."

"We had all this material we gathered when we were writing 'Jubilee.' What were we going to do with it? We said 'we'll set up a historical society,'" Mrs. Freeman says.

Since that time, the organization has grown to include 226 members. In 1989, society members purchased the first model home built in Sun City and converted it into a historical museum and headquarters. The building is open to the public from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.



The Sun Cities Historical Society maintains its headquarters in a building which once served as the first Sun City model home. The building, located at 10801 Oakmont Ave., is staffed by volunteers and serves as a permanent home for old photos and Sun City memorabilia. Volunteer Evelyn Parry looks over a collection of Sun City telephone directories dating back to 1960.

OVER

In July 1991, they added the original Del Webb sales office to the southwest corner of the organization's building. Del Webb officials opened the sales office in January 1960, and 200,000 people visited it the first weekend.

Today, the former sales office is home to photographs of the early history of Marinette (the town which once existed where Sun City now exists), Sun City's early days of development and the first sketches of model homes.

The museum also features early memorabilia such as the elaborate three-dimensional post cards Del Webb sent to its residents in the 1970s. Collectibles include keyrings and buttons, as well as early souvenirs such as ashtrays commemorating the fifth anniversary of Sun City.

Volunteers have catalogued thousands of photographs, obituaries and newspaper articles, but much work remains, Mrs. Freeman says. Boxes of slide photographs must be examined to see if the people and events in them can be identified.

The society gets its items from local residents and organizations. To determine whether something has historical significance, Mrs. Freeman says the item, phot-

ograph or clipping must relate to the Sun Cities area. It should be dated and identified, particularly if there are people in a photograph.

In addition to its collection of historical items, the society hosts periodic exhibits and sponsors special programs. In May 1991, society members hosted a celebration for former members of the Sun City Saints. The women's softball team was organized in 1965.

"We invited all the team members back and served hot dogs, popcorn and soda — just like the ballpark. We had 200 people," Mrs. Freeman says.

Society members plan another special program this spring on an as-yet undetermined subject. They hope to host at least two programs a year — one in the spring and one in the fall.

To help with special programs, exhibits and general filing, the society plans to form an auxiliary group of about 40 people, says Rose Larson, secretary.

Historical Society forming auxiliary

By Lori Baker
Staff writer

SUN CITIES — The Sun Cities Historical Society is forming an auxiliary to help organize volunteer activities.

The first auxiliary meeting will be at 11 a.m. Jan. 23 at the society's headquarters, 10801 Oakmont Drive.

Rose Larsen, auxiliary secretary, said the group is searching for men and women to volunteer a few hours each month.

Hostesses and hosts are needed to assist with open-house celebrations. They also would greet visitors during the museum's hours from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. weekdays.

Other projects needing volunteers include:

■ Two people are needed to work

on the vertical file. They would clip newspaper articles, copy them on acid-free paper and file them.

■ Someone is needed to inventory materials on the Sun City Saints softball team.

■ Help is needed in setting up a file for Sun City West.

■ Assistance is needed to select slides that are pertinent to Sun Cities history and to sequence a slide presentation.

■ People are needed to help with the society's newsletter and mailing.

■ Help is needed in planning monthly displays.

"The rewarding aspect of cataloging and recording for the Sun Cities area Historical Society is the knowledge that one's efforts are of historical value," Larsen said.

"One is not perpetrating a series of ephemeral events but is perpetuating history."

The historical society was begun in October 1985. The first house built in Sun City serves as the society's headquarters, where memorabilia, maps, photos and news clippings about the Sun Cities are kept.

A satellite office in Sun City West was opened last year and a display is being created for public viewing.

People interested in volunteering can call Jane Freeman, the museum's chief archivist at 974-2568. Freeman is the co-author of "Jubilee: The 25th Anniversary of Sun City, Arizona," which chronicles the history of Sun City through 1985.

THE WESTER Jan. 14-20, 1993

Fast Growing Sun Cities Area Historical Society Organizing Needed Auxiliary

Story & Photos,
Stan Steciak

The SCAHS (Sun Cities Area Historical Society) is growing by leaps and bounds. So fast that it now needs an auxiliary to assist the Board of Trustees. Volunteers are desperately needed to work on vertical files and to clip items from newspapers and to file them. Help is needed to inventory materials and there is a lot of materials. Someone must look at slides and save those pertinent to the history of the Sun Cities. Personnel is needed to

handle the newsletter and its mailing and to set up monthly displays. There is a great need for hosts and hostesses

to greet visitors during the hours of 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Continued on Page 10



Del Webb's first home in Sun City now the home of SCAHS

Historical Society

Continued from Page 1

Monday through Friday. Most important, to Westers, is that volunteers are needed to set up a file for the history of Sun City West.

Joining the auxiliary will be rewarding because your efforts will be of historical value.

Rose Larsen, secretary of the SCAHS, reminds all that the first meeting (it will be a historical event) of the auxiliary will be Saturday, Jan. 23rd, at 11 a.m. A luncheon will follow a brief orientation. The meeting place will be an interesting one to visit because the home at 10801 Oakmont Drive, Sun City, is

the first home built by Del Webb. If memory serves right, Mr. Webb actually worked on this home. The Historical Society is headquartered in this historical place. Soon it will have an office in Sun City West too.

History in the making

Historical Society preserves community's past, records the present

By ANNE RYMAN
Sun Cities Independent

One local organization believes in saving everything associated with the history of the Sun Cities.

Since 1985, the Sun Cities Historical Society has collected and preserved historical information about life in the two retirement communities.

The society, located at 10801 Oakmont Ave., Sun City, collects newspaper clippings, photographs, maps and other memorabilia from Sun City's 33-year history and Sun City West's 15-year existence.

"We're also interested in present-day things, too, because 50 years from now it will be history," says Jane Freeman, society archivist. This includes information about new buildings, community services and day-to-day events.

The Sun Cities Historical Society was organized in 1986 after a group of residents got together to work on a book about the history of Sun City, "Jubilee: The 25th Anniversary of Sun City, Ariz."

"We had all this material we gathered when we were writing 'Jubilee.' What were we going to do with it? We said 'we'll set up a historical society,'" Mrs. Freeman says.

Since that time, the organization has grown to include 226 members. In 1989, society members purchased the first model home built in Sun City and converted it into a historical museum and headquarters. The building is open to the public from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

In July 1991, they added the original Del Webb sales office to the southwest corner of the organization's building. Del Webb officials opened the sales office in January 1960, and 200,000 people visited it the first weekend.

Today, the former sales office is home to photographs of the early history of Marinette (the town which once existed where Sun City now exists), Sun City's early days of development and the first sketches of model homes.

The museum also features early memorabilia such as the elaborate three-dimensional post cards Del Webb sent to its residents in the 1970s. Collectibles include keyrings and buttons, as well as early souvenirs such as ashtrays commemorating the fifth anniversary of Sun City.

Volunteers have catalogued thousands of photographs, obituaries and newspaper articles, but much work remains, Mrs. Freeman says. Boxes of slide photographs must be examined to see if the people and events in them can be identified.

The society gets its items from local residents and organizations. To determine whether something has historical significance, Mrs. Freeman says the item, phot-

ograph or clipping must relate to the Sun Cities area. It should be dated and identified, particularly if there are people in a photograph.

In addition to its collection of historical items, the society hosts periodic exhibits and sponsors special programs. In May 1991, society members hosted a cele-

bration for former members of the Sun City Saints. The women's softball team was organized in 1965.

"We invited all the team members back and served hot dogs, popcorn and soda — just like the ballpark. We had 200 people," Mrs. Freeman says.

Society members plan another special

program this spring on an as-yet undetermined subject. They hope to host at least two programs a year — one in the spring and one in the fall.

To help with special programs, exhibits and general filing, the society plans to form an auxiliary group of about 40 people, says Rose Larson, secretary.

(OVER

New auxiliary lends helping hand

By ANNE RYMAN
Sun Cities Independent

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society is looking for volunteers to help preserve the history of the two retirement communities.

Board members want to form an auxiliary of 40 people to assist with filing, inventory and clipping photographs and newspaper articles, says Rose Larson, secretary of the 226-member organization.

"I've watched Jane Freeman, our archivist, and her assistants do more work than three can handle," she says.

"Every single obituary comes out of the paper. Every photo of historical significance is put on special paper and filed."

Projects for auxiliary members include:

- A display on Sun City West in the Sun City West Community Services Building.

- Serve as hosts and hostesses to assist with open houses and during visiting hours — 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

- Prepare a quarterly newsletter that goes to society members

- Inventory materials on the Sun City Saints, a woman's softball league organized in 1965.

- Construct periodic displays.

- Clip items of interest from newspapers, copy them on acid-free paper and file them.

The time commitment is up to the person who chooses to volunteer, Mrs. Larson says. "I think four of five hours a month is adequate," Mrs. Larson says. "If we had several people giving this much,

we could get so much done."

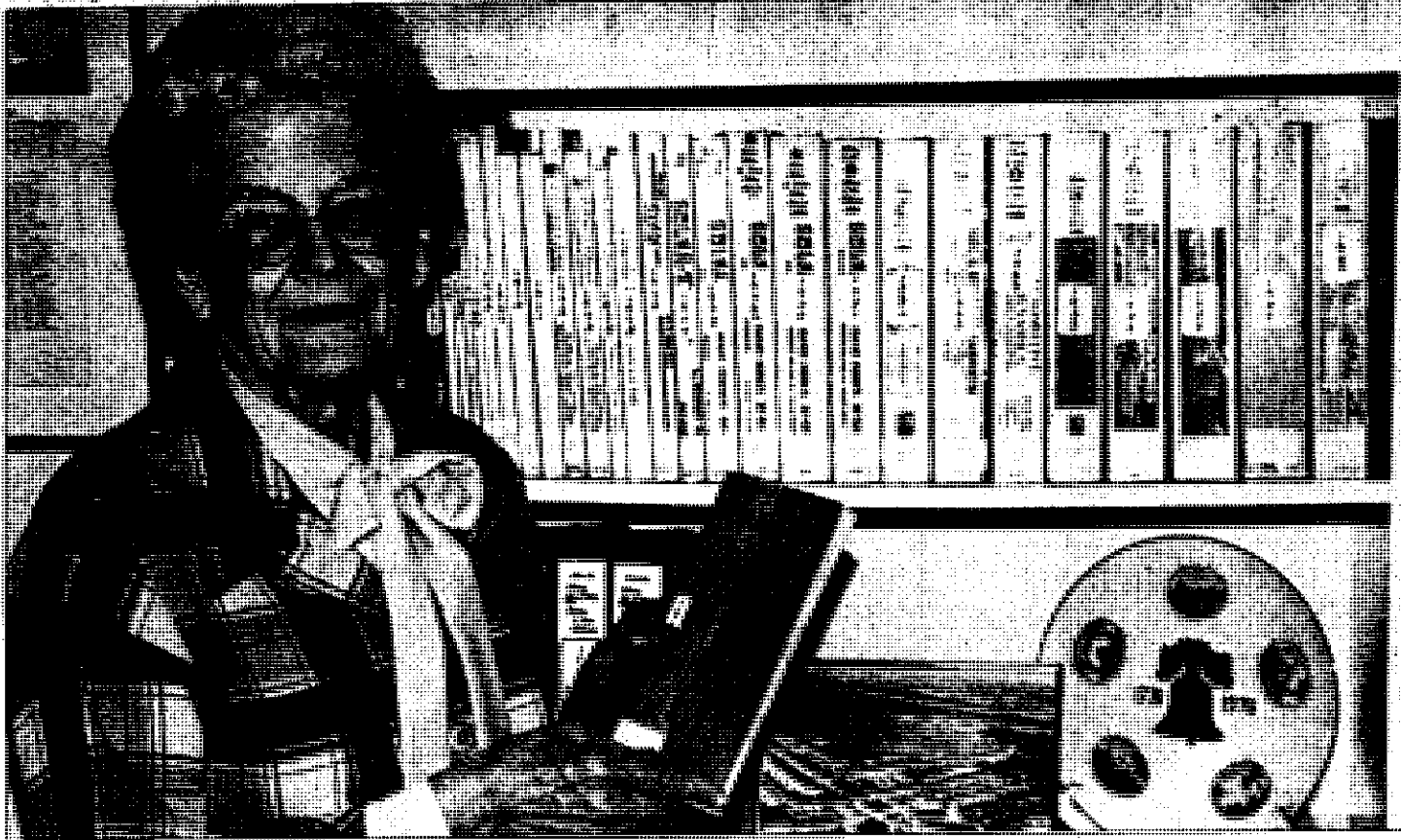
Those who are interested may contact Mrs. Larson at 972-8028. A short orientation session is planned for 11 a.m. Jan. 23 at the society's headquarters, 10801 Oakmont Drive, Sun City.

Since 1985, the Sun Cities Historical Society has collected newspaper clippings, photographs, maps and other memorabilia from Sun City's 33-year history and Sun City West's 15-year existence.

Mrs. Freeman is looking forward to the extra help of an auxiliary.

"We can give them all kinds of projects.

"We're hoping someone will be interested in going through slides and deciding what is pertinent. And we have a lot of scrapbooks to critique (for historical value)," she says.



The Sun Cities Historical Society maintains its headquarters in a building which once served as the first Sun City model home. The building, located at 10801 Oakmont Ave., is staffed by volunteers and serves as a permanent home for old photos and Sun City memorabilia. Volunteer Evelyn Parry looks over a collection of Sun City telephone directories dating back to 1960.

New auxiliary lends helping hand

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Open house marks SC's 33rd birthday

Daily News-Sun staff

More than three decades ago, Del E. Webb set out to turn a tract of desert land west of Phoenix into the largest retirement community in the nation.

Now, members of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society are preparing to celebrate the 33rd anniversary of that tract turned-Sun City.

An open house is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday in the Sun Cities Historical Society office, 10801 Oakmont Drive. The office is the first model home in the community, which opened its doors to prospec-

tive buyers in January 1960.

"This should be very interesting, to see the beginning of Sun City," said Genevieve Lewis, a member of the historical society and co-chairwoman of the open house.

Photographs, post cards, books and other memorabilia showcasing the history of Sun City will be on display.

Included will be pictures of Marinette Ranch, a 20,000-acre settlement between the Agua Fria and New rivers in the 1920s; photographs of Sun City dating to 1960; Sun City Saints trophies and memorabilia; the

first Sun City telephone directory; an obituary file; and books written about Sun City.

The post card collection shows off the Sun City way of life from 1960 to now, Lewis said.

Also on display will be the exhibit, "The New Way of Life," which focuses on the numerous retirement homes that have been developed in and around the Sun Cities in the past 30 years.

All items were donated by residents and the Del Webb Corp., Lewis said.

Members of the historical society will be on hand Saturday to explain the displays.

The open house will take place in conjunction with the Oakmont Recreation Center Fun Fair, which will be from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at 10725 Oakmont Drive, next door to the historical society office.

"We hope a lot of people will stop in as we celebrate the 33rd year of Sun City," Lewis said.

For open house information, call 974-2568.



Mollie J. Hoppe/Daily News-Sun
Jane Freeman of the Sun Cities Historical Society leafs through one of the group's many scrapbooks.

Historians mark city's 33rd year

By ROSA De SIMONE
Daily News-Sun Staff

SUN CITY — Aside from free cookies, interesting facts about the first house built in Sun City were served during the Sun Cities Area Historical Society's open house Saturday.

And while the aroma of grilled hot dogs from next door's Oakmont Recreation Center Fun Fair was tantalizing, so was the smorgasbord of history available inside the first house built in this retirement community.

Old pictures and brochures were displayed in the 33-year-old house at 10801 Oakmont Drive. The original sales office, about the size of a typical walk-in closet, was transplanted from its home across the street to the

side of the 33-year-old house.

The sales office was restored, allowing visitors to enter and read about a new community called Sun City.

"So many people aren't aware of all the interesting things that have been collected over the years," said Evelyn Parry, a member of the historical society.

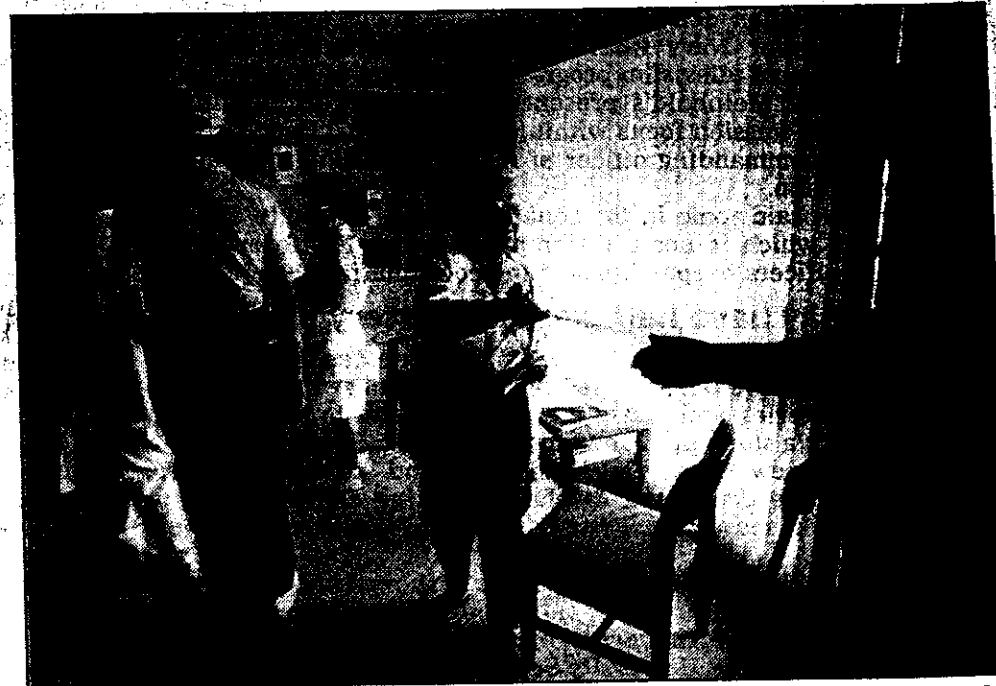
Sid Barrick was interested in an old brochure in the sales office advertising the prices of Del E. Webb's homes in 1960:

"Ranging from \$8,500 for the Basic Small Home to \$13,400 for the largest house with several optional features," a brochure read.

"I'd buy a house for \$8,500," Barrick was quick to say.

See Displays impress, A5

Displays impress Sun City visitors



Stephen Chernek/Daily News-Sun

Iria Geehan of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society hands out brochures Saturday to a visitor to the society's headquarters in the first home built in Sun City at 10801 Oakmont Drive.

—From A1

Barrick and his wife Betty are visiting for the winter.

"He (Webb) had the foresight back 30 years ago to build a house that's handicap accessible," Barrick said.

Samuel and Muriel McCullough, who bought their Sun City home 10 years ago, were equally impressed with the historical society's displays.

"I think it's marvelous," Muriel said. "They've brought together all the different eras (of information) very nicely."

Samuel, a retired farmer, especially liked the black and white photos of farms from the 1920s "with all the mules"

that thrived in Marinette, the community that preceded Sun City.

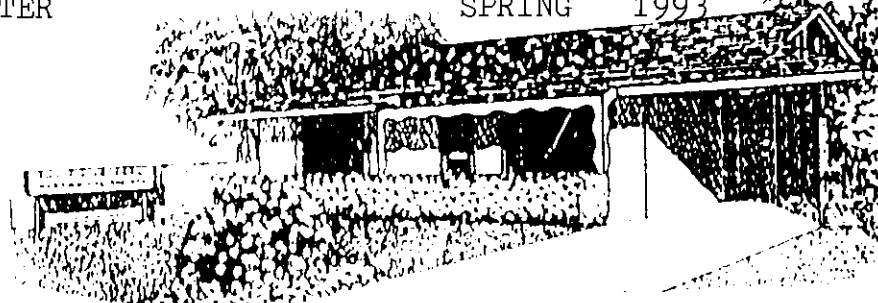
The open house also attracted Gladys Schroeder — a 17-year-resident who had never visited the historical society office.

"With the Oakmont fair next door I thought this was a good chance to see it," Schroeder said. "I think anything that's historical is important."

OVERVIEW from

OUR OLD HOUSE

Spring - 1993



Editors: Julia Manspeaker and Rose Larsen

No. 3

PRESIDENT GOLDSTEIN'S MESSAGE;

I want to thank you for your support of SCAHS. We all look at "history" in different ways. For some - history is an account of what has or might have happened; for others - it is all the recorded events of the past and still others see it as something important enough to be recorded. It is all of those things ...and for us, volunteering for the Society, it is the excitement of being part of the future that motivates us. If you are not volunteering in our Society I invite you to contact me & explore the opportunities that are available. We are most grateful for your contributions. If you have never visited our Headquarters, the first home built in Sun City, do visit us & see our piece of history. We look forward to meeting you at "Our Old House" or at our open meetings. Have a good summer!

ARCHIVALLY SPEAKING;

Work is progressing on the cataloging of photos. The actual photographs are preserved in acid free mylar cases to protect them from dust & fingerprints.

Many Organizations have deluged us with their scrapbook collections. This summer, we plan to analyze each one, photocopy that which we think pertinent to that Organization's history & keep that for our files. The scrapbooks will then be returned to the Organization if they so desire. Scrapbooks will not be damaged in copying.

We limit our collection to that which pertains to the Sun Cities area. We cannot use 'umpteens' copies of the same thing. So if we say "thank you but no thank you" please don't feel that your items are not important. We are delighted you thought enough to call us. ...Jane Freeman

WHO NAMED SUN CITY;

In 1959 Del Webb promoted a contest to name his new retirement development. The E.A. Brittons of Eugene, Oregon won, & the prize was a new home in Sun City, near Augusta & Pebble Beach in Phase I. The ignominy of this was that the Brittons decided not to live in Sun City, and sold their prize house!

OPEN HOUSE

A very successful OPEN HOUSE was held on Saturday, March 27. 250 guests toured "Our Old House" and expressed surprise at the credibility of SCAHS data and memorabilia.

ATTENTION!!!
EXTRA!!!National Historic
Preservation Week
May 9 - 16

In celebration of National Historic Preservation week, SCAHS will hold its Spring Membership Meeting on May 12th. Dr. Roba Wells, nationally known historian for the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office, will entertain with film and stories of Arizona. Your friends are welcome!

DONATION;

THE Manzanita Chapter of Quester International donated \$125 to "Our Old House". This much appreciated money was used to build a Kiosk in the first sales office - attached to "Our Old House". A plaque has been added to the Kiosk to show Manzanita's participation.

A DUES REMINDER;

Julia Manspeaker, Membership Chairman reports that her recent "dues" letter brought many renewals, some up grades & one Life Membership. This made our Treasurer happy. However, if you have neglected to renew, it's not too late. Send dues for 1993 to 10801 Oakmont NOW while you think of it. Your money will be put to good use.

'SCAHS' FIRST AUXILIARY MEETING

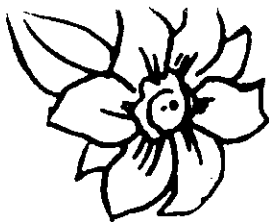
A very successful meeting and sandwich luncheon was held Feb. 6 at 11 a.m. with 17 attending. They enthusiastically signed up to help in various capacities, such as: Genevieve Lewis, Open House Chairman; Laurel Cooke, Publicity; Phyllis Street, obits file; Marguerite Horn, Cataloguing Vertical file & photographs; Frances Thompson, coordinating historic slides of Sun City; Harry and Lillian Hilburgh, mailing. We welcome them. It takes many volunteers to keep "Our Old House" running smoothly. Next meeting - September.

WISH LIST;

A NEW ROOF (We're leaking!) We want to take care of "Our Old House", which was the first model house built in Sun City. This will take many dollars & perhaps a fundraising project. Keep this in mind.

TERMITE CONTROL Professional attention needed - \$1,000 at least.

DISPLAY CASE for Sun City West to display their memorabilia in the SunCity West Community Building.



BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SUN CITY, AZ
PERMIT NO. 450

SUN CITIES AREA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
10801 Oakmont Drive
Sun City, AZ 85351

DID YOU KNOW ? ...

That Agnes Fansler, Jane Freeman's able assistant, was Librarian at The Bell Sun City Library from 1 - 84 to 10 - 88.

That our Board Room is available many mornings for meetings of small Organizations - Queter Chapters, Church Groups, etc. Please contact Neil Bultman, 977-0620 to make a reservation for your group. We also have kitchen facilities

BOOKS IN OUR LIBRARY;

"Jubilee" published in Sun City's 25th year, 1985, by Jane Freeman and Glenn Sanberg.

"Del Webb - A Man: A Company" How he built his company: his background and accomplishments. by Margaret Finerty.

"Arizona" by Marshall Trimble
"Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hospital" An Ongoing History, 1965 --
by Jane Freeman & Maurice Myerson

and many others. Come browse or do research.

NATIONAL HISTORIC



PRESERVATION WEEK

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED

to our Spring Membership Meeting

Meet with friends and fellow members
and hear an outstanding program

DATE; WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 1993

PLACE; Sun City West Community Center
14465 R. H. Johnson Blvd.

TIME; 1 p.m. Coffee and Cookie Bar

1:30 - Short business meeting

and

SPEAKER; Dr. REBA WELLS, nationally known historian for
The Arizona State Historical Preservation Office,
will speak on "Arizona: Young and Old"

Please invite your friends to this special meeting.

We look forward to greeting you.

Past lives anew in historical home

By MIKE GARRETT
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Taking one step into the Sun Cities Area Historical Society home at 10801 Oakmont Ave. is just like taking 33 steps back in time.

Promotional videos, maps, postcards, newspaper clippings and memorabilia such as old Sun City Saints softball team trophies fill every nook and cranny in one of the community's original homes.

At a glance, visitors can go back 33 years when Sun City was one big block boasting one- and two-bedroom model homes selling for \$8,600 to \$12,000, a golf course, Oakmont Recreation Center and a swimming pool.

The small development south of Grand Avenue was a stone's throw from the area's rich cotton fields.

Although an estimated 400 visitors have toured the historical home since January, society members estimate thousands of Sun Citians have never set foot in the original Webb model and have little sense of the history of Sun City and the 15-year-old Sun City West.

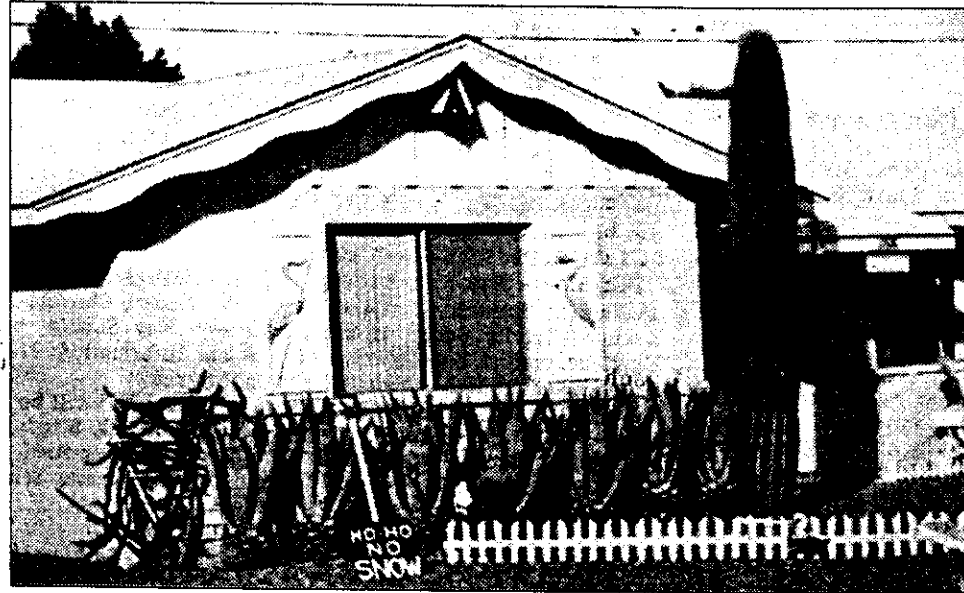
An hour's examination of the historical society's archives yields decades of information from Del Webb's dream of an active adult retirement community like none other through today's blossoming of Sun City West.

Sun Cities Historical Society President Sandy Goldstein invites residents in both retirement communities to celebrate National Historic Preservation Week May 9-16 by reliving the Sun Cities' past. The home will close for the summer May 28.

The seven-year-old Historical Society bought Del Webb's first model home in 1989 for \$44,000, said Glenn Sanberg, who along with Jane Freeman, helped found the society. "We've since spent about \$5,000 fixing it up and adding Del Webb's old sales office to the back of it." The price tag of the original golf course model in 1960 was \$9,000.

The opening of Sun City West in October 1978 didn't draw the curiosity as did Sun City in its infancy.

But Sun City West's history is equally significant to society of-



A postcard from 1961 depicts one of the original Sun City homes.

ficers and members, who will meet Wednesday to make design and organizational decisions for the Sun City West historical room in the Community Services Center.

"We're looking for donations from the early (Sun City West) pioneers who might have the promotional plates, caps and brochures Webb gave away during its groundbreaking ceremonies," Goldstein said.

Like Webb's decision to build and expand Sun City West after its suc-

cess with Sun City, the 220-member society (including 35 volunteers who maintain the house) is experiencing growing pains.

The Sun City West Community Services room will be a catch-all for the Sun City home's overflow, said Neil Bultman, Historical Society operations manager.

"We've run out of display space for all the stuff we have now. We'll be building some pullout stands and movable panels to conserve space in the new room," he said.



Rita Wright, Sun Cities Historical Society housing chairman, displays some Sun City brochures that were sent to prospective residents.

Stephen Chernek/Daily News-Sun



Reba Wells

Meeting program highlights frontier journey

Daily News-Sun staff

A historian with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office will speak at the Sun Cities Area Historical Society's annual spring membership meeting Wednesday.

Reba Wells will help the local group commemorate National Historic Preservation Week, which runs Sunday through May 16.

Wells will give a slide presentation and speak on the preservation of memorabilia and information re-

lated to America's frontier West.

An immediate past president of Westerners International, a group dedicated to stimulating interest and publishing about the Old West, Wells has also done extensive research throughout the state, including Fort Yuma, the San Bernardino/John Slaughter Ranch near Douglas, the Richard DeKuhn homestead in Cherry and the Yuma-area Quechan Indians.

Wells, who has degrees in education, Southwest history and the history of the American West, has served as research historian for the Yuma Crossing Foundation and chief curator for the Central Arizona division of the Arizona Historical Society.

Wells will speak at 1 p.m. Wednesday in the Sun City West Community Center, 14465 R.H. Johnson Blvd. Members and their friends are invited to attend.

Sun Cities Area Historical Social to Hold Annual Spring Membership Meeting

Story & Photo,
Marie Scotti

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society Annual Spring Membership meeting commemorating National Historic Preservation Week May 9-May 16 will be held on Wednesday, May 12th, at 1 p.m. The location of the meeting is the SCW Community Center, 14465 R.H. Johnson Blvd.

The guest speaker will be Reba Wells, Ph.D., nationally known historian with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office. Her topic will be "Arizona, Young and Old." Dr. Wells will give a slide presentation and a talk describing the preservation of memorabilia and data related to America's frontier West.

The youngest daughter of a pioneer New Mexico family



Reba Wells, Ph.D.

Reba Wells has been a resident of Phoenix since January, 1982, coming to Arizona from Albuquerque, New Mexico. She holds degrees from the University of New Mexico in education, Southwest history and history of the American West; and taught in the Albuquerque public school system for 17 years.

Since coming to Phoenix,

Dr. Wells has been active in historical circles, in preservation work, and oral history activities, and maintains a private historical consulting practice. She has done extensive research in Cochise, Yuma, Yavapai and Maricopa Counties, working specifically on the San Bernardino Ranch (aka the John Slaughter Ranch near Douglas), Fort Yuma and the Quartermaster Depot, the Quechan Indians (Yuma area), the Richard DeKuhn homestead in Cherry, Arizona and the Cactus/Sunnyslope communities of North Phoenix.

Prior to her work as Historian and Heritage Fund Planner for the State Historic Preservation Office, a division of Arizona State Parks, Dr. Wells was Research Historian for the Yuma Crossing Foundation in Yuma, and for three years (1986-89) the Chief Curator for the Central Arizona Division (Phoenix) of Arizona Historical Society.

All members of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society are cordially invited to attend the meeting on May 12th. Reservations are not required.

THE WESTER

Freeman Addresses Pen Women

(L. to r.) Eleanor Abell-Johnson, president of Sun Cities Pen Women, Jane Freeman, speaker at the April 17 meeting, and new members Peg Behrel and Joy Medley.

**Story & Photo,
Mildred Baker**

Sun Cities Branch of National League of American Pen Women closed the year with a spring luncheon at The Madison in Sun City West Saturday, April 17th.

Jane Freeman, who was original chair of the Sun City Historical Society and has worked with the organization since its beginning at the time of the 25th anniversary of Sun City, gave a very interesting address. She cited pertinent incidents in the history of these communities and circulated maps, pictures and newspaper references to early days of this area.

"The Wickenburg Vulture Mine has a remote connection with the Sun Cities," she explained. "Grand Avenue was originally known as "Vulture

Road," a main stagecoach route."

Marinette, the location of a post office in 1912, was named by a man from Marinette, Wisconsin.

Del Webb built Luke Air Force Base in 1941.

She stated that the Sun City Museum shelves hold many books written by local Pen Women.

Three women became new members in the letters category: Madge Saksena, Glendale, a creative writing teacher and founder of a California Writers' Club; Joy Medley and Hazel Spavin, both of Sun City.

Peg Behrel joined in the art category. Her paintings hang in several area establishments including Sun Cities Art Museum.

Arizona history lives as researcher pictures John Slaughter's story

By EVELYN BARBER
Editorial page editor

Arizona may be the third youngest of the states, at only 81, but it's one of the most beautiful and has accumulated a lot of historical significance in its comparatively few years.

We heard a fascinating portion of that history in a slide-show talk Wednesday by Reba Wells, a historian for the Arizona Historic Preservation Society, at the Sun Cities Area Historical Society's spring meeting.

We were all familiar, of course, with the name and fame of John Slaughter, an Arizona sheriff who inspired such fear in outlaws that many of them avoided his territory.

He has been featured in movies and books as one of the best and bravest of lawmen in the brief period that was the historic Old West.

But we didn't know the real story of John Slaughter and his San Bernardino Ranch, which straddled the Arizona-Mexico border of the late 1800s and early 1900s.

With slides of pictures she had accumulated over five years of research, Dr. Wells

reconstructed the lives of Slaughter and his young wife, Viola, and their often burgeoning household at the San Bernardino Ranch, near Douglas. The ranch, restored to its original appearance, is now in the National Register of Historic Places.

Viola, a pampered young woman from the East, met and fell in love with John Slaughter when she was only 17 and he was 39, a widower with two children. She accepted the rugged life of the western frontier with courage and determination, and refused to let Slaughter send his two young children away to be raised by relatives.

Not only did she and her husband give their love to his children, but to an ongoing assortment of strays who needed shelter through the years. At one time a black child, an Indian child, a Hispanic child and an Anglo child all were in their care — a rainbow coalition on the frontier.

Slaughter was in the cattle business, and had as many as 90 employees, which of course made cooking a large undertaking. But in addition, the Slaughters found that the tourist business was a financial help. They entertained visitors from all parts of the United States who had heard of the beautiful San Bernardino Ranch and wanted to share in the Slaughter's hospitality. The fun times were many, especially for the Slaughter children who by that time were in their teens.

Double takes



Dr. Wells has many anecdotes to tell of the Slaughters and of southern Arizona. One involved several years of research before she could authenticate it.

She had heard that a Mormon settler had built his house half within the United States and half within Mexico for a very special reason. But until a donation of pictures came into her hands from California, she could not be sure it was true. One picture proved the story.

It seems that the man had four wives, but could have only one in the United States. He built his house so that he and his first wife could live in the United States and his other three wives in Mexico.

Dr. Wells makes history live in her talks. She is enthusiastic about the history-gathering being done by the Sun Cities Area Historical Society and encouraged the group to collect the history of these communities even while it is being made.

She outlined the requirements for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places: The building must be at least 50 years old; reflect the broad sweep of history; be associated with a historic person; possess unique architecture of a historic period; have the potential to yield information about history.

The San Bernardino/Slaughter Ranch fulfills all the qualifications. And Dr. Wells held out the prospect that one day there could be such historic sites in this area.

Incidentally, the historical society is always looking for volunteers who want to help assemble the artifacts and historic documents that tell the story of the retirement communities, especially relating to Sun City West. Just call 974-2568.

THE WESTER

Dr. Reba Wells Addresses Historical Society**Story & Photo****Marie Scotti**

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society held its Spring Membership Meeting on Wednesday, May 12 at the SCW Community Center. Sandy Goldstein, president, presided at a short business meeting prior to the program.

Dr. Reba Wells, nationally known historian for The Arizona State Historical Preservation Office addressed the members on "Arizona: Young and Old." She gave a slide presentation and a talk describing the preservation of memorabilia and data related to America's frontier West.

Communities thought Arizona celebrated the state's diverse historic and architectural heritage during the second week of May with activities ranging from tours of historic neighborhoods to historic craft demonstrations. These activities were part of Arizona's celebration of the 21st annual National Historic Preservation Week, designated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation for the purpose of promoting public awareness of our nation's cultural resources. The national theme for this year's Historic Preservation Week was "Preservation & Livable Communities: Make the Connection."

Dr. Wells told the audience about The National Register of Historic Places. Over 60,000 historic sites, objects and districts



From l.: Jane Freeman, Historical Society Archives Chairman and Dr. Reba Wells, Arizona State Historical Preservation Office historian display Preservation Week poster, during Historical Society meeting.

including more the 700,000 buildings within the districts are listed in the 1993 National Register of Historic Places. "Saving these culturally significant places is what the preservation movement is all about" said Dr. Wells. Established under the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and administered by the National Register is the country's official inventory of districts, buildings, sites, structures and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture. Also

listed in the national Register are all historic areas in the National Park System and all designated Nation Historic Landmarks.

"Although National Register listing does not prevent an owner from demolishing, selling or altering the property, it does provide benefits, such as federal rehabilitation tax credits for income-producing buildings, cultural resource planning and national recognition" reported Dr. Wells.

Listing properties in the National Register often changes the way communities perceive

Societies help preserve history

Sun Cities, Youngtown clubs started fact-collecting early

By Lori Baker
Staff writer

Sun Cities and Youngtown residents are doing a good job keeping their history current, a historian says.

Although the retirement communities are not yet considered historic places, they have active historical societies.

"This is unique," said Reba Wells, a historian with the state historic preservation office. "Usually, people wait until it's hard to get the history. Things are scattered."

Wells spoke to Sun Cities Area Historical Society members May 12. They were commemorating National Historic Preservation Week, May 9-16.

To be placed on the National Register of Historic Places, a building must be at least 50 years old and meet other requirements.

Youngtown buildings would be eligible around 2004.

Sun City, however, would have to wait about two decades.

"It's important to stay current as we collect history," said Sanford Goldstein, president of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society.

For example, volunteers have collected oral history from Sun City pioneers.

"We got their recollections on audio tape about their perceptions and knowledge of the area," Goldstein said.

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society, which has 220 members, was started in October 1985.

The first house built in Sun City serves as the society's headquarters, where memorabilia, maps, photos and news clippings about the Sun Cities are kept.

The headquarters, 10801 Oakmont Drive, is open from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. weekdays. Friday is the last day before the summer hiatus. The office will be closed June through August.

"Many people in the United States don't think of us as having any history out here. They are not aware of our prehistoric inhabitants."

Reba Wells
Historian

least 50 years old, the buildings must not be significantly altered, and the properties must have historical significance.

People who live in registered historic buildings receive a 50 percent reduction in their property tax.

A satellite office in Sun City West opened last year and a public display is under construction at the Sun City West Community Services building. Original Sun City West residents who received a commemorative plate from Webb are being asked to donate them to the historical society.

The Youngtown Historical Society started in 1988. Residents recently completed a quilt commemorating the town's history. Self-guided tours are available of the clubhouse square, which has buildings dating to 1954.

Wells has done extensive historical research throughout Arizona.

"Many people in the United States don't think of us as having any history out here," Wells said. "They are not aware of our prehistoric inhabitants."

In 1540, the first European came up the Colorado River to Arizona, Wells said.

"We're not really that young in our history," she said.

Arizona has about 9,000 listings — such as churches, homes and public buildings — in the National Register of Historic Places. That includes the historic districts in Phoenix such as the Roosevelt and Encanto neighborhoods, which have hundreds of properties.

To be eligible for the National Register, properties must be at

Residents help record SC history

By ROSA De SIMONE
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Melanie Sturgeon may be too young to live in Sun City, but over the past two years she has lived and breathed the community.

Looking for a research topic for her doctoral thesis in community history, the Arizona State University graduate student said she could not find a better sample than Sun City.

One-on-one interviews with the pioneers of Sun City's active retirement community gave Sturgeon an opportunity to fulfill two goals: complete a thesis and help the Sun Cities Area Historical Society increase its resources.

"Oral history is extremely important for a community like Sun City," Sturgeon said.

Sturgeon has recorded about 35 conversations with many involved in the development and early years of Sun City, from the first residents here to the developer, Del Webb Corp.

"We have been trying to get an oral history program for several years, but I could never recruit someone to do it," said Jane Freeman of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society.

Freeman and others at the society were eager to help Sturgeon with her research.

Sturgeon's fascination with history goes beyond Sun Citians. She's been hired by people to write their family histories.

The mother of five has a bachelor's degree in history, a master's in community history and has almost completed her doctorate in modern U.S. history with a focus on community history.

"Almost every person I interviewed was really delightful, and they not only talked about Sun City but their early life."

Sturgeon learned some of the many characteristics that defined Sun City and its resi-

See Graduate student, A5

Graduate student studies Sun Citians

—From A1

dents, she said. Among them:

■ "There's a perception that women in the 1920s, who live here now, stayed at home, but there were many who worked and had careers."

■ "There was cooperation and interaction in the early days of the community."

■ "Women were much more involved in social service volunteerism than men." Male residents were more involved in political issues and groups, she said.

The theme of her study focused on the "Activity Theory of Retirement," a theory popular in the 1950s and used in the development of Sun City.

Not only did the people who moved here make the theory a reality, with their hard work ethic as well as their love for leisure activity (developed in the 1920s), but the developers played a major role.

"Del Webb made sure that it worked," Sturgeon said. "That's why Sun City is so interesting. It was really the first completely organized and planned retirement community (in the country)."

The early residents Sturgeon interviewed told her of the hard work they put in during the early days, to get clubs off the ground and keep the community active.

"The clubs were the life force of the community," she said.

Many of the Sun Citians, most of whom were women, expressed both nostalgia and sadness regarding what seems to be a decline in club activity and the demise of the close-knit community it produced, she said.

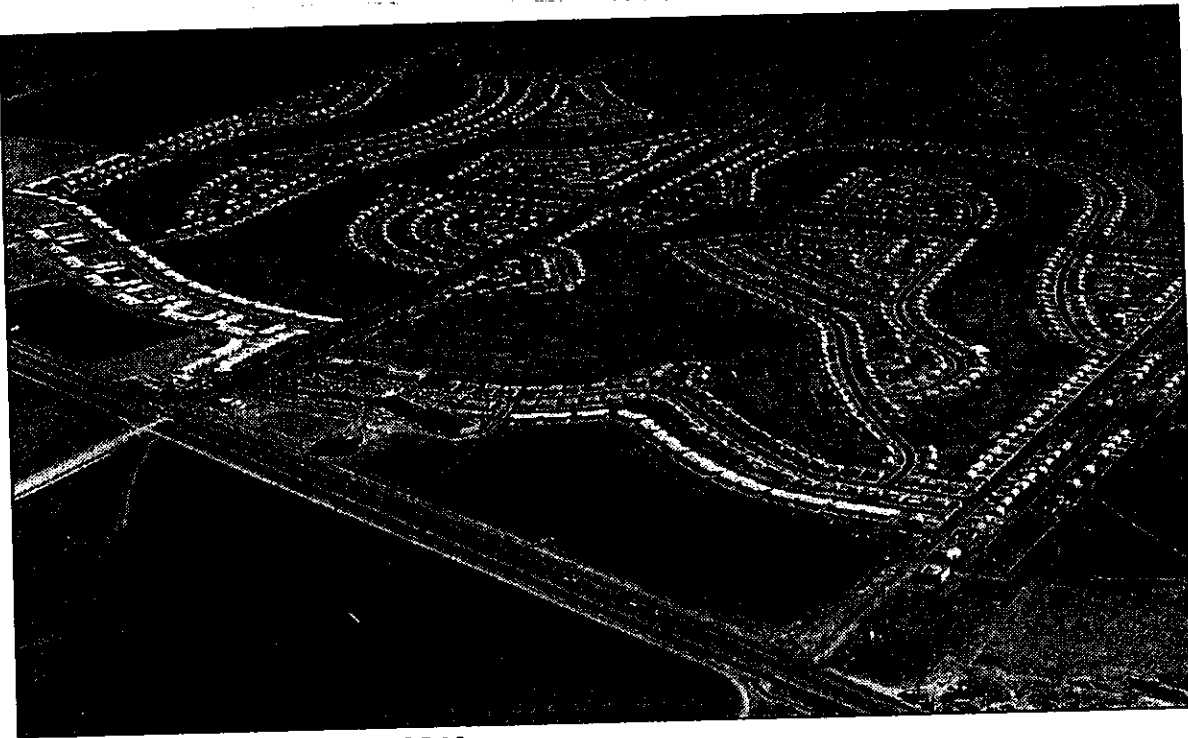
"A common theme (in the interviews) was sadness that it has changed from a small, interactive community to a large impersonal one," Sturgeon said.

Freeman, a long-time resident of Sun City, agreed that much has changed. Both women hope the taped interviews will educate new residents on the history of Sun City and motivate them to get more involved, they said.

"There was a fellowship that you don't have now," Freeman said.

The public is welcome to listen to the tapes in the Sun Cities Area Historical Society in the first house built in Sun City at 10801 Oakmont.

For information and hours, call 974-2568.



An aerial view of Sun City in 1961.

Preserving the Sun Cities

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society all started with a chance remark in 1983 that no where was there a central point for Sun City information and history. This remark culminated in *Jubilee* — a 25 year history of Sun City by Jane Freeman and Glenn Sanberg which was published in time for the 25th anniversary in 1985.

As a result of this publication, a vast storehouse of information and memorabilia was accumulated. What to do with it? A small group of interested volunteers set to work organizing a permanent group to preserve this historical information. On Friday, Nov. 14, 1986, a charter membership meeting was held to inaugurate the Sun

Cities Area Historical Society (SCAHS). The stated purpose was, and still is, "to act as a vital guardian of the important records of the past... to collect, preserve, organize and display these historical items. The motto, "Today is tomorrow's tomorrow's history" still holds true. Founding officers were Jane Freeman, president; Glenn Sandberg, vice-president; Rits Wright, Secretary and Col. Paul Morrill, Treasurer.

It was expected with so much organized material becoming available pertaining to the "new style of active retirement" and living in a planned community for senior citizens, sociologists and others studying this lifestyle and the demographic characteristics would avail

themselves of this valuable resource. And this has proven to be the case.

Until January 1990 information was stored in cartons and boxes of all sizes and shapes in a private home where really not much work could be done. Eventually one of the local businessmen leased SCAHS a small office space where work could begin on sorting all the information in some semblance of order.

In May 1989, SCAHS acquired the first model home to serve as headquarters. Built in 1959 by Del E. Webb Development Company and shown to the public for the first time on January 1, 1960, the Kebtworth model of 940 square feet

see SOCIETY page 37

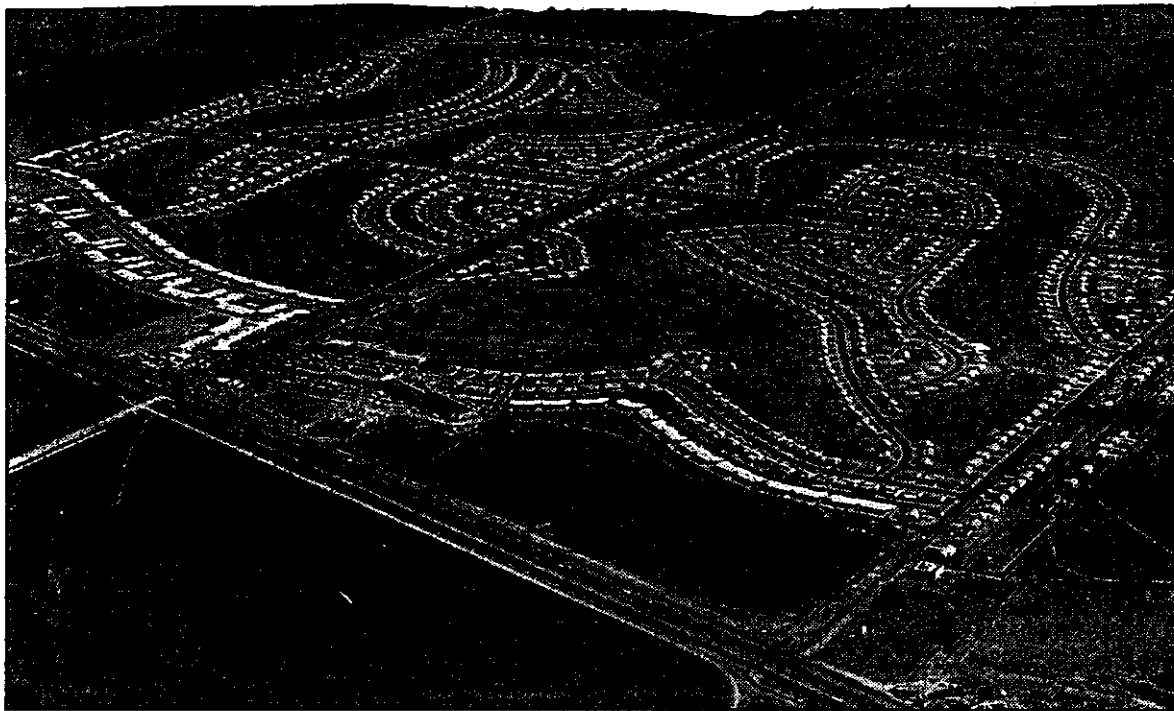
continued from page 28

consisted of a living room, 1 bedrooms, bathrooms, a kitchen. There was an attached carport and utility room. The house sold for \$8,500. A course lot was extra as was conditioning. In later years extra bedroom, bath and a zona room were added on back, which SCAHS converted to office space and conference room use. On January 1990, Carole Carpenter, the County Supervisor, presided the ribbon cutting — SCAHS was officially open for business. The purchase of the house made available through generous support of J.G. B. well Foundation, Del E. Webb Foundation and the Webb Corporation.

Melanie Sturgeon, an A graduate student is completing a two year oral history project where she has interviewed Sun City "pioneer" residents (moved here in 1960). Having people's various experiences and expressions on tape make the moments in history more interesting and vibrant — and years come, even more so.

Some items of interest are photographs of Marinette (before Sun City) taken in the 1920s; a complete set of telephone directories since 1961; an extensive clipping photo collection, early advertising and sales promotion cards and model home information mention a few. Sorting and cataloging is still going on.

SCAHS serves Sun City West. It is incorporated and is a non-profit organization under tax-exempt law. It relies solely on member dues and contributions for existence. The house is open Tuesday through Saturday from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. and by special appointment for other hours.



An aerial view of Sun City in 1961.

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see SOCIETY page 37

Society begins with book

continued from page 28

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Memorabilia wanted

Historical group seeks items about Sun Cities area from before 1960

By Betty Latty
Special to Community

SUN CITIES — This summer, the Sun Cities Area Historical Society is reaching out to untapped sources such as Waddell, Litchfield Park, Peoria, Glendale and Wickenburg in hopes of finding memorabilia of the ranching countryside that became the Sun Cities.

Jane Freeman, chief archivist for the society — which is housed in one of Sun City's first model homes at 10801 Oakmont — has made a "want list" in the hopes that summer closet cleaners might come up with some pre-Sun Cities items — such as newspaper clippings, photographs (identified, please,) and maps — that deal with the period from 1920-1960.

"We would love anything related to the early years of Grand Avenue," she said. "We need more history of Marinette, the little town that preceded us, and we would love to interview people who may have worked for Boswell Ranch or have photos and recollections of its cotton gin."

The society has a few photographs from the 1930s, she said, but "we could use a lot



Community

more."

"There used to be tent cities for migrant workers and cabins for those who worked year 'round," she said. "Those cabins were later moved. Somebody must have pictures from back then."

Freeman said she dreams of finding a photograph showing the old Santa Fe Railroad sign at Marinette, which was still standing when she moved to Sun City. "I kick myself now because I didn't take a

See HISTORY, Page 5



Tom Tingle / Staff photographer
Looking over an old map of what later became Sun City are (from left) Agnes Fansler, Jane Freeman and Edna Ploeser. The Sun Cities Area Historical Society is looking for donations of items dealing with the period 1920-1960, such as this mug. It was produced to honor retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Robert Scott, author of "God Is My Co-pilot" and a former Sun City resident.

HISTORY

From Page 1

picture of it," she said.

Freeman, who with Glenn Sanberg co-authored "Jubilee," a chronicle written for Sun City's 25th anniversary, said she wrote to the railroad several times for material but never received a reply. Among her summer projects is another attempt to obtain information from the railroad.

Some information sought by the archives committee might come from Litchfield Park, Freeman + said, because the Boswell Ranch operations were centered there.

Early telephone directories from the surrounding communities, especially Peoria and Glendale, also are on the "want list." The archivists seek news articles and information about local residents, past and present.

A recent gift was a coffee mug produced to honor retired U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Robert (Bob) Scott on his 84th birthday April 12.

Scott, author of the World War II best seller "God Is My Co-Pilot" and 15 other books, and a former commander of Luke Air Force Base, lived in Sun City for 16 years. He is affiliated with the Museum of Aviation at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia.

"If anyone has clippings or photos they don't want to part with, we will gladly make copies and return the originals," Freeman said.

Along with volunteers Agnes Fansler and Rita Williams, Freeman plans to spend her summer months sorting photographs, copying and cataloging.

The historical society will be open by appointment only during June, July and August, Freeman said. Visitors and those hoped-for donors may leave messages at 974-2568, and calls will be returned.

Historical Society works to preserve Sun City's past

Very first model home serves as headquarters, museum of memorabilia

By ANNE RYMAN
Sun Cities Independent

A menu features filet mignon for \$2.45, a home costs \$8,000 and cotton fields take the place of today's houses and condominiums.

Those days may be gone, but the files of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society puts the early beginnings of the Sun Cities at people's fingertips.

The society museum, located at 10801 Oakmont Ave., features information about the first model homes, early photographs of the Sun Cities, newspaper clippings, street maps and memorabilia.

Collectibles include keyrings and buttons as well as early souvenirs such as ashtrays commemorating the fifth anniversary of Sun City.

In 1989, the society purchased the first model home built in Sun City which members converted into a historical museum and headquarters.

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society is open Monday through Friday from 1 to 3 p.m.



Photograph courtesy Sun Cities Historical Society

Prior to 1960, Sun City was nothing but one large cotton field. The town of Youngtown, foreground, was established in 1955. The above aerial photograph was taken just as the Del Webb Co. was clearing the land in preparation of the retirement community to come.

Before the home purchase, society members used a small office in Plaza del Rio as well as their homes for storing memorabilia. Jane Freeman, archivist of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, says she

kept items in her garage, utility room, inside closets and even under beds.

Mrs. Freeman co-founded the organization with Glenn Sanberg. Members met while working on "Jubilee," a book

published in 1985 about the history of Sun City. The society has grown to include 250 members, she says.

One archive is not necessarily more important than another.

"It's all important," she says.

The society is interested in anything that will depict the way of living in the Sun City or Sun City West.

"What we're trying to do is collect any pertinent data valuable to the future," says Emil Fischer, president of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society. He says while the information may not seem important today, it will have great importance in 50 years.

Mrs. Freeman says some people bring in items that are historically significant but have nothing to do with the Sun Cities such as a *Life* magazine's John F. Kennedy assassination cover.

"Historically, it's good, but we can't begin to take everything," she says, because the society's focus is preserving information about the local area.

Volunteers currently are working on a file which has clippings of information about services such as banks, bowling, churches, etc.

Members copy the information on acid-free paper and place it in acid-free folders for preservation. Volunteers also are

See SOCIETY, Page 3

■ SOCIETY

working to complete a pamphlet file.

"These pamphlets can't be copied because you lose the essence," Mrs. Freeman says of pamphlets put out by organizations such as the Prides or the Sun City Symphony. Members work to identify and date photographs given to the society by the Del Webb Corp.

Mrs. Freeman says she doesn't know exactly how many photos have to be identified, but estimates it to be several thousand.

Members just completed gathering and mounting a collection of early Sun City postcards and Christmas cards. Beginning in 1960, the Del Webb Corp. sent Christmas cards to all its residents.

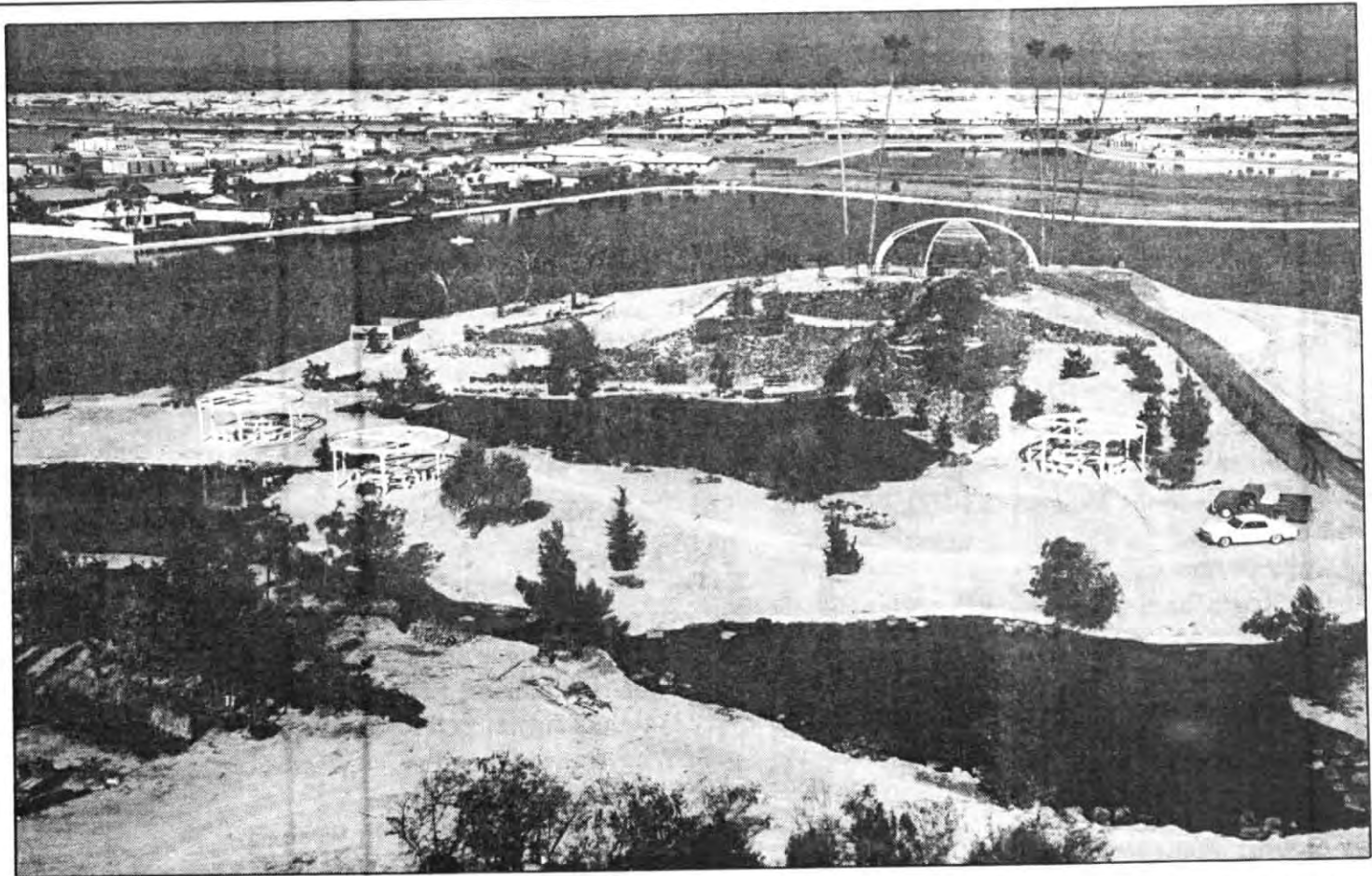
Most of the cards are fold-out or three-dimensional. In one card, a white picket fence opens to reveal a series of photographs of Sun City.

"It (the mailing of holiday cards) was discontinued in 1970 because there were getting to be too many people," Mrs. Freeman says.

Mr. Fischer says the society is interested in preserving the archives of both Sun City and Sun City West.

"We like to emphasize that because some people think of us (the society) as only Sun City. We're very much interested in Sun City West," he says.

From Page 2



THE BUILDING OF PARADISE. Viewpoint Lake and the adjoining mountain and picnic area under construction during the 1970s.

C6 Lifestyles Thursday, Feb. 27, 1992 Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz.

SUN CITIES HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Daily News-Sun

Sun Cities Area Historical Society officers are from left, Emil Fischer, president; Al Driscoll, vice president; Rose Larsen, secretary; and Sandy Goldstein, treasurer.

Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz., Friday, Dec. 27, 1991

Westers see need to preserve local history

By JACQUE PARRAS, a staff writer
Daily News-Sun staff

Thirty years after the first home was sold in Sun City, a historical society headquarters opened to showcase memorabilia from the community's early years.

Now, 13 years after the birth of Sun City West, the Sun City Area Historical Society is looking to expand its horizons.

"The time is now for us to be collecting paraphernalia, photos and other things of historical interest in Sun City West. We don't want to lose them to people passing away or moving back to their home town," said Al Driscoll, a member of the society's board of trustees.

In an effort to bring the society's goal of collection and preservation closer to Sun City West, volunteers have opened a temporary office in the Community Services Building, 14475 R.H. Johnson Blvd.

Driscoll said he and other Sun City West residents have been organizing the office to serve as "a guardian of the records and events of the past."

And with 31,000 residents estimated to live in Sun City West by 2000, a historical society seems to be a must for the community.

"Most every city has a historical society today. The headquarters in Sun City is a success and we hope to be successful here," Driscoll said.

Driscoll said the temporary office does not have a telephone number yet because the society may soon move into a larger room in the building.

He said Sun City West resident Ann Raymond,

a former Del Webb Corp. executive, has volunteered to coordinate the volunteers at the office.

In addition to collecting memorabilia, Driscoll said the society wants to get more Sun City West residents to join the organization.

The cost of membership ranges from \$10 to \$250 for a life membership.

Driscoll said the group plans to send membership forms out to local residents in January. For more information on membership or being a volunteer call 584-2210.

The historical society has 15 residents on its board of trustees, five of whom are from Sun City West.

Les Merydith, society president, said he is pleased with the progress the Sun City West residents are making.

"They have moved rapidly toward getting organized to do the job that lies ahead in Sun City West. They are already where Sun City was after 25 years," Merydith said. "The long-term objective is to have a full-scale historical society in Sun City West. We hope to be able to locate Sun City West's historical records in Sun City West."

Much of Sun City West's memorabilia collected by the society is being stored in the Sun City headquarters, at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive.

The headquarters, which features photographs, directories and other memorabilia from the community's early years, officially opened to the public on Sun City's 30th anniversary in January 1990.



Stephen Cherek/Daily News Sun

Al Driscoll, left, shows Sandy Goldstein and Ann Raymond a package of information about Sun City West donated by a resident. The information will be used by the Sun City Area Historical Society to some day display in Sun City West.

Historical Society works to preserve Sun City's past

Very first model home serves as headquarters, museum of memorabilia

By ANNE RYMAN
Sun Cities Independent

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History in the making

Historical Society preserves community's past, records the present

By ANNE RYMAN
Sun Cities Independent

One local organization believes in saving everything associated with the history of the Sun Cities.

Since 1985, the Sun Cities Historical Society has collected and preserved historical information about life in the two retirement communities.

The society, located at 10801 Oakmont Ave., Sun City, collects newspaper clippings, photographs, maps and other memorabilia from Sun City's 33-year history and Sun City West's 15-year existence.

"We're also interested in present-day things, too, because 50 years from now it will be history," says Jane Freeman, society archivist. This includes information about new buildings, community services and day-to-day events.

The Sun Cities Historical Society was organized in 1986 after a group of residents got together to work on a book about the history of Sun City, "Jubilee: The 25th Anniversary of Sun City, Ariz."

"We had all this material we gathered when we were writing 'Jubilee.' What were we going to do with it? We said 'we'll set up a historical society,'" Mrs. Freeman says.

Since that time, the organization has grown to include 226 members. In 1989, society members purchased the first model home built in Sun City and converted it into a historical museum and headquarters. The building is open to the public from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

In July 1991, they added the original Del Webb sales office to the southwest corner of the organization's building. Del Webb officials opened the sales office in January 1960, and 200,000 people visited it the first weekend.

Today, the former sales office is home to photographs of the early history of Marquette (the town which once existed where Sun City now exists), Sun City's early days of development and the first sketches of model homes.

The museum also features early memorabilia such as the elaborate three-dimensional post cards Del Webb sent to its residents in the 1970s. Collectibles include keyrings and buttons, as well as early souvenirs such as ashtrays commemorating the fifth anniversary of Sun City.

Volunteers have catalogued thousands of photographs, obituaries and newspaper articles, but much work remains, Mrs. Freeman says. Boxes of slide photographs must be examined to see if the people and events in them can be identified.

The society gets its items from local residents and organizations. To determine whether something has historical significance, Mrs. Freeman says the item, phot-

ograph or clipping must relate to the Sun Cities area. It should be dated and identified, particularly if there are people in a photograph.

In addition to its collection of historical items, the society hosts periodic exhibits and sponsors special programs. In May 1991, society members hosted a cele-

bration for former members of the Sun City Saints. The women's softball team was organized in 1965.

"We invited all the team members back and served hot dogs, popcorn and soda — just like the ballpark. We had 200 people," Mrs. Freeman says.

Society members plan another special

program this spring on an as-yet undetermined subject. They hope to host at least two programs a year — one in the spring and one in the fall.

To help with special programs, exhibits and general filing, the society plans to form an auxiliary group of about 40 people, says Rose Larson, secretary.



The Sun City Historical Society maintains its headquarters in a building which once served as the first Sun City model home. The building, located at 10801 Oakmont Ave., is staffed by volunteers and serves as a permanent home for old photos and Sun City memorabilia. Volunteer Evelyn Parry looks over a collection of Sun City telephone directories dating back to 1960.

Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz. Thursday, May 16, 1991



Daily News-Sun photo by Jacque Pappas

HERE FROM THE START — Sun City Pioneers Bernice Walker, from left, Dorothy Bell, Florence Sears and Sarah Butts look at Emil Fisher's ink drawings of the churches in Sun City. The drawings and other Sun City memorabilia were on display this week as part of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society's open house. The society will be attaching an addition to its office at 10801 Oakmont Drive. The addition is a shed which housed Sun City's first home sales office.

Webb gives society 1st home sales shed

By JACQUE PAPPAS
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — A brown wooden shed used as Del Webb Corp.'s first home sales office will be moved next to Sun City's original model home.

The 10- by 4-foot shed is in Del Webb's storage yard and will be attached to the Sun Cities Area Historical Society office within a month, said Les Merydith, president of the group. Webb donated the shed to the society.

The small shed is said to have also been used as an office for hostesses who gave tours of Sun City and by the Sun City Saints slow-pitch women's softball team.

Merydith made the announcement Wednesday to a group of Sun City pioneers and other residents who attended the society's open house in honor of National Historic Preservation Week.

The society headquarters, at

10801 W. Oakmont Drive, is the original model home built in Sun City in 1960.

The headquarters officially opened to the public on Sun City's 30th anniversary in January 1990.

Dozens of people visited the headquarters this week and got a look at photos, newspaper clippings and memorabilia of Sun City's early days.

Joe Keenan, a historical society trustee, gave a talk on the origin of words and sayings.

"Pioneers is a word that means something to all of us. It's the people who took a chance and changed history just like people in Sun City," Keenan said. "Who would think you could just go out in the desert and create an oasis like this?"

A number of pioneers — people who moved to Sun City in the early 1960s — reminisced about their move to the retirement community.

Bernice Walker, 96, moved here November 1960 and still lives in her original home on Desert Hills Court.

Dorothy Bell, 78, moved here in August 1961, and worked for the Webb sales department for 21 years. "You never met a stranger. We all knew each other in the early days," Bell said.

Florence Sears, a volunteer for the historical society, moved here in April 1960. "We came out every other day and watched them build our house," Sears said.

Sarah Butts, 89, moved to Sun City in April 1960 and now lives in Sun Valley Lodge, the community's first care center.

Alex Smith, 87, bought a home here in February 1961. "If you had \$350 you could buy a house in Sun City," he said.

The historical society headquarters is a Kentworth model with two bedrooms and one bath that sold for \$8,750 in 1960.

'Saintly' goods available for softball display

By ANN T. DALEY
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Sun City Saints memorabilia are available for display by local businesses and organizations.

Les Merydith, president of the Sun City Historical Society, has 28 trophies of the women's fast-pitch softball team as well as a team photograph.

Merydith said any number of the trophies may be borrowed for display.

"It's a significant part of Sun City history," said Merydith of the collection.

"We would prefer that the entire group be kept together," he said.

The Sun City Rays senior baseball team was the last organization to possess the trophies. The collection was on display last year in the trophy case inside Sun City Stadium, 111th and Grand avenues.

After the Rays disbanded in December, Saints' Booster Club President Alice Messick offered the trophies to the historical group.

"Everything happened so fast. Whoever had the stadium had (the trophies)," said Gerald Stapley, Saints manager.

"(After the fall of the senior league) we had to get (the trophies) out of there so fast," he said.

Sun City Saints

Merydith said the Historical Society relocated the collection inside the meeting room at the Historical Society headquarters, 10801 Oakmont Drive, Sun City.

"The trophies are on three tiers, about 12 feet across and nine feet high," said Merydith. "The display takes up a whole wall. It's very impressive."

Some of the trophies — as tall as 3 feet — date from the early 1960s to 1984. The Saints earned the awards in national and international tournaments.

"We'd like to promote the image," said Merydith of the Society. "The Milwaukee Brewers used to train at Sun City Stadium in the spring and then the Saints would take us through the summer."

The Saints, homeless at this time because of a lack of financial support for Sun City Stadium, will have a meeting March 16 to decide what measures the team will take in regard to the 1991 season.

"We'd like to be back in Sun City, but we'll see what the girls decide," said the manager.

For information, phone the Sun City Historical Society at 974-2568.

Sports Friday, March 1, 1991 Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz.

SUN CITIES AREA



HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1991 *

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

TERMS EXPIRE DECEMBER 31

| | | | | |
|------|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----|------|
| 1991 | Neil Bultman | 10060 B Royal Oak Dr. | 977 | 0620 |
| | Alvin M. Driscoll | 13231 Mesa Verde Dr., 375 | 584 | 2210 |
| | Joseph Keenan | 11102 Palmeras Dr. | 972 | 0123 |
| | Jay Woods | 14021 Palm Ridge Dr. | 977 | 2683 |
| | Rita Wright | 11029 Bluefield Ct. | 972 | 9310 |
| | Al Thompson | 10322 Kelso Dr. | 974 | 5039 |
| 1992 | Althea Curfman | 17623 Whispering Oaks, 375 | 975 | 1123 |
| | Emil Fischer | 15201 Rosewood Dr. | 977 | 2070 |
| | James W. Hawks | 16406 111th Ave. | 933 | 2979 |
| | Les Merydith | 13602 Kaanapali Pt. | 977 | 1723 |
| | Glenn Sanberg | 11002 Cameo Dr. | 977 | 9961 |
| 1993 | Richard Gray | 12422 Marble Dr., 375 | 975 | 1955 |
| | Donald Manlove | 10323 Aztec Dr. | 933 | 5478 |
| | Julia Manspeaker | 13806 97th Ave. | 977 | 5367 |
| | Martha Moyer | 13950 Meeker Blvd. | 546 | 5110 |
| | Evelyn Parry | 10729 Clair Dr. | 933 | 2698 |
| | Maurice Street | 17815 Conquistador Dr., 375 | 584 | 0323 |

* As of March 1, 1991

OFFICERS

| | |
|----------------|--------------|
| PRESIDENT | Les Merydith |
| Vice PRESIDENT | Emil Fischer |
| SECRETARY | Rita Wright |
| TREASURER | Al Thompson |

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

| | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 2nd Thursday of the month | 10:00 a.m. | 10801 Oakmont Dr. |
| January 10 | April 11 and spring meeting | Oct. 10 |
| February 14 | May 9 | Nov. 14 and fall (annual) meeting |
| March 14 | September 12 | Dec. 12 |

XXXXXX • Sun City, Arizona 85351 • (602) 974-2568
10801 Oakmont Dr.



Historical Society officers

The Sun City Historical Society has elected new officers. From left, back, Les Merydith, president; Al Thompson, treasurer. From left, front, Emil Fischer, vice president; Rita Wright, secretary.

FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 5, 1991--SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT--PAGE 9

Poster

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

Wednesday, March 13, 1991



Community
Memorabilia and memories of the Sun City Saints are all that remain for Les Merydith (left), Historical Society president; Alice Messick, booster; and Jack Falerni, stadium groundskeeper.



James Garcia / Staff photographer

Marching out

Sounds of Saints softball team are only memories at stadium

By Julia Jones
Staff writer

Sun City

The grass is sprouting in the dirt along the base line in Sun City Stadium at 111th and Grand avenues.

No one runs the bases anymore.

Jack Falerni, groundskeeper, goes occasionally to check on the property and equipment, but he doesn't turn on the sprinklers to water the field.

No one is there to care if it's green.

A couple of weeks ago, he helped Alice

Messick move 27 trophies, won by the 1979 world champion Sun City Saints, a womens' fast-pitch softball team, from showcases in the deserted stadium to the Sun City Historical Society headquarters on Oakmont Drive.

The home team's trophies are big, glittering masterpieces of brightly colored metal and polished wood, tributes to an excess of design with fluted columns, spheres and plaques in abundance. Most have a tiny batter poised, forever ready to knock one out of the park.

They mark the Saints' glory days,

between 1966 and 1984.

But after 18 seasons in the sun, the Saints were called out on a squeeze play: they lost to the money men.

"We have the trophies on display now, but there are too many for us to keep out all the time," said Les Merydith, Historical Society president. "They take up our whole meeting room."

Messick was president of the Saints booster club earlier this year when the team took another swing at a comeback, and missed.

But the game is over, Messick said; this

time, it's for good.

Messick, 81, and Falerni, 77, were more than fans.

Since Messick came back home to the Valley with her husband in 1971, she had been a part of the Saints, body and soul. The Saints were playing in a dirt field along Grand Avenue then, where a family restaurant now stands. They were making their own posters announcing their schedule, persuading area merchants to display them.

The team needed help with that, so
See TROPHY, Page 6

TROPHY

From Page 1

that's what the Messicks did, she said. They had always been active volunteers, working for 40 years with the March of Dimes, for instance, and she had chaired Wyoming's 75th anniversary celebration of statehood.

And from then on, they helped the Saints wherever and whenever help was needed.

"We were just there to help expedite anything the girls did," she said, "any fund-raising, selling ads for the program or scorecard or whatever. It was really a pleasure for us. We were with them before there was a booster club."

"We probably averaged 1,000 or 1,200 fans in the stands in those days," Messick said. "These other teams would come in with their boosters, maybe 40 people, and I think it kind of scared them to see all these people in that pretty stadium. And then this year, we had 900 people there, and I thought that was pretty good, since a lot of our old-timers had passed away."

Falerni has his own set of memories.

"I took care of the place when the (Milwaukee) Brewers were there for spring training, too," Falerni said. The San Francisco Giants played there briefly, as did a legion of other teams, including Arizona State University and Grand Canyon University, and some Pop Warner boys.

The ballpark, built on 12.5 acres by the Del Webb company, opened July 4, 1971. Building permits still posted show the cost as \$300,000. It was the third field Webb had built in its Sun City development, and by far the most elaborate.

Falerni, who started out as a hooter in the Catskills and New York City's burlesque houses, learned pick-and-shovel work in his dad's construction business.

"I'm just the guy out there (at the Sun City Stadium) with the mower now," he said.

And the Saints are just part of Sun City history, Messick said. Messick's eyes moved over the assembled trophies again to one she bought, the first big trophy commemorating the Del Webb Memorial Day Tournament, back in 1978, as a memorial to her husband, who died that year.

Another one, she pointed out, was when the girls won the state championship, and one marked a trip to Australia. A Japanese team came over here to play, she said. Then the Saints went to the Netherlands and Canada, down to Rhodesia. And everywhere they went, they held classes, to spread the word about their sport.

The team, most recently coached by Gerald Stapley of Mesa, never finished below fourth in the Amateur Softball Association National Tournament for eight straight years.

But in the mid-'80s, the property changed hands twice, and stadium rent soared to \$6,000. Now, the stadium is for sale, through the federal government's real estate office, Merydith said. The asking price for the property, in the Agua Fria River floodplain, is \$1.8 million.

The Saints tried a comeback last year, Messick said, at about the same time the Sun City Rays, a senior league ball club, got rolling, but it seemed both clubs struck out.

Messick is not optimistic about another revival. It isn't just the rent, she said. There also is a matter of upkeep.

"People don't realize it costs about \$25,000 a year to maintain that field," Falerni said. Watering alone would cost about \$1,000 a month.

Some of the trophies will be on display at the Historical Society, Merydith said. They would like to loan others to Sun City agencies and firms with display space, so people won't forget.

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Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz. Friday, April 12, 1991

Community could save

By MIKE GABRETT
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY WEST — The man who had as much to say as anybody about the Sundome Center for the Performing Arts being built in 1979-80, said he hopes somebody comes forward to help save the facility.

Former Del E. Webb Development Co., (now Del Webb Communities) President John Meeker, who resigned from

Webb in 1982 to pursue business interests in Phoenix, said he thinks the community and Webb will do what it takes to keep the Sundome open.

Meeker made the remarks after he and former Sundome manager Don Tuffs spoke to members of the Sun Cities Historical Society Thursday in the SCW Community Services Center. Both provided a historical perspective on what the Sun-

dome has meant to Sun City West in its 10½ years of existence.

Meeker responded to community concerns raised this week when Arizona State University West officials said Gov. Fife Symington's proposed budget cuts for ASU and ASU West could put the Sundome at risk for future funding support.

Tuffs and Meeker acknowledged the Sundome has

Sundome, official says

been a money loser virtually every year despite current annual resident support of more than \$200,000.

Asked if he felt the Sundome could ever make money, Meeker said a non-profit corporation could break it even. "But it would take a lot of input from the people in the community. The residents are doing their share of it, but maybe they ought to get in on the bookings

more. I'm sure somebody will rise to the occasion and find a way.

"I understand they cut out part of the lecture series and somebody ought to look at that more closely," said Meeker, noting that somebody like Paul Harvey should (and did) sell it out.

"But the Sundome has never been there to make money, nor was the Sun Bowl (in Sun City).

Maybe Webb should step up to the plate. It sure as heck is a good marketing tool for them."

Meeker said the original intent behind building the Sundome was as a marketing tool, "knowing that one day that it would slow down. When we built that building, it was meant to serve 125,000 people in the Sun Cities. The population of the combined commu-

See Support, A5

— From A1
nities is now 66,000."

Meeker said he doesn't see how Del Webb could ever afford to let it close, particularly in view of its proposed 880-acre expansion of Sun City West.

Sun City West General Manager Chuck Roach and Fred Dunikoski, president of the Sundome Performing Arts Association, met with ASU officials Wednesday to discuss ways to keep it afloat.

Roach said Thursday he will have a report possibly today on the outcome of that meeting.

Meeker said somebody should closely scrutinize the Sundome's operating budget to see where the problem is. "If they're in the hole, find out where the hole is."

"Maybe they (ASU) are laying off some of their costs from Gammage (Auditorium) onto the Sundome," said Meeker.

Jim O'Connell, ASU director of public events, said ASU's annual Sundome operating budget is roughly \$1 million,

with a quarter of that supported by the community and another quarter subsidized.

"The Sundome lost money its first few years because of fixed costs," said Meeker. "You had to have maintenance people and all the consulting sound people were brought in for each performance."

"You also had grounds maintenance people, general repair, operating taxes and other capital expenses. It was easy to spend \$50,000-\$100,000 a year on maintenance for that facility," said Meeker.

Tuffs, who managed the Sundome for four years in the mid-1980s, said he thinks the Sundome has just hit a temporary blip in the road.

To get the Sundome back on track will require "tough negotiating" with performers and for ASU to do more block bookings of performers with Gammage.

"Historically, performing arts centers don't make money anyway, at least I don't know of any that do," said Tuffs.

National Historic Preservation Week
May 12-18, 1991

All week long 1 to 3 PM

- - Open house - Special exhibits

- - Punch and cookies

Rita Wright - Rac Mason - Reba Merydith

- - In attendance each day - Regular hostess - at least one board member -
Pioneers invited

Wednesday May 15 - 1 to 3 PM

- - Press invited

Al Driscoll

- - Pioneer rally - Invitations

Evelyn Parry

- - Program - Pioneer interviews

-Joe Keenan - Talk on "Words in History"

--

8 The Arizona Republic/THE PHOENIX GAZETTE Wed., May 15, 1991

History of Sun City area part of display

An open house at the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, 10801 Oakmont Drive, will continue through Saturday as an observance of National Historic Preservation Week. The group's headquarters is arranged in one of the original model homes built in Sun City.

SC INDEPENDENT

• Volume 31, Number 20 •



Historical Society slates open house

The Sun Cities and other communities throughout Arizona are observing National Historic Preservation Week, through May 18.

Locally, the Sun Cities Area Historical Society will hold open house 1-3 p.m. daily at its headquarters, 10801 Oakmont Ave., Sun City.

Oakmont is the first street south of Grand and 107th Avenue. The headquarters is the original model home built in Sun City in 1960.

As a guardian of important records of the past, the society collects and organizes displays and exhibits for special occasions and throughout National Preservation Week.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the 75th anniversary of the National Park Service.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation Week designated the week-long observance to promote public awareness of the nation's cultural resources.

Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz. Thursday, May 16, 1991 Community A3*

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By JACQUE PAPPAS
Daily News-Sun staff

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DAILY NEWS-SUN 5-16-91



Daily News-Sun photo by Jacque Pappas

HERE FROM THE START — Sun City Pioneers Bernice Walker, from left, Dorothy Bell, Florence Sears and Sarah Butts look at Emil Fisher's ink drawings of the churches in Sun City. The drawings and other Sun City memorabilia were on display this week as part of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society's open house. The society will be attaching an addition to its office at 10801 Oakmont Drive. The addition is a shed which housed Sun City's first home sales office.

Cruise plans undecided

Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Sun Cities Area Historical Society chief archivist Jane Freeman of Sun City hasn't decided what she'll do with a cruise she won earlier this week.

The decision will be left up to Freeman, said Historical Society President Les Merydith after Freeman was selected as Volunteer of the Month in a May 21 drawing at the Sun City Community Service Building.

The Volunteer of the Month program is sponsored by Holland America Lines. Each month a local non-profit, or not-for-profit organization submits a nomination for volunteer of the month. A drawing is held each month and the winner is eligible for a luxury cruise ship holiday for two.

Eligible non-profit Sun Cities volunteer organizations who win the trip have the option of allowing the individual nominee to take the trip or use it in some other manner, such as a fund-raiser, said Ray Brown, president of the Volunteer Bureau of the Sun Cities Area, which coordinates the project for Holland America.

All volunteers nominated by their organizations will receive a non-cash recognition award and will be eligible for the final random drawing for Volunteer of the Year to be conducted in January 1992.

Contest rules stipulate no organization may win more than one monthly drawing, but any winning monthly volunteer will be eligible for the final Volunteer of the Year drawing.

Historical Society volunteer earns honor

Sun Cities Area Historical Society Volunteer Jane Freeman, a Sun City resident, was awarded the first Volunteer of the Month honor under a new program created by The Volunteer Bureau of the Sun Cities, Inc. and Holland American Cruise Lines. The drawing — the first of eight such monthly drawings — was held at May 21 at the Volunteer Bureau's Sun City office.

The Historical Society was one of 28 area volunteer organizations which submitted entries to the first drawing. The contest winner will receive a plaque and their submitting volunteer organization will receive tickets for a cruise line vacation for two.

Entries for June's Volunteer of the Month contest must be turned into the bureau by June 15 for the drawing held one week later.

Volunteer organizations may continue to submit entries throughout the drawings. All entries will be combined at the end of the year for a final Volunteer of the Year award.

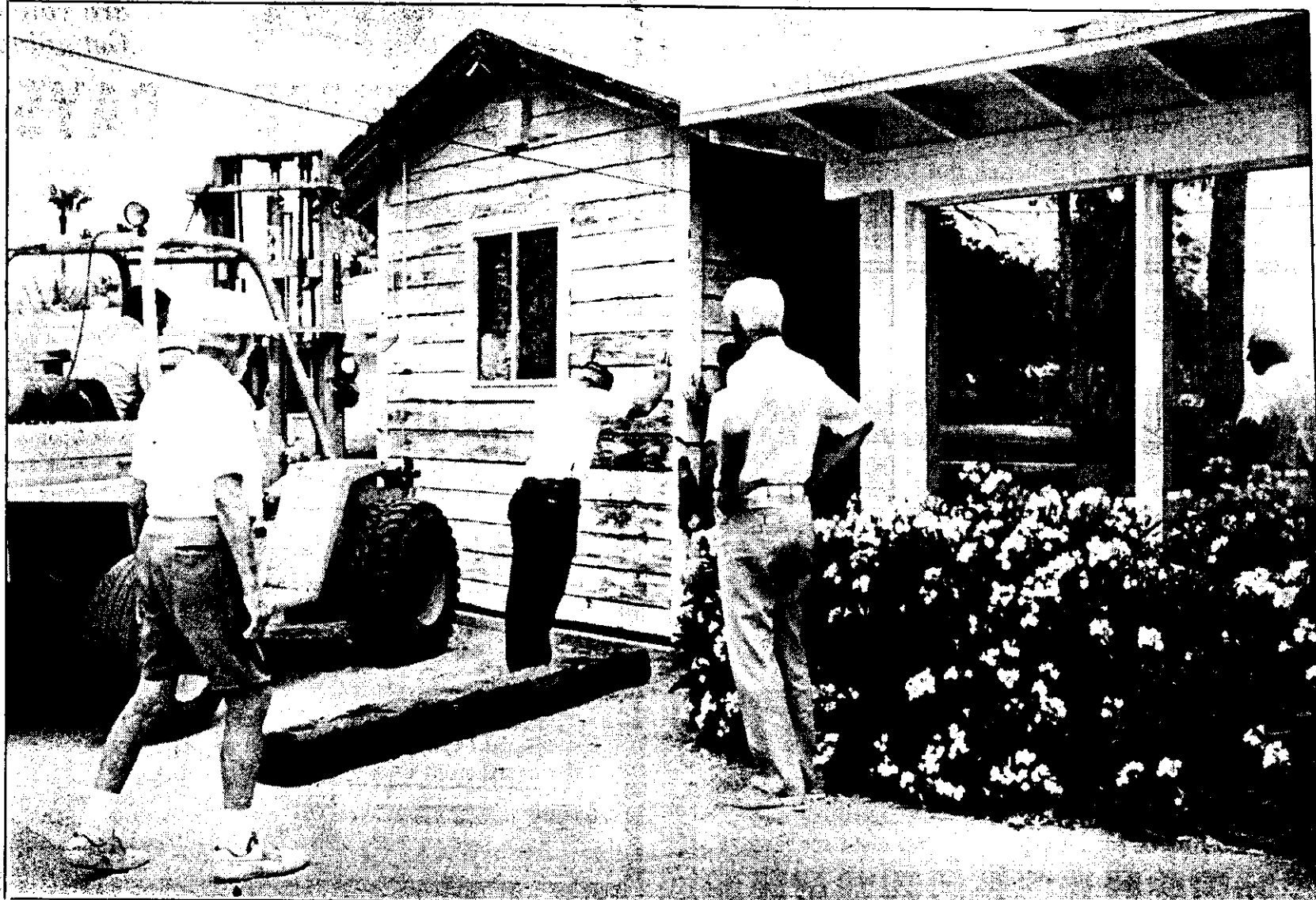
SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT • MAY 29-JUNE 4, 1991 • 25 cents



COMMUNITY, A3 DAILY NEWS-SUN

ASU student delves into the history behind the first Sun Citians

6/12/91



AN ORIGINAL — A forklift operator draws attention as he sets the original Del Webb sales office onto a concrete slab next to one of Sun City's first model homes, which now houses the Sun City Historical Society. The building was moved to Coggins Avenue from Sun City West Tuesday and will be restored to its original state.

Daily News-Sun photo by Mollie J. Hoppes

Student creates oral history

By JACQUE PAPPAS
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — A student working on her master's degree wants to capture the excitement and uncertainty Sun City's first residents felt in the early 1960s.

During the next year, Melanie Sturgeon will record interviews with the community's pioneers as a part of her thesis or a master's degree in public history at Arizona State University.

"I'm very interested in interviewing as many pioneers as possible. Historians too often look at what other historians wrote or what government officials did," Sturgeon said. "I think you get more of a sense of what things were like by talking to the people."

Sturgeon will make the recordings at the Sun City Area Historical Society's headquarters, 10801 W. Oakmont Drive.

The headquarters is the original model home built in Sun City in 1960. It officially opened to the public during Sun City's 30th anniversary in January 1990.

Sturgeon said she had been doing research on retirement and the evolution of retirement communities.

"A number of things were tried in Florida in the 1920s, but nothing really got successful until Sun City," she said. "I want to know what about living in a retirement community appealed to them and how they heard about Sun City. You can't get a feel for that unless you talk to someone."

Sturgeon said she will make two tapes of each interview. One will remain at the historical society headquarters and the other will be stored at ASU.

Sturgeon, 43, lives in Mesa and has five children, ages 11 to 17.

She has applied for a \$3,000



Daily News-Sun photo by Mollie J. Hoppes

FOR POSTERITY — Melanie Sturgeon peruses people profiles at the Sun City Historical Society. She is working with the society on an oral history of the community.

state grant to help her cover the costs of her project.

Jane Freeman, chief archivist for the historical society, said she met with Sturgeon last week and helped her make a list of people she can contact for the oral history project.

"Having people's voices and

expressions makes the moments in history more vibrant and personal to hear about," Freeman said.

She said the oral history will mark the first time stories from pioneers — Sun City's first residents — are put on

tape.

"An oral history is vitally important to any historical society and community. In years to come it will even be more important," Freeman said. "Just imagine how exciting it would be to have George Washington's voice on tape."

Preserving history

Sun City West memorabilia sought for historical records

By Lori Baker
Staff writer

SUN CITIES — Sun City West is only 13 years old but memorabilia is already being collected to preserve the community's history.

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society plans to open a satellite office in Sun City West by mid-October for residents to drop off photos, maps, newspaper articles and other records of Sun City West. The office is in the Sun City West Community Services Building, R.H. Johnson and Stardust boulevards.

"We want to start collecting memorabilia for Sun City West now, before things get discolored and deteriorated," said Al Driscoll, who has been on the historical society's board for four years.

An appeal has been made to pioneers of Sun City West to become members of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society. The historical society's board was expanded this year to include five members from Sun City West, Driscoll said.

"We will have displays from time to time, but primarily it will be a collection site for pictures, old activity calendars, newspaper clippings, and other memorabilia of Sun City West," Driscoll said.

Volunteers are being sought for the new Sun City West office as well as the museum in Sun City that is reopening Sunday after the summer hiatus.



Tom Tingle / Staff photographer
Les Merydith and Jane Freeman, officers of the Sun City Area Historical Society, look over old newspapers at the society's building, 10801 W. Oakmont Drive.

The historical society will resume its operating hours of 1 to 3 p.m. seven days a week. The museum is in Sun City's first model home, 10801 W. Oakmont Drive.

Volunteers are needed to act as hosts for museum visitors.

Help also is needed in sorting and cataloging slides and other historical materials. Clerical as-

sistance also is being sought.

People interested in volunteering can call Jane Freeman, the museum's chief archivist at 974-2568. Freeman is the co-author of "Jubilee: The 25th Anniversary of Sun City, Arizona," which chronicles the history of Sun City through 1985.

Visitors to the Sun City museum may view one of the promotional

films from 1960, when the sale of homes in Sun City first began.

Thirty-one trophies for the Sun Cities Saints ball team are on display as well as T-shirts and other Saints memorabilia.

Soon to be available is a file with copies of newspaper and magazine articles about the Sun Cities. Original articles are being copied on acid-free paper and filed by subject alphabetically.

Among the topics are the grape festival, churches, ambassadors, recreation centers, school tax and the posse. In the personalities file, there are copies of stories about individuals.

Scrapbooks from Sun Cities clubs also are available. Also, phone books from every year since Sun City was started in 1960 are stocked in the museum.

The house that is being used as a museum was built in 1959 by Del E. Webb Development Corp. and originally sold for \$8,500. The historical society bought it 40 years later for \$44,000 and spent \$16,000 renovating it, using donations from the James G. Boswell Foundation, Webb Foundation and Del Webb Corp.

On Jan. 1, 1960, when Sun City's model home opened, 237 homes were sold the first day. Cars were lined up for miles to gain entrance to the new retirement community. More than 100,000 people visited during the first three days, Freeman said.

Supplement to DAILY NEWS-SUN Tuesday, Sept. 24, 1991 - 31



AN ORIGINAL — A forklift operator draws attention as he sets the original Del Webb sales office onto a concrete slab next to one of Sun City's first model homes. The model now houses the Sun Cities Area Historical Society. The sales office was moved to the site on Coggins Avenue from Sun City West and is undergoing renovation.

Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz. Tuesday, Sept. 24, 1991



Katie Young and Neil Bultman reminisce about the early days of living in Sun City and look at maps at the Sun City Historical Society, 10801 Oakmont Drive, Monday.

Bultman is a trustee and Young is one of many hostesses who welcome visitors to the society headquarters, which has reopened for the season.

Frances Guarino/Daily News-Sun

From the outside, the white, two-bedroom house at 10801 Oakmont Ave. seems an unassuming landmark for a cultural revolution led by Sun City developer Del E. Webb.

Sun City's first official residence has a single carport, desert landscaping and a backyard view of the 154-acre front nine of the 72-par North Golf Course.

Although she has never lived in the home, Vera Jean Painter is very much a part of its history.

Painter, owner of Jean's Sportsg, 12801 W. Bell Road, bought it in 1984 for \$50,000 from the family of the original owner, Denver motel builder John McDonald. He and, in turn, each of his two wives, occupied it for 24 years.

"I just thought it would be nice to own the first home in Sun City," Painter said.

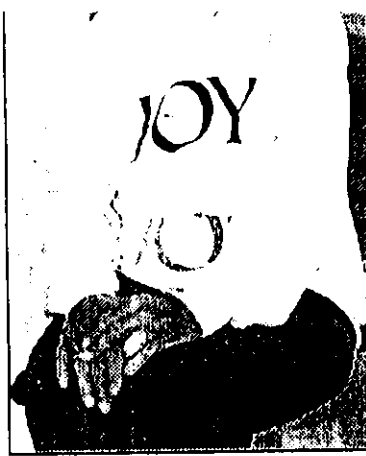
At the time, "I also had (my) business at (Grand Center) on the corner of Grand Avenue and 107th Avenue. It was right across the street from the back door of my store."

Painter rented out the house while she owned it, never spending a single night there herself. She once considered moving her 94-year-old mother into it, but never did.

Last spring, she sold her piece of local history to the Sun Cities Area Historical Society for \$44,000.

"I sold it at a loss, but I felt like I made a donation to the Historical Society," she said.

Historical Society founders Jane Freeman and Glen Sandberg are grateful the property is now available for display and use as a local museum. It will be open to the



Michael Ging/The Arizona Republic

Mildred Toldrian, 82, is a pioneer of Sun City. When she and her now-deceased husband saw the community, "we were just amazed," she said. "We fell in love with it."

public starting Monday.

When new in 1959, the 950-square-foot Kentworth model home, built of brick, sold for \$8,500.

It was the prototypical starter house for an older but wiser generation — retiring grandparents of baby boomers, who bought into Webb's concept of an active lifestyle in their golden years, according to Sandberg.

Today, there are still 225 of the original residents.

One of them, Mildred Toldrian, 82, is a pioneer of both Sun City and Sun City West, where she moved when Del Webb Corp. opened it in 1978.

She and her now-deceased husband, Clarence, a 30-year Milwaukee postal worker, moved from Wisconsin to Phoenix in 1958

bought a Brookside model home for about \$10,000 on a corner of a cul-de-sac at 12025 Hillcrest Drive.

"It was a two-bedroom, one-bath house, with a living room and nice kitchen area," Toldrian recalled.

The home was within walking distance of both Grand Center and the Oakmont Community Center, then the twin hubs of such Sun City socializing and recreational pursuits as golf, lawn bowling and swimming.

"We went swimming every day. If I went to the grocery store, I needed an hour and a half," she said, explaining that filling up her shopping cart was just an excuse for visiting with neighbors and making friends of new arrivals.

"It was a real fun community."

Despite Sun City's growth from a small, tight-knit community of 2,000 to today's population of 46,000, Toldrian said she and her husband never wanted to move.

They lived together in the same house for 14 years.

After her husband's death in 1974, she stayed there four more years before deciding it was time to leave.

"I felt I had to do something different," she said. "I picked up all my good memories" and departed for Sun City West.

With the sale of her Sun City home, she purchased another in its sister community, where she maintains an active lifestyle.

"I like Sun City and Sun City West," she said. "There's so much to do. If you can't find something that interests you, then there's something wrong with you."



Michael Ging/The Arizona Republic

Vera Jean Painter, who bought Sun City's first official residence in 1984, sold her piece of history last year to the Sun Cities Area Historical Society. It was converted into a museum that will be open to the public starting Monday.

1-188

2nd owner
1980, 1981

Then and now ...

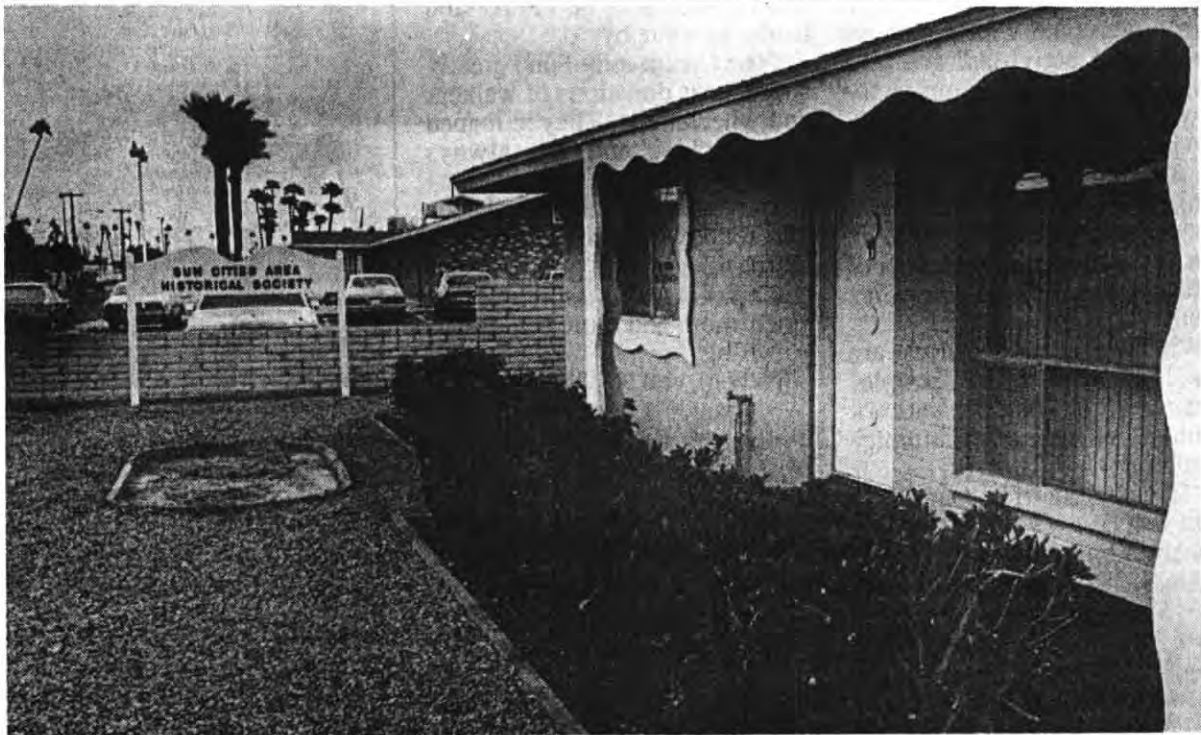


Jan. 3-9, 1990, THE SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT-Page 7



The Sun Cities Historical Society has officially opened its headquarters in a building which once served as the very first model home for Sun City. The building, located next to the Oakmont Recreation Center on Oakmont Drive, was one of the first buildings ever constructed in Sun City. In both photos, the recreation center is on the left and the model home/Historical Society headquarters is on the right. The photo at left was taken in 1960, soon after Sun City officially opened. The photo above is how the building looks today, surrounding shopping centers and homes.

YUNG TOWN, ARIZONA • PHONE 972-6101 • *S.C. Independent* • Jan. 3-9, 1990 •



HISTORY IN THE MAKING. As Sun City celebrates its 30th anniversary this month, the newly-opened Sun Cities Historical Society headquarters and museum will serve as the centerpiece of activities. The building, located at 10801 Oakmont Ave., houses historical data, photographs, old advertisements for Sun City and other items. The home originally served as the very first model home for the Del Webb Corp. when it opened Sun City and was purchased by the Historical Society last year. It has been restored to its original condition and is now open to the public.

Laurie Hurd-Moore/Independent

Historical Society prepares for its grand opening

By GLENN B. SANBERG
Daily News-Sun columnist

Would you like to see the first Sun City Telephone Directory published in 1961?

How about those published each year after that — with one exception?

How about perusing hundreds of Del Webb ads appearing in newspapers and



Sanberg

magazines across the country telling the story of this new "Active Retirement Community"?

Are you curious about the original brochure announcing the model you selected when you bought your home?

Were you here in 1965 when

Retired in style

the big celebration of the fifth anniversary took place?

Do you remember the big plastic ash trays the Del Webb people handed out before smoking was a no-no?

How about looking for your picture among those taken at the Strawberry Festivals in the Sun Bowl?

Remember the Sun City Saints — who provided us with near-professional fast-pitch girls softball?

The first Pom Pom Girls?

The new Sun City Area Historical Society headquarters at 10801 Oakmont Ave. will offer the community a peek at its past in a setting of special historical significance on Monday, Jan. 15, at 10 a.m. when the home will be opened to the pub-

lic with appropriate ribbon-cutting ceremonies.

As its door swings open the public will be reminded of Sun City's past, since the home is one of the first of five model homes built by Del Webb in 1959.

The main part of the house, 940 square feet, has been retained: living room, kitchen, two bedrooms and one bath. The house sold for \$8,500, plus \$600 for air conditioning.

The original owners, John and Chloe McDonald, came to Sun City from Colorado and lived in the home for several years. It was eventually sold to Vera Jean Painter as a speculative investment.

In May 1989, the historical society bought the property and has converted it into its headquarters.

The Arizona room, which was added later, has been converted into a conference room and office.

There are hundreds of pictures, some dating all the way back to the '30s when the tiny village of Marinette was a community of cotton field workers.

Cataloguing of the myriad of these items is in progress and from time to time will be on public display.

The society's new home was made possible by a matching grant of \$30,000 by the Boswell Foundation, a \$25,000 grant from the Del Webb Foundation and \$5,000 from the Del E. Webb Co.

Friends and trustees have also made substantial contributions as have local business and professional firms.

Organized in 1985 with the publication of "JUBILEE, the 25th Anniversary of Sun City," The Sun City Area Historical Society has been the work of a group of dedicated, civic-minded leaders who wished to preserve a significant social change in retirement living.

For the first time since its founding, the Society has centralized the various historical items under one roof. The need now is to continue the work of sorting, cataloguing and displaying the vast amount of historical material contributed by individuals and organizations.

There is an urgent need for volunteers who will spend an hour or two each week. We need hostesses, cataloguers and clerical workers of all kinds, the trustees say.

Now that the center has been established and the story of the glorious history of this unique community can be told to residents and visitors alike, we should be willing to back this enterprise proudly in the only way this city knows how — enthusiastically.

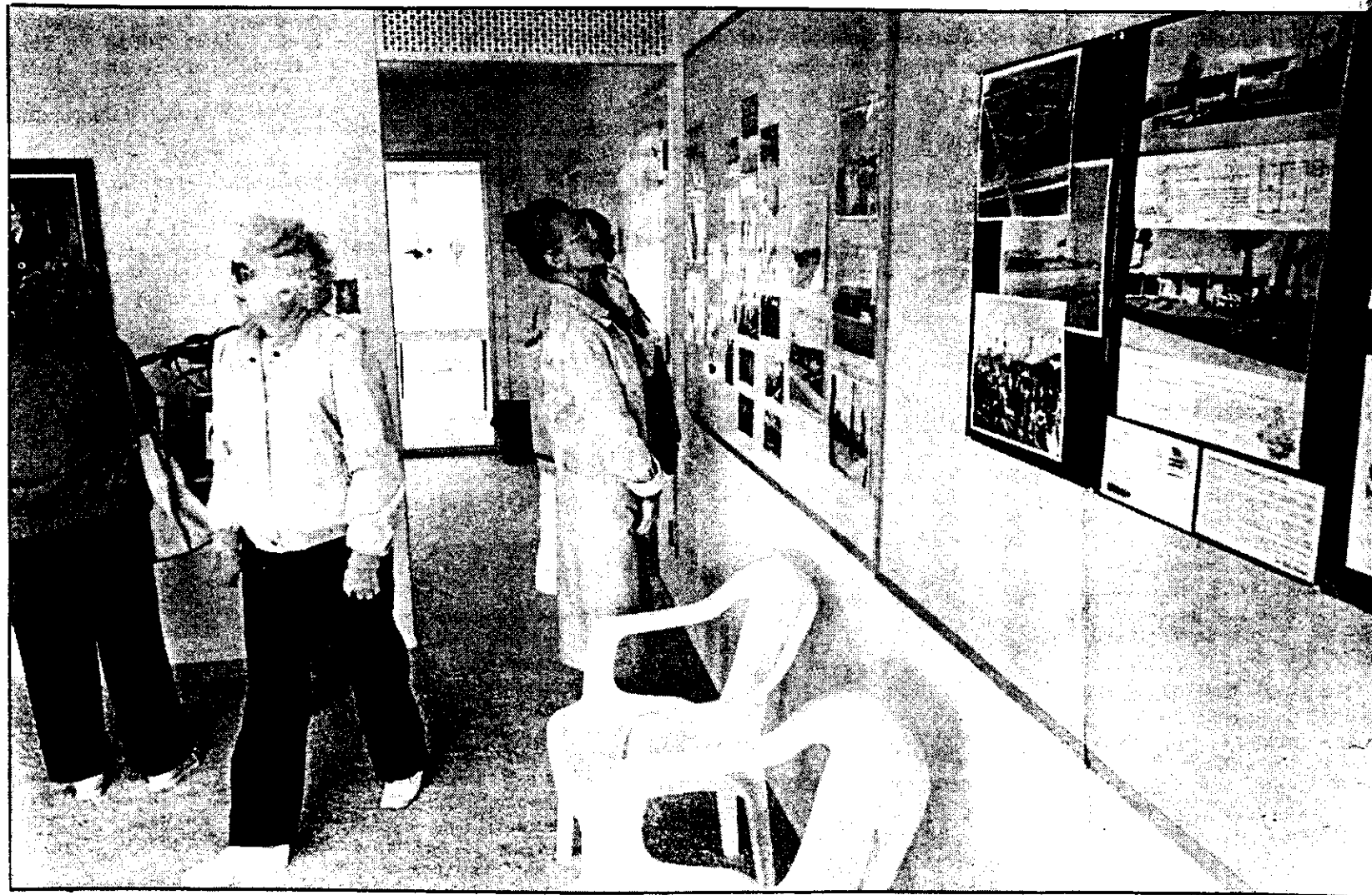
After you have paid a visit to the Society, why not lend a hand as a volunteer? Thirty years has passed by so swiftly we dare not let the history of Sun City be ignored.

Each year brings new and exciting people and events to our community that must be recorded.

If you are not able to volunteer, your membership will be your next best substitute. The address: 10801 Oakmont Drive — the telephone: 974-2568.

DAILY NEWS-SUN Jan 16, 1990

Home tour shows off Sun City originals



HISTORY ON DISPLAY — The Sun Cities Area Historical Society's new headquarters opened to the public Monday.

Visitors to the house at 10801 W. Oakmont Drive viewed photographs from Sun City's past.

Daily News-Sun photo by Stephen Cherek

64 PAGES

VOL. XXXIII NO. 149 DAILY NEWS-SUN

Serving the Northwest Valley Jan. 16, 1990

Turn back

Webb models reopen doors for anniversary

By JACQUE PAPPAS
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — More than 100,000 people filled Oakmont Drive 30 years ago this month as they took a peek at five model homes that showcased Del Webb's concept of active retirement living.

Thousands of residents toured the original homes again Monday as part of a week-long series of events celebrating Sun City's 30th anniversary.

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society's new office officially opened to the public after a ribbon-cutting ceremony with local dignitaries.

The office, 10801 W. Oakmont Drive, was the first model home built in Sun City. It remained



Daily News-Sun photo by Stephen Chernek

T-BIRD WATCHERS — Robert and Dorothy Thorne of Surprise admire a pink 1956 Ford Thunderbird, on display in front of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society, 10801 Oakmont Drive. The home was the first Sun City model home.

open Monday along with two other original homes built along Oakmont Drive and South Golf Course. Memorabilia — from old telephone books to a fifth anniversary ashtray to a 1979 trophy of the Sun City Saints — See Home, A3

— From, A1

was on display at the society office.

"We've been in Sun City a long time and it's nice to come here and see old familiar places and faces," said Milton Semrau, who moved to Sun City with his wife, Iome, in 1971. "I've just enjoyed walking around here (the society office) and looking at all the old photographs on the walls."

Hostesses were stationed at each home and shared tidbits of information with the thousands who visited the Sun City landmarks.

"I like to tell people about some things in Sun City that they may not know. And that's what the historical society is going to be all about — documenting history," said Rita Wright, secretary of the board.

The historical society honored its co-founder Jane Freeman by naming the office conference room after the Sun Citian.

In addition to the open houses, antique cars were on display and a variety of clubs had craft shows in the former TG&Y store at the Grand Center.

Betty Joachim, who chaired Monday's events, said she was happy with the big turnout.

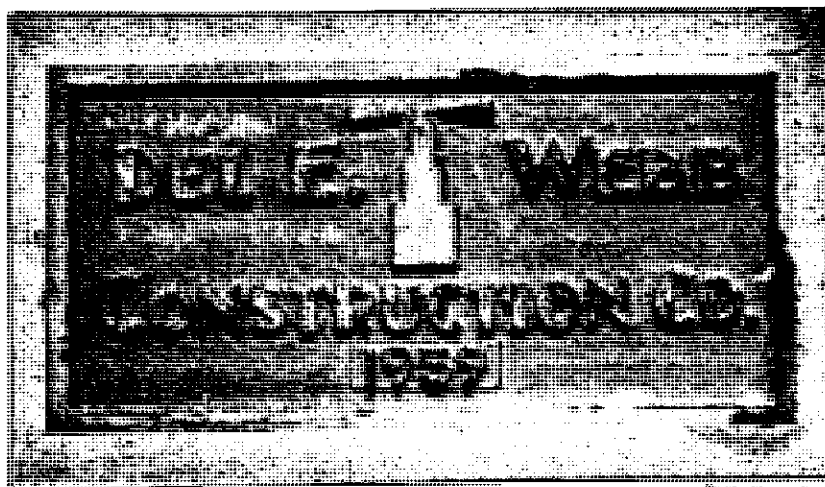
Area residents, people from out of town and many from throughout the Valley came to the second day of anniversary events in Sun City.

Carol Heimann, of Phoenix, walked through the homes Monday with her two daughters ages, 6 and 9.

"My daughters just loved seeing the old cars. I think more people who live in the Valley should come out here. I don't think they all realize that the people out here are active," said Heimann, whose mother, Mary Grangaard, lives in Sun City.

Touring the homes, along with those who had never visited Sun City before, were some people who have lived in the retirement community since 1960.

"I have been here since March 1960 and I think this anniversary is terrific. I have donated quite a few articles, photos and old phone books to the historical society because I think things like this should be preserved," said Rae Conn, who still lives in the home she bought 30 years ago on Pebble Beach Drive. "I've seen Sun City grow from nothing and now we need to work to keep it going strong."



LANDMARK — The Del E. Webb Construction Co. placed a plaque in the cement in the driveway of the original homes.

Historical Society to open Monday

SUN CITY — The Sun Cities Area Historical Society will open Monday to the public.

The society purchased the first model home in Sun City, 10801 W. Oakmont Drive, as its headquarters. Beginning Monday, the headquarters will be open from 1 to 3 p.m. weekdays.

Volunteers will serve as guides and answer questions. The society collects, organizes and displays historical memorabilia of the retirement communities.

Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz. Saturday, Feb. 17, 1990 Community A3



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#5

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History in the making

Antique lovers in the early days of Sun City, found the one thing missing from their retirement paradise was a club for antique enthusiasts. On Sept. 26, 1968, the Pioneer Antique Club of Sun City was organized. Helen Gorton was one of the group's first members. Today, Mrs. Gorton is the only remaining active member of the club. She recently presented to the Sun Cities Area Historical Society a plaque commemorating the Antique Club's participation in the Jan. 4, 1976 Bicentennial Parade. The award, which will be included in the Historical Society's archives, was accepted by Society trustee Les Merydith.



Page 2-THE SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT, Jan. 31-Feb. 6, 1990



Daily News-Sun

HISTORY BUFFS — The Sun Cities Area Historical Society officers are pictured from left, Emil Fischer, vice president; Les Meredith, president; Rita Wright, secretary and Al Thompson, treasurer.

Tuesday, April 24, 1990 Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz.

Sun City West gears up to preserve heritage

By JACQUE PAPPAS
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY WEST — Long before the retirement community boasted neatly manicured homes and recreation centers, the 11,000-acre tract was home to one of the largest feedlots in the nation.

Del E. Webb Development Co. acquired the majority of land in 1972 from Circle One Livestock Co., also known as Lizard Acres.

J. Charles Wetzler brought the feedlot to the West Valley in the mid-1950s. For nearly 30 years, the company's hay stacks, cattle and corrals abound in what is now thriving Sun City West.

In an effort to preserve Sun

City West's heritage, the Sun Cities Area Historical Society is soliciting the support and enthusiasm of local residents.

The society and Del Webb Corp. are sponsoring a bi-annual meeting Thursday that will feature speakers who have seen the area develop into a renowned retirement community.

The meeting, which is free and open to the public, is from 1:30 to 3 p.m. at the Sun City West Community Services Building, 14445 R.H. Johnson Blvd.

Martha Moyer, manager of public affairs for Del Webb Corp., said the meeting is the first public effort by the society to start documenting the early

days of Sun City West.

"I think bringing the meeting to Sun City West will truly enhance the presence of the society in the area. The society started in Sun City, but the development of Sun City West is also of historical significance," Moyer said. "Preserving Sun City West's heritage is important now because not too many years from now Del Webb will complete its development in the area and move on."

Moyer said residents are encouraged to give the historical society any item that would help document the community's early days.

Examples are advertisements for homes and photos of ground-

breaking ceremonies.

"The society members know how to preserve and catalog so the items will not deteriorate further," Moyer said.

A special committee headed by Al Driscoll has been established to head the Sun City West preservation effort.

Driscoll said some residents do not realize that the historical society serves both Sun Cities.

"After the society had its open house during Sun City's 30th anniversary, the board decided it was time to start collecting photographs, tapes and other historical memorabilia of Sun City West," Driscoll said. "A variety of people have indicated that they have boxes of

materials, monthly newsletters and other brochures Webb passed out. It will all probably end up in the garbage if it is not given to us."

The headquarters of the society is based at the first house ever built in Sun City, 10801 Oakmont Avenue. For more information, call 971-2568.

Driscoll, who is a member of the society's 15-member board of directors, said the meeting will feature three speakers: Gloria Gemmill, who lived in the area from 1947 to 1978; Dick Masten, Webb vice president in charge of land development; and Ann Loos Raymond, Webb vice president from 1974 to 1987.

In addition, many pioneer residents will be in attendance.

"It's time to gather this kind of information about the early years while the pioneers are still living," Driscoll said. "Anyone interested in the origins of Sun City West should not miss this meeting."

Ground-breaking ceremonies for the community took place Feb. 15, 1978. Eight months later the first model home opened to the public. More than 65,000 people visited the community in the first two months.

By 1979, multi-million dollar projects such as Crestview Restaurant, Hillcrest Golf Course and R.H. Johnson Recreation Center were built.

Historical group preserves Sun City West memories

By TIFFANY MEANS
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY WEST — Scrapbook in hand, Clarice Uhl reminisced recently during a local historians' meeting featuring speakers who helped establish Del Webb Community Inc.'s second Arizona retirement community.

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society along with Webb designed Thursday's program, "Hello, Sun City West — So Long Lizard Acres," to attract Sun City West pioneers like Uhl and her husband, Ed.

The Uhls were the second family to move into the new community. Luman Wick, the first official resident, also attended the meeting.

For awhile, the two lived close to each other. Now residing in different areas, the Uhls and Wick remain friends, Wick said.

"There was a lot of friendship in the early group. Del Webb took us on lots of trips and parties that everybody went on," Wick said.

Historical Society members said those are the memories that they want founding citizens to help them record.

The club wants donations of fliers, brochures, and other memorabilia that can be used to record such events.

About 15 in the 85-member audience could boast a move-in date during late 1978 — which was the official opening year for Sun City West — and early 1979.

The event marked the club's first public attempt to begin documenting the community's growth, said Al Driscoll, Historical Society chairman of the committee for the preservation of Sun City West.

As an introduction, Gloria Gemmel turned back the clock



Daily News-Sun photo by Stephen Cherek

MEMORY LANE — Early Sun City West residents Clarice Uhl, left, her husband, Ed, and Luman Wick look at photographs from the community's beginning, after a meeting of the Sun City Area Historical Society Thursday at the Sun City West Community Building.

to pre-Webb development as she described the area when it supported a working community of 45 people.

"Once upon a time, there was a place called Lizard Acres," Gemmel said. The name was the unofficial title given to Circle One Livestock Co., one of the largest feedlots in the nation.

Gimmel and her husband moved to the feedlot shortly after its opening in the late-1940s. Nearly 40 years later, their

home was one of the buildings razed to make way for Webb.

Clarice Uhl and Wick said they enjoyed hearing Gimmel's description of the feedlot.

Dick Mastin, Webb vice president in charge of land development, worked on Sun City West from the project's beginning in 1972.

Mastin, then 23 years old, said he remembers the sense of excitement that pervaded the people planning and construct-

ing the community, a process which took about six years.

After the Webb executives shared their memories, Driscoll asked residents to recollect their own stories and write them or record them for the Historical Society.

Clarice Uhl said she recalls the dirt and the coyotes.

"It was kind of surprising that no one mentioned how much they like it here. I sure do," Uhl said.

Events keep heritage alive

By Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — Arizonans will join the rest of the country in celebrating National Historic Preservation Week Sunday through Saturday.

The theme is "Keeping America's Heritage Alive." Many events are scheduled for today and Sunday.

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society, 10801 Oakmont Ave., will host an open house from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. Exhibits include the historical record of Sun City West (not yet completed).

Refreshments will be served.

Admission is free.

Information: 974-2568.

Other area events:

- Cave Creek — Opening of a restored tuberculosis cabin at 10 a.m. today in Cave Creek Museum.

Information: 488-3183.

- Phoenix — "Preservation Fair" from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. today in the Ellis-Shackleford House, 1242 N. Central Ave., including demonstrations, workshops and product information pertaining to historic homes. Bus transportation from the fair to the Encanto-Palmcroft Historic District Home Tour will be available.

Information: 255-4470.

- Phoenix — hands-on Victorian children's room from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. today in Pioneer Arizona Living History Museum.

Information: 993-0212.

- Phoenix — "Step Back in Time," living history tours in the Rosson House, from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. today in Heritage Square.

Information: 262-5071.

- Phoenix — walking tour of historic architecture in down-

town Phoenix from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. today. Meet in Heritage Square, Van Buren and 7th Street.

Information: 262-5071.

- Phoenix — walking tours and bake sale in Encanto-Palmcroft Historic District from noon to 4 p.m. today.

Information: 252-3151.

- Phoenix — "Researching Your Historic Home," hands-on workshop from noon to 4 p.m. today in Ellis-Shackleford House. Information: 255-4470.

- Phoenix — walking tour of the Oakland Historic District, including tours of homes, at 10 a.m. Sunday, Arizona Museum, 1002 W. Van Buren St.

Information: 253-2734.

- Phoenix — guided and self-guided tours of historic city cemeteries from 8 a.m. to noon Sunday, Monday, and Friday and May 19 by reservation.

Information: 253-2734.

- Phoenix — "Afternoon in the Square," Rosson House restoration 10th anniversary celebration from noon to 4 p.m. Sunday in Heritage Square.

Information: 262-5071.

- Phoenix — "Victorian Mother's Day Tea Sampler," living history re-enactment from 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday in Pioneer Arizona Living History Museum, 10 miles north of Phoenix in I-17.

Information: 993-0212.

- Phoenix — exhibit of National Historic Preservation Week photo contest winners on display Monday through Aug. 31 in State Capitol Museum.

Information: 542-4675.

Daily News-Sun Saturday, May 12, 1990

Today is Tomorrow's History

No facility has ever documented the creation of an "Active Retirement" community in American culture as has the Sun Cities Area Historical Society.

We are proud to be a part of the Society's work of collecting, displaying and preserving the fascinating story of America's first full-service active retirement community. We

also are proud of our own growth from a sole practitioner to a full-service law firm serving the Sun Cities area since the mid-1960s.

We salute the dedicated people of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society who continue to tell the exciting story of our communities and who make sure that "Today is Tomorrow's History."

Farrer, Shapiro & Ross, P.C. Attorneys at Law

Robert J. Farrer • Myron Shapiro • Frank L. Ross
Craig E. Collins • Gary A. Goebel • William J. Howard
Walter Linton, of Counsel

Royal Oak Mall Ph 977-7251
10225 W. Thunderbird Blvd., Sun City, AZ 85351

Group preserves Sun City's past

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society is organized as a non-profit corporation exclusively for civic and educational purposes. Its task is to collect and preserve the historical data of the Sun Cities area — the transformation of the Marinette cotton ranch and the Lizard Acres cattle ranch into Del Webb's famous retirement communities of Sun City and Sun

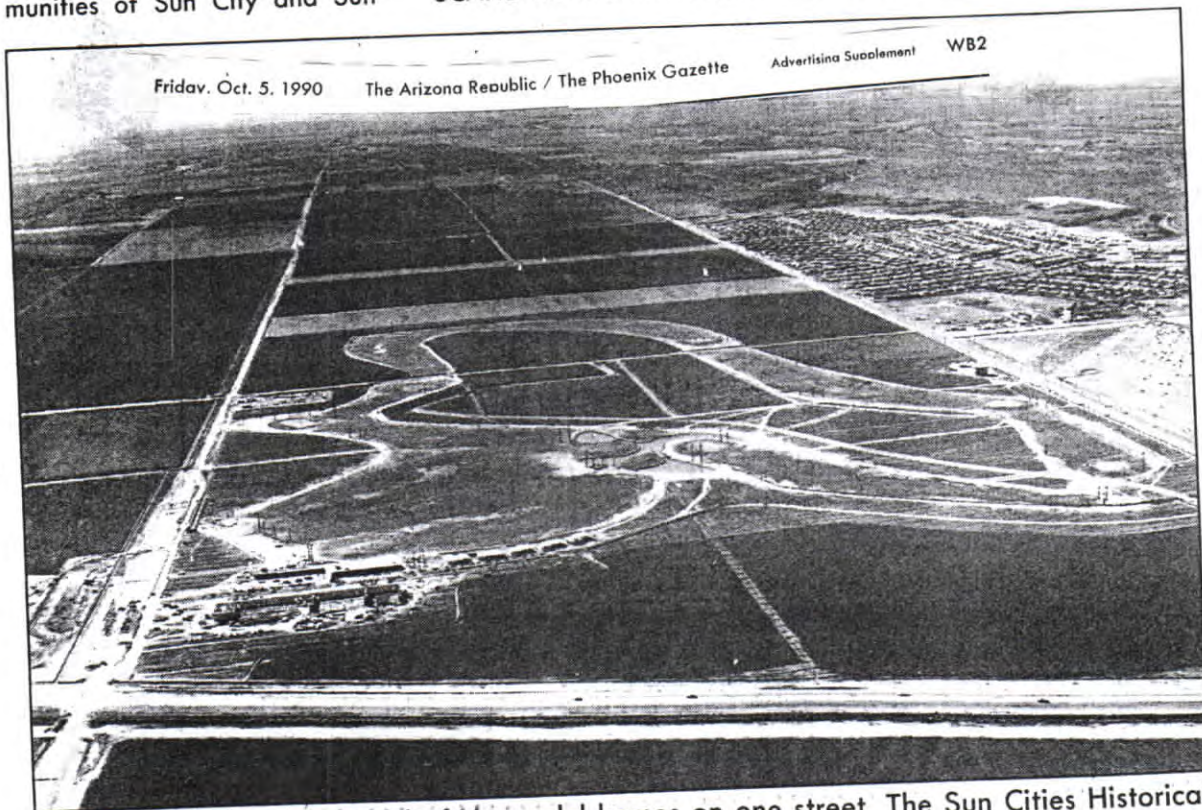
City West, and the history of those people who have lived there over the past 30 years.

Through the support of the J.G. Boswell Foundation, Del Webb Corporation and other groups and individuals, the Society purchased Sun City's first model home, located at 1081 Oakmont Ave., as its headquarters.

SCAHS will hold its semi-an-

nual public meeting at 1:30 p.m., Friday, Oct. 12, at the First Presbyterian Church in Sun City. The program will feature "A Walking Tour of Marinette" by Chief Archivist Jane Freeman, and "A Phoenix Carpenter Creates A New Industry," by Jerry Svenson, publisher of *Sun Life* magazine.

For more information about SCAHS, call 974-2568.



IN 1960, Sun City consisted of six model homes on one street. The Sun Cities Historical Society seeks to preserve historical data about the community's beginnings.

Volunteer applauds co-workers

By Julia Jones
Staff writer

SUN CITY — Jane Freeman doesn't try to deny that she has done the work. She just wants to throw the spotlight on her co-workers.

"Here in Sun City, there are 12 times 12 times 12 volunteers that should be recognized," she says. "All of these people should be getting the coverage in newspapers and on the radio, and all the TV coverage. Recognizing volunteers and volunteerism is important to society because reaching out and touching others, like the telephone company ads say, that's what's important."

Freeman will be among those honored at the 12 Who Care — Hon Kachina Awards gala Saturday at the Registry Resort in Scottsdale. The awards program, presented annually since 1977, is sponsored by The Luke's Men, a volunteer organization of business and professional people affiliated with St. Luke's Medical and Behavioral Health Centers, and



Randy Reid / Staff photographer

Jane Freeman of Sun City is one of the volunteers who will be honored Saturday at the 12 Who Care — Hon Kachina Awards gala at the Registry Resort in Scottsdale.

KPNX-TV, Channel 12.

Freeman, a Pennsylvania native, retired as a dean of university students in a New York state school. After a life's work in education in the northeast, she says, she hardly expected to end up retired in Arizona, let alone Sun City.

"Like everyone else," she says,

"our first reaction was, 'Who wants to live with all those old people?'"

But the next year, she and her husband visited again. "We were a year older then, and it didn't seem nearly so bad. The idea of Arizona was completely foreign to us, being from the eastern part of the

See VOLUNTEER, Page 7

Fri., Oct. 26, 1990 The Arizona Republic/THE PHOENIX GAZETTE 7

From Page 1

VOLUNTEER

country, but we loved the wide open spaces."

They found a house on the outskirts of Sun City. That was in 1970; they joined a town of 18,000.

"We loved it at once," Freeman says. And she's in that same house today, although her husband, Leslie, died 14 years ago, and the population has grown to about 46,000.

Like all newcomers to the Sun Cities, the Freemans made the rounds of the various recreation centers. Then they took classes, learning to work with silver and then lapidary.

"But after a time, all that wears

thin," Freeman says. Her first volunteer involvement was probably serving on a committee at a recreation center, she says. Then, she found herself a member of the center's board of directors. And almost in the twinkling of an eye, she found herself serving as liaison with the Sun City Library, and that connection worked.

"We couldn't do without our volunteers," says Charles Youngman, the Sun City Library director.

Freeman, he says, is a vital member of the program committee, which lines up special presentations each month that draw

more than 100 in audience. "That gives us a visibility that we need," he says.

The library lists a staff of about 250 volunteers, Youngman says. "If we didn't have them, we wouldn't be able to keep our doors open."

Freeman lists as her active associations the Sun City Library, Sun City Historical Society, Sunshine Service Inc., Sun City Meals-on-Wheels, Sun Health Foundation, Sun Health Corp. and the Handi-Capables of Sun City.

"Yes, there are several," she says, laughing. "But I go for diversity; I don't play favorites."

Pioneers receive new life Club assured of future

By JACQUE PAPPAS
Daily News-Sun staff

SUN CITY — A meeting thought to be the last hurrah for the Sun City Pioneers on Saturday ended up being a new beginning for the community's original residents.

Earlier this month, the Pioneers considered disbanding the club because attendance at annual meetings had dropped drastically since the group was established in 1973.

Evelyn Parry and Margaret Diggs, who have borne the bulk of work for the club since it started, said more Pioneers need to show an interest in the club to keep it alive.

But with 120 Pioneers and their guests at the group's 17th annual luncheon, President Walter Witt said he did not want the club to call it quits.

"This was publicized as our last meeting. With the turnout here, I'm not sure," Witt said.

Witt said the club will operate on its own for at least one more year. And an offer made at the meeting by the Sun Cities Area Historical Society assured the future prosperity of the club down to the last living Pioneer.

Les Merydith, president of the historical society, offered a



Daily News-Sun photo by Stephen Cherne

SUN CITY'S FIRSTS — The Sun City Pioneers helped establish the first clubs, service groups and community programs in Sun City. The Pioneers, who moved to the community in 1960, attended the group's 17th annual luncheon Saturday.

number of services to the Pioneers.

"The Sun City Pioneers Club is too valuable a source of historical data to be allowed to disappear from the local scene," Merydith said.

The club was originally open to residents who moved to Sun City in 1960 and 1961. As membership decreased, the club opened to associate members who moved to Sun City from 1962 to 1965.

Merydith said the historical society's office — in Sun City's first model house on 107th Avenue and Oakmont Drive — is open to the Pioneers.

In addition, the society offered to maintain the club's roster and mailings, conduct taped interviews with members who

have stories of the early years and honor at least one Pioneer each month, Merydith said.

"We want to help the club continue as long as there is one Pioneer left to participate," Merydith said.

Many of the Pioneers at Saturday's meeting said they were happy with the historical society's offer.

Sarah Butts, who moved to Sun City in 1960, said she always looks forward to seeing her first friends at the annual luncheon.

"We all love to come to these meetings and reminisce, so their offer to help us out is wonderful," Butts said.

Butts, 89, once volunteered as a Sun City hostess, taking newcomers on bus tours of the

community in the 1960s.

"I still meet people who say they remember me giving tour on one of Del Webb's buses," she said.

Several of the pioneers at the meeting are in their late 90s. One is 100 years old. Many have stories to tell of Sun City's early years.

Bernice Wallace, 95, said she moved to a two-bedroom house in Sun City from a log house in Oklahoma.

She still lives in her original home on Desert Hills Court, drives and does her own yard work.

"The early years were so exciting," Wallace said. "I remember the parades we had along 107th (Avenue) from Peoria to Grand (avenues)."

Fri., Nov. 2, 1990 The Arizona Republic/THE PHOENIX GAZETTE

Farewell lunch gives new life for Pioneers

By Connie Cone Sexton
Staff writer

SUN CITY — Don't play taps yet for the Sun City Pioneer Club, its members say.

During what was to be the final annual meeting of the club Saturday, several members protested the club's proposed demise.

Dozens of the 125 people attending a "farewell" luncheon Saturday asked that the club carry on.

Pioneer Club members — many of whom are now in their 80s and 90s — settled into Sun City between 1960 and 1965, the early years of the retirement community. The club formed 17 years ago to share memories and rekindle friendships.

But the planning of club activities recently has become burdensome, say club leaders Margaret Diggs and Evelyn Parry.

During the past year, the Pioneer Club's board decided that Saturday's luncheon was to be the group's last organized meeting.

But sentiment washed over the crowd during the lunch. When club president Walter Witt asked how many people wanted to continue meeting, there was a flurry of hands.

Parry, Diggs and Witt have worried about who would be willing to take over; they said new leaders were needed to help the board. "It's hard sometimes to get people involved," Diggs said.

Her fears may be unfounded. Members of the Sun City Historical Society have volunteered to help.

Historical club member Les Merydith made the offer during the Pioneer Club's luncheon Saturday.

When historical society members heard that the day was to be the final meeting of the club, the news "had come as quite a shock," Merydith said.

Members of the historical group did not want to see the Pioneer Club disappear, he said. To keep the group going, Merydith said the historical society is willing to perform all secretarial duties, including keeping a roster of the Pioneer Club members up to date.

See PIONEERS, Page 3



David McIntyre / Staff photographer
Inez Chamberlin, 99, attends what was supposed to be the final luncheon of the Sun City Pioneers, which may not disband after all.

PIONEERS

Because Pioneer members have a rich history of the area, he said his group would like to make written and oral histories, interviewing the Pioneer members to make a record of the early years of Sun City.

"We should have a file drawer full and a stack of tapes" from the Pioneers, Merydith said.

He offered the use of the historical society's facility in Sun City for meetings and programs. Pioneers can bring items they would like to donate to the society,

which will act as a repository, Merydith said.

In providing such services, he said he hopes to keep the Pioneer group alive "right down to the last Pioneer."

In an interview after the luncheon, Witt said he appreciated the historical society's offer. "We'll work along with them and maybe give them more to work with as time goes on," he said.

Witt said the society is a "natural" group that could take over the purpose of the Pioneer

Club. "There has been a mutual interest in preserving the history of Sun City," he said.

"It takes a tremendous amount of work to keep the Pioneer Club going. If new blood wants to come along, we'll work with them," Witt said.

Pioneer Club member Fred Turner, 85, moved to Sun City 29 years ago. He said he enjoys being a part of history and hopes the spirit of the club will continue.

"It's just wonderful to get together with fellow Pioneers. I

really appreciate our time," he said.

Edna Wagner, 79, agreed. She was surprised to see so many people at the luncheon.

"It's amazing that so many of our people are still getting around as well as they do," she said.

Wagner, who moved to Sun City in 1961, also has enjoyed the Pioneer Club. "It's wonderful that the club has lasted this long. I love seeing everyone. We're like one big family."

• November 14-20, 1990 • 25 cents •

Local Historical Society rescues SC Pioneers Club

Club nearly disbanded due to low membership

The Sun City Pioneers Club has a new lease on life.

The club, whose members were among those who moved to Sun City during the early 1960s, announced last month that it was disbanding after 17 years due to dwindling membership.

Thanks to an offer by the Sun Cities Historical Society, the club will continue to meet on a regular basis. According to Les Merydith, president of the Historical Society, the club is welcome to hold its meetings at the home of the Historical Society.

"The Sun City Pioneers Club is too valuable a source of historical data to be allowed to disappear from the local scene," says Mr. Merydith.

"The Society has therefore offered the following services to the Pioneers Club to continue as long as there is one Pioneer left to participate."

The services offered are:

- The Pioneer Club will make available for club use the Society's facilities, including the meeting room, kitchen, filing and copying.
- The Society will perform secretarial service including maintaining the roster and mailings.
- The Society will conduct oral history or VCR-taped interviews with Pioneers who have items of historical significance to record.
- The Society will provide a permanent repository for any items of historical significance that members wish to leave to the Society.
- Members will receive invitations to all meetings and programs.

Historical Society holds annual meeting

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society will have its annual meeting 1:15 p.m. Nov. 16.

The program will be in Swain Hall, First Presbyterian Church, 12225 103rd Ave.

Speakers will be Chief Archivist Jane Freeman and Jerry Svendsen.

The Society is located at 10801 Oakmont Drive, and is open 1-3 p.m. daily (seven days a week).

Call 975-2568.

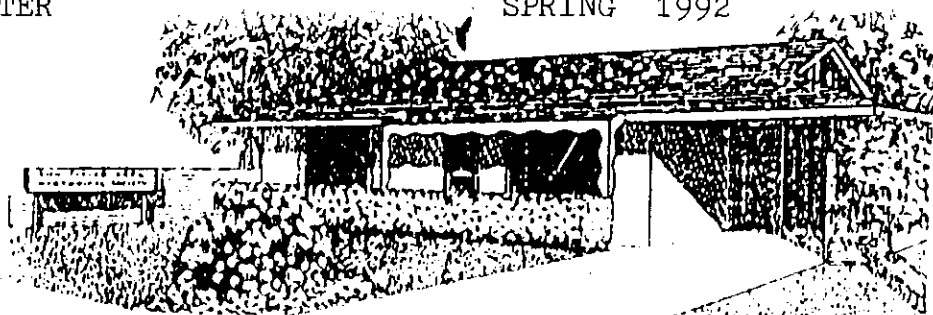
Historical open house

SUN CITY — Open house, Sun Cities Area Historical Society, 1-3 p.m., Nov. 16. A 30-year resident, Beulah Heuer, will be telling stories and anecdotes. The Historical Society is located at 10801 Oakmont Ave.

OVERVIEW from

OUR OLD HOUSE

Spring - 1992



Editors: Julia Manspeaker and Rose Larson

No. 1

On April 25, 1989 an Agreement was signed to purchase the VERY FIRST MODEL HOUSE built in Sun City, located at 10801 Oakmont Dr.

PRESIDENT EMIL FISCHER SAYS ...

The Sun Cities Area Historical Society was established to bring together those people interested in history and especially the history of the Sun Cities. Today's events soon become tomorrow's history. History, to be significant and meaningful, is not just a collection of events, but rather a careful compilation of these memorabilia. Devoted volunteers are recording and indexing data and preserving them for future Sun Citians. Without your interest and support we could not exist. Please drop in, encourage friends to do so, and view the displays in the first house to be completed in Sun City.

VOLUNTEER HOST/HOSTESS PROGRAM

No special skills are required except a little spare time and a like of people! The program is entirely volunteer. We greet visitors and show them through "our old house", explaining that we collect, catalogue and preserve all materials relevant to the Sun Cities. You will have an orientation on becoming a volunteer that will enable you to answer most questions.

The time commitment is up to you. We hope that you will be able to give two days or more each month. The hours are 1 - 3 p.m. Think of the wonderful service you will be offering the communities - we really need you!

Neil Bultman 977-0620
Rita Wright 972-9310

HAVE YOU SEEN the new addition to "our old house"? Del Webb's first sales office was donated to our Society by the Del Webb Corporation and has been incorporated into our building. The original office has been duplicated with original advertising, pictures and furniture of the 60's.

DID YOU KNOW?

hat our very own VIP's JANE FREEMAN and GLENN SANBERG have been awarded cruises with the HOLLAND AMERICAN LINES for their many volunteer accomplishments. Congratulations/Bon Voyage!

that the kitchen in our house was restored to its original 1960 plan last summer by Wally and Peggy Britton, owners of Denny's Decorating Service in Youngtown. Material and labor was generously donated by them.

that Trustee EVELYN PARRY is a Sun City Pioneer. Her late husband, Lester, was Sun City's first 'key man' and many of us remember him as the one who accompanied us on inspection of our new house before turning over the keys to us.

that although all of us are volunteers it nevertheless requires considerable resources to defray the operating and maintenance costs of our headquarters.

Our income depends on voluntary contributions and membership dues, so "talk up" your Society and help to increase membership in the Sun Cities Historical Society.

MEMORABILIA ...

"Our Old House" preserves every published Sun City phone book; magazines and newspapers published in Sun City; complete obituaries for most years and many books by Sun City authors. There are pictures galore of before, now and in between! Come and do any research at our old house!

FUTURE OUTLOOK

Archivist JANE FREEMAN is enthusiastic about her plan to have "featured displays" of SUN CITY SAINTS, PUPPET CLUB, POM POMS, etc. Watch the newspaper for announcements of these displays.

Sun City West is fast organizing their pioneers and is planning a display case in the Sun City West Community Service Building, 14475 R. H. Johnson Blvd. AL DRISCOLL, SANFORD GOLDSTEIN, MARTHA MOYER, ALTHEA CURFMAN & MAURICE STREET are steering this project. Six of the 17 Board members of Sun Cities Area Historical Society are from Sun City West. 31,000 residents are estimated to live in Sun City West by the year 2000.

PLEASE SHARE YOUR NEWSLETTER

WITH FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Look for another Newsletter from "our old house" in the fall.

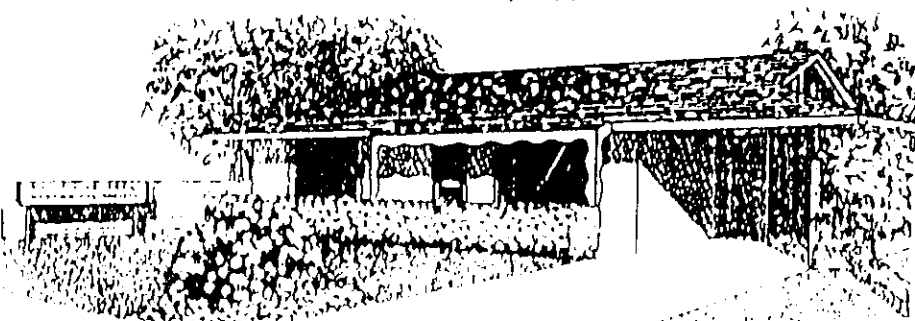
SUN CITIES AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OVERVIEW from

OUR OLD HOUSE



FALL - 1992



SUN CITIES AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Editors: Julia Manspeaker and Rose Larsen

No. 2

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: Neal Bultman, Althea Curfman, Al Driscoll, Emil Fischer (PRESIDENT), Sanford Goldstein, Dick Gray, Jim Hawks, Rose Larsen, Julia Manspeaker, Les Merydith, Martha Moyer, Evelyn Parry, Glen Sanberg, Maurice Street, Jay Woods, CURATOR Jane Freeman.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:

The summer hiatus is over & your SCAHS Committees are preparing exhibits and events for an interesting winter season. It is also the time to again remind ourselves that it obviously requires money to purchase supplies, maintain our property & pay utility bills. Your membership fees & contributions sustain us & we are most grateful for your support. But give "Our Old House" another boost - encourage at least one neighbor or friend to join. To all who are members & especially those who also volunteer - a big THANK YOU!

VOLUNTEER HOST/HOSTESS PROGRAM:

Rita Wright, Chairman, had a good turnout at a Coffee for Volunteer Host/Hostesses recently. However, she is still looking for "a few more good men" (and women). **NEW HOURS** are: 1:30-3:30 Monday thru Friday. Orientation will be given. The TV and VCR are operating now. Just a few hours a month will allow us to improve service to the community, & also increase your knowledge about "Our Old House" & SCAHS. If interested, please call Rita - 972-9310.



GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN:
THE SAINTS CAME
MARCHING IN...

On May 17th SCAHS hosted a celebration for the Sun City Saints' alumni. "Our Old House" was agog with a gathering of players, coaches, boosters & SCAHS members. Baseball fare - hot dogs, soft drinks & popcorn - were enjoyed by all. The Sun City Women's Soft Ball team was organized in 1965 & their logo was adopted in 1972. Saints memorabilia will be displayed in "Our Old House" thru November.

ANNUAL FALL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

A luncheon will be held at Palmbrook Country Club on Nov. 17th at 12 Noon. We look forward to the warmth of your presence! Burt & Ursula Freireich, first Editors of the Sun City News-Sun Newspaper, will speak.

They will relate experiences from their early press days. The newspaper started in Youngtown in 1957, with only a few mimeographed sheets.

MINI-WORK SHOP

On Sept. 30th a successful "give and take" session was attended by eight representatives from Sunnyslope, Glendale & Peoria Historical Societies. State Archivist Michael McColgin contributed his professional expertise with helpful suggestions. SCAHS Archivist, Jane Freeman, hosted the workshop in "Our Old House".

SUN CITY WEST EXHIBITS ...

A display case (see background) of the Sun Cities Area memorabilia will be installed in the Sun City West Foundation Community Bldg. at 14475 R. H. Johnson Blvd. The permanent display will be under the supervision of SCAHS P.R. Chairman, Alvin Driscoll.

VOLUNTEER AWARD

Rita Wright, "Our Old House" Hostess Chairman, has been awarded the Holland-American Lines "Sun City Volunteer of the Month" for September. Information & Referral Service submitted her name as a volunteer of six years. CONGRATULATIONS, RITA!

CALLING ALL MEMBERS!

As SCAHS image in the communities is growing & as we add more activities to our agenda, it is becoming apparent that an Auxiliary is required. Men & women who would be willing to help with filing, mounting displays, assisting with receptions, fund raising events, etc. are needed for this new group. You will find the work fascinating. **WE ARE CATALOGUING HISTORY!** If you feel you do not know what is going on in "Our Old House", we'll involve you. Call Secretary Rose Larsen (972-8028) or Althea Curfman (584-0816) for more information.