A SPECIAL ADVERTISING FEATURE CREATED BY REPUBLIC

LEGENDS IN ARIZONA

MEDIA CUSTOM PUBLISHING

HOMEBUILDING

Sun City opened on Jan. 1, 1960 to a crowd of over 100,000. PHOTO COURTESY OF DEL WEBB

Del E. Webb

One-time carpenter had a major impact on homebuilding across the country

BY PAULA HUBBS COHEN

There are a number of individuals who have had a significant impact on homebuilding in Arizona. One of the most famous is Delbert Eugene Webb, better known as Del E. Webb.

Dreams of baseball

Born in 1899 in Fresno, California, young Del became a carpenter, but his real dream was to play major league baseball. In fact, according to folklore, Webb had a personal motto: he'd only work for companies that had a baseball team he could play on.

Unfortunately for him, his dream was derailed when in 1927, he came down with typhoid fever.

"At that time, he moved to Phoenix where he hoped the climate would ensure his recovery," said Jacque Petroulakis, corporate communications with PulteGroup, which is now the parent company of Del Webb. "Later that year, he was working as a carpenter on the hotel Westward Ho in downtown Phoenix, and to make a long story short, he made some connections and ended up opening his own company known as 'Del E. Webb, Contractor'."

Big business

Aided by large defense contracts during World War II, Webb's company became one of Arizona's largest contractors, and Webb became friends with big-name celebrities and politicians including Howard Hughes, Bing Crosby, Bob Hope and Barry Goldwater.

Proving that a young boy's dreams never die, he circled back to his dream of professional baseball and in 1945, Webb and partner

Del E. Webb loved to play golf, as did comedian and humanitarian Bob Hope. In this picture from the 1960s, they are pictured discussing their golf game.
PHOTO COURTESY OF DEL WEBB SUN CITIES MUSEUM

became owners of the New York Yankees. A financially lucrative experience, the Yankees won the World Series 10 times, including five times in a row, during the 20 years that Webb was one of the owners.

The birth of Sun City

A few years later, Webb partnered with landowner James Boswell and his concept of retirement living developed into Sun City, a community that has served as an influential prototype for countless retirement and active-adult communities across the country.

Sun City opened on Jan. 1, 1960, and with just 10,000 or so visitors expected, over 100,000 people showed up on the grand opening weekend, thus launching Arizona as one of the most popular retirement destinations in the United States. Hotel and 'motor hotel' development would provide additional opportunities for Webb's success, as would casino-building in Las Vegas.

This is an aerial view of the Sun City Lakeview Recreation Center in 1970. It is located near 107th Avenue and Thunderbird Road. New home construction is to the north.
PHOTO COURTESY OF DEL WEBB SUN CITIES MUSEUM

Long-lasting legacy

Webb died in 1974, but his legacy of active-adult living lives on in the more than 300,000 homes built in more than 80 Del Webb communities across the country, 50 of which are actively selling new homes right now, Petroulakis said.

The company he founded is now part of the PulteGroup family, one of the nation's largest homebuilders, and the foundation he created in 1960 has supported numerous community-sustaining entities related to issues such as education and health-care. Opened in 1988, Banner Del E. Webb Medical Center in Sun City West is named in his honor.

More information about Del E. Webb and additional founders and visionaries related to Sun City can be found at *www.DelWebbSunCities-Museum.org*, the website of the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum.

Sources: Del Webb/PulteGroup and the Del Webb

FROM YOUTHFUL EAGER BALLPLAYER (ABOVE) AT [illegible], WEBB TURNED TO CARPENTERING, A TRADE HE COMBINED WITH BASEBALL UNTIL

THE WEBB OF MYSTERY

He is the [illegible] to the Yankee [illegible], but Del Webb [illegible] his ballplaying [illegible] to quit for good

[illegible] JOE DAVID BROWN

When a man is half owner of the fabulous Yankees, hobnobs with the top people in both Washington and Hollywood, controls one of the nation's [illegible] construction companies, heads [illegible] on the boards of 43 corporations, has a partnership or major interest in 21 companies, belongs to 24 clubs and has so much money that he almost never has to touch the dreary stuff, it puts one's teeth slightly on edge to call him unknown. Yet it's an abashing fact that an overwhelming number of people still have never heard of Del E. Webb or, if they have, find his name only vaguely familiar and disembodied.

Nobody is more indifferent to this phenomenon than Del Webb himself. A quiet, unassuming, impressively

Webb is not a convivial man. He used to drink, but he quit overnight 17 years ago when he came down with an unexplained fever. Up until then he had been known to take as many as 20 hookers of bourbon a day. He has never drunk tea, coffee or carbonated beverages. He abhors tobacco smoke and usually posts a neat "No Smoking" sign in any room he occupies for long. Visitors looking for Webb's office in his Phoenix or Los Angeles headquarters are sometimes told: "Go down the hall until you see a bunch of cigarette butts outside a door—that's his office." Webb's offices in both Phoenix and Los Angeles are furnished identically right down to the carpet on the floor and the rack of souvenir World Series bats in a corner. By Webb's orders, all building plans, equipment and supplies are kept in the same place in both headquarters, an idea Webb borrowed after seeing how standardization added to the efficiency of chain grocery stores he had constructed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Valuable assistance in the preparation of this article was given by Rube Samuelsen, sports columnist of the Pasadena *Independent Star-News* and Arnott Duncan of the *Arizona Republic.*

Personally, Webb is not as well organized as this might indicate. Like most busy men, he creates a mild chaos when left on his own. He frequently is the despair of his two secretaries because he mislays papers and loses tickets, cancels plane reservations without letting them know and sometimes forgets to advise them of his plans. He also forgets to carry keys to his own offices and on two occasions while working late at night has been locked in and had to break his way out. But when it comes to business, Webb is almost fearsomely well organized and attentive to detail. This is fortunate, because his interests are so varied and so far-flung, his corporate structures so numerous and interlocking, that even he probably could not sit down and rattle them off. When asked how much he is worth, Webb smiles and shrugs. "I don't know. There's no way of telling." The only [illegible] could tell would [illegible] at once. [illegible] Webb's associates estimate, roughly, that he might wind up with $30 million to $35 million.

To keep tabs on his empire, Webb requires every corporation and company in which he has a stake, every foreman of every construction project being handled by his company to file a daily report. These reports come from the Yankees and from a toy shop, from ranches and oil wells, from farms and drilling companies, hotels and motels, restaurants, investment companies, a brewery, a box factory, shopping centers, housing developments and even a playhouse. The reports give a breakdown of sales or attendance, report progress or accidents on construction projects. They even give the temperature and general weather conditions.

Webb sifts the reports carefully. "I may go broke someday," he said recently, "but if I do I'll know why. And that's not a joke. There have been many businesses which have gone broke, and it was weeks or months before anybody realized it. But aside from that, daily reports are a good thing in three other respects. In the first place, if people think the boss is taking an interest, they will, too. In the second place, it helps the employee on the scene get a clear idea of what's going on, too. And the third good reason for a daily report [illegible] furnishes a permanent reco[illegible] the accounting departm[illegible]thing to refer back to if nec[illegible]

IT'S ONLY MONEY

Money, as such, no longer interests Webb. For example, after deciding to join Larry MacPhail and Dan Topping in buying the Yankees back in 1945, he telephoned his financial manager from New York. "I've decided to join the deal for the Yankees. [illegible] can I get some money?"

"[illegible] don't you step around to th[illegible] National Bank?" the finan[cial] m[an]ager said. "They're holding a m[illi]on dollars' worth of bonds that belong to you."

A few years ago after finishing a round of golf with Bing Crosby and Hollywood Writer Jimmy Grant, Webb was playing gin rummy in the locker room. Grant had written a film script based on the life of Heavyweight Champion John L. Sullivan which Crosby had read and told Webb he liked. As they dressed, Grant

continued

and Crosby began discussing the script again and, suddenly, Crosby had an inspiration. He called out to Webb, "Hey, Delbert, let's make Jimmy's picture ourselves so it's done right."

Webb, absorbed in his gin game, appeared not to hear. "How about it, Delbert?" Crosby prodded. "Why don't you help finance it?"

Webb looked up casually. "All right. How much do you want?"

"Oh, about $100,000," Crosby said.

Webb called the locker room attendant, asked for a blank check, made it out for $100,000 and handed it to Crosby. Then he went back to his gin game.

The film, *The Great John L*, produced by Bing Crosby Productions, Inc., made a substantial profit.

COFFEE SHOP MAN

Webb is usually not, however, given to ostentation. There are a couple of Cadillacs in the fleet of cars he keeps in Phoenix and Los Angeles, but Webb prefers to drive a Ford which has a company emblem on the door. At one time his company kept two private planes, but as soon as commercial airlines had established scheduled flights throughout the Southwest, he sold them. He has no particular interest in food, being primarily a steak and potatoes man, except that he does like large and gloppy ice-cream desserts. "If the dessert is good, Del thinks any meal is fine," said an associate. Although he has a half interest in Navarre's, one of the finest restaurants in Phoenix and, perhaps, the Southwest, Webb does most of his eating in the coffee shops of his two sprawling motor hotels.

Webb has no desire for possessions in the ordinary sense. Someone once remarked that it took a fortune to keep the late Mahatma Gandhi in poverty. Similarly, it takes two fortunes to keep Webb unencumbered with possessions. He maintains suites in the Waldorf Towers in New York, in the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills and in the HiwayHouse, his luxurious 250-room motor hotel in Phoenix. Each suite is completely stocked with everything he needs: suits, haberdashery and toilet equipment. Webb seldom stays in any one place for more than a few days at a time. As he shuttles back and forth on steps on a plane with nothing except a brief case or, perhaps, his golf clubs. He is probably one of the best-dressed men in the country, but his faultlessly cut suits are so conservative and he wears them so casually that most people never give them a second glance. Webb hasn't the slightest idea how many suits he owns, but when pushed for an estimate he set the figure at between 150 and 200. Neither does he have any clear idea of the number of custom-made shirts he owns. He does know how many pairs of golf shoes he owns, though, because for some reason he recently counted them: 52.

Baseball fans who know Webb only as a rich contractor and an absentee co-owner of the Yankees are sometimes amused when he says, as he often does, "There are [illegible] things I enjoy something about and try [illegible] baseball and construc- [illegible] the statement is true to a considerable degree. For almost half his life—until he was 28, to be exact—baseball literally dominated everything he did. His obsession with the game was so great, in fact, that it came perilously close to making a bum of him.

Delbert Eugene Webb was born May 17, 1899 in Fresno, California, where his father, Ernest [illegible] Webb, was a contractor and [illegible] a sand-and-gravel business on the side. The elder Webb was an avid baseball fan and as a young man had won local fame as half of a reversible battery with Frank Chance, later the Peerless Leader of the Chicago Cubs. With this background it isn't surprising that Webb can't recall a time when he wasn't playing baseball. By the time he was 13, a bean pole of a kid weighing 130 pounds and standing 6 feet 3 inches, he was considered one of the best first basemen around

continued

YANKEE OWNERS WEBB (LEFT) AND DAN TOPPING STROLL IN STADIUM

Fresno, and if he was lucky, sometimes got as much as $2.50 a game by playing on a pick-up semipro team.

When he was 14 and in his first year at high school, his father's business went broke. Webb, the eldest of three boys, had to go to work as a carpenter's apprentice to help support the family. He continued with his ballplaying on the side, however, and at 15 was the captain, sparkplug and best all-round ballplayer on the Modesto (California) Merchants. When World War I came, Webb was a full-fledged carpenter and he went to work in the Oakland shipyards and played on the shipyard team. "I was lucky," Webb recalled recently with a grin. "I drew down $8 a day as a carpenter. The other players didn't have a trade and they got only $4." By now, Webb had attained his full 6 foot 4 inches, weighed 180 pounds and was known all up and down the West Coast as a pitcher with a mean fast ball.

After the war, he left the shipyards and became a drifting semipro ballplayer, working as a carpenter only for firms which had a ball team. This was the pattern of his life for years, except for a brief interlude in 1919, when he married Hazel Church, a childhood sweetheart. The marriage ended in 1953—34 years later—when Mrs. Webb established Nevada residence and divorced Webb on grounds which have never been disclosed. The Webbs have remained friends and usually have dinner together when he is in Phoenix. Said a friend: "Del probably sees Hazel more now than he did the last few years they were married."

With today's efficient scouting and extensive farm systems, a ballplayer of young Webb's ability almost certainly would end up by being signed somewhere. But 30-odd years ago he had to settle for the next best thing, and for Webb, at the time, that was good enough. He played in the Alameda winter league, the Standard Oil league, drifted in and out of outlaw leagues where he played under a phony name. For a time he was in a winter league where Ty Cobb and Harry Heilman were players and Rogers Hornsby and George Sisler managers.

During the years he drifted from Idaho to California and back again, Webb pitched every chance he got. As a result he soon had a chronically sore arm. At times it hurt so much that he couldn't clench his fist and for long periods at a time he even had to eat with his left hand. Webb thinks now that his arm's effectiveness was probably gone as early as 1921, but he persisted in playing ball until a fateful summer day in 1927. On that day he was scheduled to pitch in an exhibition game for the inmates of San Quentin Prison. Those were Webb's drinking days, and he awoke late and with such a hangover that he missed the boat carrying the rest of the team across to the prison. When Webb finally did make his way across the bay, a trusty, who was moping about and obviously sick, helped him find the dressing room. Webb asked for a drink of water and the prisoner brought him a pitcher and a glass. A few days later Webb was laid low with a particularly virulent case of typhoid fever. Twice he almost died and his weight dropped from 204 pounds to 99. He was in bed for 11 weeks and it was a year before he was able to work.

As near as any man can point to a single, well-defined turning-point in his life, Webb believes this was his. He was sick, broke, 28 years old, with nothing much to show for his life except a so-so record as a drifting ballplayer. "That did it," Webb said. "I guess a fellow couldn't like baseball any more than I did, but I knew I had to swear off the game forever." (16 years later, in a similar mood, he stopped drinking.)

OFF IN A MODEL A FORD

Webb's doctor advised him to move to a warm, dry climate if he could, so when he had recovered, he scraped together $100, packed his tool kit and wife in a model A Ford and headed for Phoenix. Webb's first job was hanging doors at the Westward Ho Hotel, then under construction. He had no way of knowing it then, but years later he was to build a million-dollar annex to the hotel.

Six months after he arrived in Phoenix, Webb was a carpenter foreman working on a new store for the A. J. Bayless grocery chain. He was also unhappy and had decided to move back to California. He drew his $70 paycheck one Friday and went home and helped his wife pack their model A. Then he went to the bank to cash his check. It was refused because of insufficient funds. This was the second biggest break of Webb's life. Chafing, he stayed in Phoenix until Monday and then took his worthless check to the store owner and asked if he would make it good. The owner agreed on condition that Webb would take over and supervise completion of the store. The original contractor had gone broke but a warrant was out for his arrest. Webb took on the job and that was the birth of the Del E. Webb Construction Co. in July 1928.

After the store was completed, Webb contracted to build another. Then he built a small clapboard office, hung up a sign, and his wife moved in as secretary while he scouted for more business. He built garages and filling stations, chain stores and theaters. It was a desperate struggle at first, but if a contractor had to be struggling Phoenix was probably a better spot than most. It had already started its slow climb from a parched desert town of 29,000 [illegible] thriving modern

MOMENT OF PANIC hit celebrities' box at Ebbets Field in 1955 series. Dodgers' Campanella pursued Don Larsen's pop

foul right to the box, but Webb (*in fedora, just beyond Campy's arm*) was hit on the head. Beside him, Henry Crown, New York financier, and Mrs. Casey Stengel take evasive action while Ford Frick (*hatless, in first row*) shrinks away from the ball.

metropolis of 330,000. There were other contractors in Phoenix, but Webb outstripped them all. When asked the secret of his success he invariably replies, "I applied the rules of baseball to business."

REWARDING OF BOLDNESS

This has the hollow thud of a ripe platitude—except when Webb says it. For once his analogy is accepted, evidence can be dredged up to support it. There is boldness, for example, in one early bid, Webb had to list [illegible] equipment for a job building an overpass on an Arizona highway. He wrote down: one cement mixer (one-bag size), 10 wheelbarrows, 20 shovels and 10 picks. He got the job anyway.

There is showmanship. A short while after Webb [illegible] business, Gypsy Smith, the [illegible] evangelist, accepted an invitation to come to Phoenix and conduct a revival meeting. There was not a building in town big enough to satisfy the seat demand. Webb came forward and asked to be allowed to build an auditorium which would be cheap and yet serviceable. He had [illegible] workmen throw up a hasty fra[illegible] 200 civic-minded c[illegible] hom had never bu[illegible] than a chicken [illegible] and completed the 6,000-ca[illegible] ilding in seven hours. The pub[illegible] Webb received was worth m[illegible] fee would have been [illegible] permanent structure.

There is calm in a crisis—Webb never tightens up in a clutch. Contracting is a risky business and when bidding is close and competitive it can be a sort of financial Russian roulette. In his struggling days, Webb almost bid himself out of business a couple of times. "It's mighty tough to keep your word when you see nothing but red ink staring you in the face," Webb said, "but I just wouldn't do anything else."

Webb was a past master of the art of getting a jump on what he considered the other team, *i.e.*, other contractors. When news was passed around that a new business was coming to Phoenix, most contractors were content to wait until a representative arrived. But Webb would grab a plane and go to the company's headquarters. As a result he has built an overwhelming majority of the chain stores in Phoenix. Sears, Roebuck and Montgomery Ward have massive stores right across the [illegible] from each other. Webb built [illegible] both at the same time.

A HAPPY TEAM

Besides honing a fine edge to his natural competitive spirit, baseball taught Webb the value of having a happy team. Even his rivals admit that he has surrounded himself with one of the most loyal, closely knit and talented groups of executives in the business. Webb picked most of his key men when they were young, brought them along rapidly, paid them well—and worked them hard. R. H. Johnson, 46, a vice-president and head [illegible] Los Angeles office, started wit[illegible] ompany as a timekeeper 25 yea[illegible] ago. L. C. Jacobson, 47, was a carpenter down to his last $10 when he applied for a job in 1938. Webb, who liked his looks, persuaded him to take a job as a timekeeper at $25 a week rather than a carpenter at $46, gave him a raise almost every week for a year, finally made him a vice-president, then general manager, and in 1943 gave him a quarter interest in the company and made him a partner. Webb's executives travel almost as much [illegible] does, make up their schedules [illegible] in advance, and twice a year [illegible] gether and [illegible] ossible hang[illegible] ut a plan [illegible] for the next [illegible] months.

By the early '30s Webb's company was doing about $700,000 worth of business a year. By the mid-'30s it had reached the $3 million class and was operating in 12 states. In 1936 Webb established a Los Angeles office and announced: "Arizona isn't large enough to furnish all the business our

continued

company is equipped to handle." This rather grandiloquent statement almost turned out to be premature, because in the very next year Webb almost lost his shirt building a Los Angeles high school. Webb's executives are still touched when they recall that when things looked blackest and the pressure was heaviest, Webb's chief concern seemed to be that he could not pay them a bonus that year. He made it up to them the only way he could: took them to dinner at an expensive restaurant.

A BOUNTY OF BLESSINGS

Fortunately, a steady flow of new contracts made up for the losses on the school, and it was the expanding company's last major crisis. In the limping '30s the most bountiful blessings flowed from Washington. Webb practically commuted there at times. He met Franklin D. Roosevelt early, and an immediate rapport was established when F.D.R. learned that Webb, like himself, had been bedridden for a long period and considered that it had changed his life. Webb was a good friend of Ed Pauley, California oil millionaire and Democratic power; and later one of his closest friends was the late Robert Hannegan, Democratic national committeeman. Through Hannegan, he became a friend of Harry Truman. Webb liked Ike early and still does. At a Dodger-Yankee World Series game the President attended in 1955, he inquired for Webb and was told that he was seated in the celebrities' box across the field. As the President's limousine made its traditional circuit of the field after the game, Ike had it pause in front of Webb's box, alighted and walked over and shook his hand warmly, congratulating him on the Yankee victory.

By 1940 Webb had powerful connections and an established reputation in Washington. But all the contracts he had ever received—or could even possibly have dreamed about—seemed piddling by comparison with the ones he received when World War II began. His first major war contract was to build Fort Huachuca, one of 50 maximum-size Army posts planned for the nation, on 149 acres of Arizona desert waste. The project had to be completed in 90 days at a cost of $8 million. Webb finished the job on time and then contracted to add additions as they became necessary. Eventually the total cost of the camp amounted to $22 million.

After Fort Huachuca, Webb received contracts to build air fields, Army camps, hospitals, Marine bases, radar schools and ordnance camps all over Arizona and California. All had to be built speedily and usually in isolated, sun-baked regions. The Japanese Relocation Center at Parker—spoken of locally as "the part of Arizona God forgot"—was a typical example of the kind of project which strained the company's ingenuity and endurance. Webb was instructed to

WEBB AND PARENTS are shown in their Los Angeles home. Webb Sr. died in 1954.

erect buildings within three weeks with 3,000 separate units to accommodate 10,000 Japanese internees who, in the early post-Pearl Harbor hysteria, were removed from their West Coast homes and sent into the desert. Both the wisdom and the morality of this project have since been seriously questioned, but at the time it was a job to be done, and Webb did it remarkably well. The half-mile-square site for the camp had been chosen purely for its isolation with no other consideration involved. When the company's huge construction caravan rolled up to the site at 3 o'clock one afternoon, the temperature was hovering around 120°. The area was devoid of shade and covered with a growth of sagebrush six feet tall. The construction boss telephoned Webb and reported the hellish conditions and told him he couldn't even estimate how long it would take his men

to clear the area of mesquite, if they could do it at all. Webb instructed him to sit tight. Fortunately, he had a fleet of Caterpillar tractors working on another project at Blythe, California. He phoned the foreman of the Blythe project and told him to send the tractors to Parker at once. They arrived at 6 o'clock in the morning and had plowed up the mesquite by mid-afternoon. Webb then threw 5,000 workmen into the Parker project on a double-shift schedule. The job was completed in less than three weeks. Webb then signed another contract to expand the camp to accommodate another 25,000 internees within 120 days.

Webb's company did $100 million worth of wor[illegible] the Government alone during [illegible] years and employed 25,00[illegible] wartime contracts gave [illegible] equipment and financial stabu[illegible] to bid for bigger and bigger contracts after the war and raised it to a Goliat[illegible] field.

Nothing irritates [illegible] into so much as whispers that [illegible] obtained his Government contracts through some undercover political chicanery. Since he always talks as if he had just been injected with truth serum, he admits that his sole purpose in going to Washington was to try to obtain business for his company. He made many close personal friends in Washington, but he also is proud of the fact that he is a salesman for his business. "We can build as well or better than anybody else, so why shouldn't we get the business?" he asks.

Since Webb's success has astonished and disgruntled many of his oldtime competitors, one is most apt to hear the whispers in Phoenix. A typical—but nonvicious—example occurred during the 1949 sports award dinner held there. The humor at these affairs, as is well known, is usually raw or goatish anyway. For instance, Giants Owner Horace Stoneham was introduced as a man who had inherited the Giants and a cellarful of whisky from his father and had been in the cellar ever since. Then Phoenix Merchant Robert Goldwater, brother of U.S. Senator Barry Goldwater, introduced Webb as "an ignorant sonuvabitch who built a million dollars with a hammer and a nail and a case of whisky thoughtfully distributed in Washington." Webb sportingly laughed along with the gag, but he wasn't amused.

continued

DEL WEBB *continued*

Although as far as the startled sports world was concerned he came shooting out of the blue, Webb did not buy into the Yankees on impulse. He first began to consider the idea of buying a ball club as far back as 1942 when he heard the Oakland Oaks were for sale. In the nearly 15 years which had elapsed since he swore off baseball, he had not attended more than three or four games. In fact, he was so uninterested that when Judge Kenesaw Landis, who vacationed near Phoenix, invited him to two World Series games, he saw one but ducked out of the other. He thought of adding a baseball club to his interests only as a business proposition, a hedge against inflation and, possibly, taxes. Webb told his lawyer to get a price on the Oakland club and let him kn[illegible] Some time later when the la[illegible] called to tell him he could ge[illegible] club for $60,000, Webb was frantically pushing work on Fort Huachuca and too busy to think of anything else. He told his lawyer to forget the matter. Quite a while later, as he tells it, when visiting one of the bases he had built, Webb ran into Larry MacPhail, who was then on Under Secretary of War Robert Patterson's staff. Webb and MacPhail had met many times previously in Washington, and Webb mentioned how he had been interested in the Oakland team. MacPhail said something to the effect that if Webb was interested in acquiring a ball club he ought to buy a big one, like, for instance, the Yankees —which he had heard the Ruppert estate would have to sell because of tax problems. MacPhail said he was thinking of getting a group together to make an offer and asked Webb if he was interested. "Count me in," Webb said.

AN OFFER FROM TOPPING

Dan Topping, whom Webb had also met [illegible] was one of the people [illegible] in the group he [illegible] Webb was building [illegible] El T[illegible] Marine base when he [illegible]ntered Topping, then a Marine captain. They discussed the Yankee deal, particularly reports that Ed Barrow ha[illegible] refused to discuss a sale with MacP[illegible] Topping said that if he had a [illegible] he thought he could swing the [illegible] "If you can," Webb said, "co[illegible] in."

Shortly [illegible] this Webb told Judge

Landis he was thinking of buying the Yankees and asked him what he thought. Said Landis: "If you want to worry when you're making a putt; if you want to worry when having your dinner; if you want to worry when you're going to bed, then go ahead and buy the Yankees."

There are as many versions of how the deal was finally set up as there are participants, but the next word Webb had came one Sunday morning while he was playing golf at the Phoenix Country Club. He was on the 7th green when he was summoned to the clubhouse to take an urgent long distance call from Topping. Topping said that Barrow wanted to meet Webb and asked if he could come to New York immediately. He said he was pretty sure that Barrow would sell the club to him. Webb and MacPhail if he did. Webb left for New York as soon as he could change clothes. The next day Topping took Webb around to meet Barrow. Barrow shook Webb's hand and looked him up and down. "That's a good handshake you've got there—and I hear you're a good man. You'll do." Some details had to be worked out,

A HAT FOR CASEY is fitted by Webb on the white thatch of his favorite manager.

but the bargain was struck then and there.

When Webb first bought into the Yankees he was adamant about its being a purely business proposition. Sometimes he still says the same thing —but now and then the skinny old sentimental ballplayer pops up out of somewhere and makes him a little schizophrenic. In his sentimental mood he likes to talk about how young fellows nowadays, even major leaguers, do things that wouldn't be tolerated one minute on the Ambrose Tailors or Modesto Merchants, like hooking a base on the outside instead of the inside, or pitchers not taking a position on the mound so they can readily pick off a player on first. And always, always, when he talks about baseball one phrase keeps popping up, "The kids all over the country," as if baseball is something held in trust for kids—which, of course, it is.

But then the level-headed millionaire takes over and baseball becomes something of a peanut business—which, of course, it is, too. A gloriously fascinating business, maybe, but still a peanut business, when compared with other things. A good hotel, for instance, costs three or four times more than the best ball club. A good tourist court costs almost as much as the Yankees. And motion pictures! A really big motion picture, says Webb, nowadays costs more than any ball club.

Webb gets annoyed because some people can't seem to understand that he doesn't have anything to do

cont.

the day-to-day running of the Yankees. "Topping runs the New York club," he says. "He's the boss. My father always used to tell me not to have a partner if you can help it. But nobody could have a better partner than Topping. He's a strictly straight man. I have a 50% interest in the Yankees, but—and I don't particularly care to see this printed everywhere—I think I went to about 12 games last year. Topping is the boss of the ball club."

Something else that nettles Webb is the suggestion that he somehow is a behind-the-scenes power in baseball, a shadowy string-puller and manipulator. Since he seldom raises his voice, he expects people to listen when he does, but when he has a fight to wage or a score to settle he comes out into the open. He cheerfully admits that he is chiefly responsible for the decision to get rid of Happy Chandler as commissioner. "If I've never done anything else for baseball," he says, "I did it when I got rid of Chandler. There's something most people don't know: I was the only baseball owner who knew Chandler. I mean I really knew him. I had known him a long time. Those other owners, Stoneham, Griffith, Briggs—they didn't know Chandler. I used to talk to him about what he was doing. I was sitting with him one day when he called a couple of players up into the stands and held court right there. I said to him, 'Chandler, what in the hell is wrong with you, holding court in the middle of a ball park? You can't make a decision out here. You made a fool out of yourself.'

"Do you remember the time that fan came up behind Durocher and hit him, and Durocher turned around and knocked him down? Well, I got a call from Chandler. 'Del, come over here,' he said. Well, I went over and he was all excited and running around and shuffling papers and he said, 'Del, I've got to throw Durocher out of baseball forever.' I said, 'What are you talking about, Chandler? Do you have the facts? Have you [illegible] the [illegible]?' That's the way he was, [illegible] making a fool of himself. [illegible] me about 48 hours to get enough votes to throw him out. It was the best thing that ever happened to baseball."

Webb is not a man who raises his voice often. The only other occasion on which it has happened in baseball followed the Battle of the Biltmore, the historic occasion which preceded Larry MacPhail's exit from baseball. Webb was not present when MacPhail came in, allegedly under the baleful influence of drink, and socked a Branch Rickey defender in the eye, sacked sober George Weiss and almost [illegible] himself into a brawl with Dan Topping.

"I was upstairs in another part of the hotel," Webb says. "Dan came in and told me what happened and we went looking for MacPhail, but he had already gone out the back entrance. We went up to Weiss's room and he was all upset about what MacPhail had said. Well, after we had straightened him out, Dan and I called our lawyers and told them to draw up the papers to buy MacPhail out. We sent him word that we would give him $2 million and he'd damned well better take it. We gave him until 6 o'clock that night.

"I was in a [illegible] that afternoon when somebody came in and told me MacPhail was outside and [illegible] I said I didn't want [illegible] to tell him that he had [illegible] damned papers by 6 [illegible] later they [illegible] MacPhail [illegible] me anyway. [illegible] MacPhail was [illegible] smiling and he [illegible] said, 'Del, [illegible] good partner to me.' I [illegible] shake your [illegible] what I thought of him and walked away."

A few [illegible] words about Del Webb were spoken recently by a [illegible] "Del Webb don't interfere [illegible]. He's not the [illegible] harasses the [illegible] glad and [illegible] the [illegible] into the [illegible] around [illegible] I think [illegible] well [illegible] thinks [illegible] job; he [illegible] good job; [illegible] Stengel does a good [illegible] Casey Stengel displayed [illegible] had been given by Webb on July 30, 1959, when the Yankees were at their lowest ebb and people were calling for Stengel's scalp. It was inscribed: "Everything considered, the greatest manager who ever put on a uniform." END

VF SC DEL WEBB SAHARA HOTEL LAS VEGASBBUILT BYWEBB FIRST HI_RISE ON LAS VEGAS STRIP,ALSO SERVED AS HIS L.V. EADQUARTERS FOR 25 YEARS PER EDSON ALLEN ARRIZONA REPUBLIC MARCH 12,3011

FOLDING THE CARDS

Demise of Sahara deals new blow to Las Vegas Strip

By Oskar Garcia
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — The Sahara Hotel & Casino, among a few Las Vegas Strip resorts left from the Rat Pack era, is closing nearly six decades after dealing its first hand.

Several other casinos from the earliest days of gambling in Sin City were remade into megaresorts, but the Sahara's owners don't have a plan for the property.

"The continued operation of the aging Sahara was no longer economically viable," CEO Sam Nazarian of owner SBE Entertainment Group said.

The property will close May 16, officials said.

The Sahara, which opened in 1952, was featured in 1960's "Ocean's Eleven" as one of five casinos robbed by a group of veterans. Today, it touts around-the-clock $1 blackjack and a 6-pound burrito-eating challenge at its NASCAR Cafe. Nazarian said his company was considering options including a complete renovation and repositioning.

Nazarian said MGM Resorts International was helping find jobs for affected workers and accommodations for guests who reserved rooms after May 16. SBE officials declined to say how many people work at the Sahara.

MGM Resorts CEO Jim Murren said the closure was part of the Sin City life cycle.

"While the closing of any hotel is sad, it is a natural and expected part of our great city's history," Murren said. "While today we pause to reflect on many great

See SAHARA, Page D2

The Sahara Hotel & Casino exudes Rat Pack glamour, beginning with its porte cochere. The legendary Vegas property is expected to close in May.
ETHAN MILLER/ GETTY IMAGES

Sahara

Continued from D1

memories and stories of its legendary past, like so many before it, there is a brighter future for this property."

The two companies have an established marketing relationship.

Murren pointed to the Desert Inn making way for Wynn Las Vegas, the Dunes becoming the Bellagio, Aladdin renovating into Planet Hollywood and the original Las Vegas Sands giving way to the Venetian. And, when Murren's company built the $8.7 billion CityCenter, it used the land that had held the Coney Island-themed Boardwalk.

Phil Ruffin, the owner of Treasure Island in Las Vegas, said redevelopment of the Sahara would be good for the Strip, but he predicted SBE would have a hard time getting financing.

"I hope we live that long — I don't see it for a long time," he said. "I'd like to see it happen but I don't think it's anything imminent."

Ruffin said the Sahara's neighborhood looks "very bad."

The unfinished multibillion-dollar Fontainebleau development that filed for Bankruptcy Court protection is nearby. Billionaire Carl Icahn, who ultimately bought the property, sold its furniture to a casino on the California-Nevada border and hasn't said when construction might resume.

There's no guarantee something glamorous will emerge. The former site of the Landmark hotel now holds a parking lot for the Las Vegas Convention Center. After the Stardust was razed in 2007 so Boyd Gaming Corp. could build its $4.8 billion Echelon complex, the project stalled. And a $5 billion complex that was supposed to replace the New Frontier never materialized.

The Sahara first gave a hint that change was afoot the same day CityCenter's anchor casino, Aria, opened with 4,000 rooms in 2009. That's when the Sahara announced it was mothballing rooms in two of its towers for the winter season.

But Nazarian called the northern end of the Strip, which includes the Sahara, the "future of Las Vegas."

"With Las Vegas showing early signs of recovery, we are confident that we ultimately will find a creative and comprehensive new solution for this historic property," Nazarian said.

1975

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Construction magnate Del E. Webb willed a tax paid $1.5 million to his second wife and $75,000 a year for life to his first wife, court records show. The will was filed Thursday and scheduled for probate in Superior Court Aug. 2.

Webb, 74, died July 4. He had widespread construction holdings including several retirement communities and was a former co-owner of the New York Yankees baseball team.

The bulk of his estate, which has not yet been evaluated, goes to the Del E. Webb Foundation, based in Phoenix, Ariz.

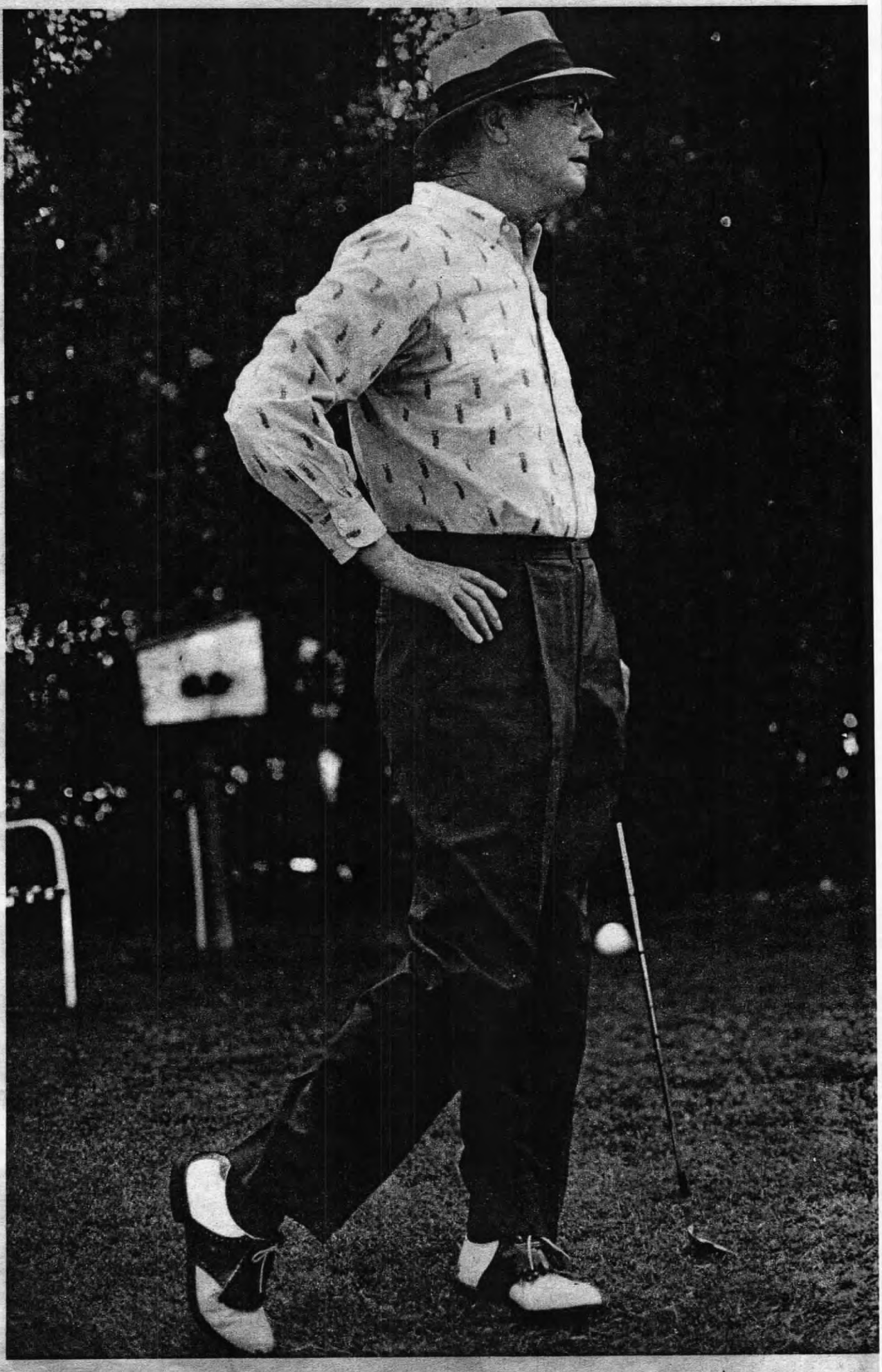
The will also provides his second wife, Toni Ince Webb, $10,000 monthly until the estate is settled. His divorced first wife, Hazel L. Webb, lives in Webb-built Sun City, Ariz.

Webb's brother, Halmar, of North Hollywood, and five Arizona and Nevada business associates were bequeathed $100,000 each. Two nieces, Margot Weber and Candice Ballou of Los Angeles, are to receive $25,000 each, and the executor of the estate, Robert H. Johnson of Pasadena, gets $150,000.

DEL WEBB, THE SHFUL RNUM

ELO SEDERBERG
and
HN F. LAWRENCE

He isn't as rich as J. Paul Getty, nor as mysterious as Howard Hughes. On



VF SC DEL WEBB L.A. TIMES SEPTEMBER 14, 1969

other hand, Del Webb got to Vegas before anybody except Bugsy Siegel.

It's about 11 a.m., Sunday, 4th of July weekend. Del E. Webb, to whom Sundays are like any other day and for whom holidays hardly exist, sits stoically for an hour behind his desk in his souvenir-laden office at his Beverly Hills mansion. He's regaling his interviewers with tales of a still-active 70-year life.

Using laconic phraseology laced with mild profanity and country-boy grammar, he's spoken of baseball and the once-proud New York Yankees he owned, of Harry Truman and Barry Goldwater and FDR, of Las Vegas and The Mob. Inevitably, with gentle prodding from the reporters, the conversation gets around to Howard Hughes.

Webb hesitates. But then he says, "Well, I've known Howard for 35 years and I consider him one of my closest friends. We've done a lot of his building. He has his peculiarities, but he's one of the shrewdest fellows I ever knew. You talk to him about a deal and he's got all the answers."

Then Webb's eyes light up —the first flash of emotion he's shown all morning—and he says, "Come to think of it, I'm supposed to call Howard."

He picks up the phone and dials a number that connects him with Hughes' quarters on top of the Desert Inn Hotel in Las Vegas. Webb waits, his eyes twinkling, while the reporters' pencils hover above their pads. Webb says, "Hello, John? Where is he? Oh, that's what I thought. Listen, tell the boss I've had a change of plans. I'll be in Phoenix at 2 p.m. today and I'll be there two, three days."

He hangs up. The reporters ask where Hughes is.

"Sleepin'," Webb says. "Been workin' all night."

The demonstration reveals nothing about Hughes, whose nocturnal habits are legendary, but it may reveal something about Del Webb. It may, in fact, partially explain the success of the Fresno-born baseball bum who dropped out of high school but grew up to own the Yankees, of the $6-a-day carpenter who became a multimillionaire master builder. It is this. If Hughes is the Bashful Billionaire, perhaps Webb is the Bashful Barnum, the Silent Showman.

Webb would deny it. He attributes his success to the old Puritan virtues of "a creative, active mind and a lot of hard work."

And certainly his outward appearance, behind the "No Smoking" sign on his desk, gives no clue of showmanship. He looks like a gentleman farmer and talks like a blend of field hand and potbellied stove philosopher. He's taciturn, soft-spoken, slow-turned. One can imagine him on the mound in his baseball days, spitting, staring in, shaking off the sign, pumping and delivering a sizzling fastball that takes the batter by surprise.

But other factors about him are showmanlike. His company is conspicuously the Del E. Webb Corp., engaged in the construction, resort hotel and retirement center businesses, headquartered in Phoenix and listed on the New York and Pacific Coast stock exchanges. All his hotels, like Wilbur Clark's or Conrad Hilton's, are Del Webb's. Match books proclaim "Del Webb's Towne House" or "Del Webb's Mountain Shadows" or "Del Webb's Sahara."

Webb shies away from estimating how much he's worth. But he won't dispute $100 million. That includes some $60 million worth of stock in his construction-hotel company. Webb also owns a multimillion-dollar stock and bond portfolio.

In addition, he owns Webb Resources Co., engaged in oil exploration, and a company named Master Products, "a box factory in Los Angeles worth maybe $2 or $3 million." And Webb says he has money invested in "electronic things" as well as motion pictures. "I'm probably in a half-dozen pictures now," he says. "Bing Crosby and I have a production company. We financed *The Great John L.* in 1949 and money's still coming in.

Most of the Webb showmanship is under the surface. But some of it, when brought out, may be downright braggadocio. For example, he says, "I've known every president since FDR."

Also, when in the mood, Webb turns from hesitant-tongued to long-windedness, reminiscently spinning a lengthy tale or two with or without an eventual point.

For example: "Harry Truman gave me hell once for voting for Ike, but I figured around Ike's first term we had a lot of military problems so a military man was best. I'm a lifelong Democrat —you can say a slightly conservative Democrat—but I can't vote for a bad Democrat over a good Republican.

Del Webb isn't as much in the public spotlight today as he was in his Yankee ownership days (1945-65). But there's nothing senile about him. Not long ago, he was leading Ben Hogan by three strokes after 18 holes in a pro-am event.

A trim six-foot-four, 200 pounds, he's still a seven handicap. "He'll hit the ball a long, long ways," says Johnson, "but it slices more now than it once did."

In Las Vegas, the Webb company owns the Sahara, Thunderbird and Mint hotel-casinos. Its fourth gambling hotel is the Sahara-Tahoe, Del E. Webb Corp. puts up about $100 million worth of construction a year, ranging from airports to office buildings to baseball parks. And it operates three retirement centers.

There is nothing conglomerate or go-go about the house that Webb built. Webb, in fact, is slightly worried about go-go speculation in stocks in general, both by individuals and institutions.

"In 1924, a bunch of us baseball players went to Bank of Italy (now Bank of America) and bought some stock with our baseball money," Webb recalls. "I bought $50 worth. That was something—ballplayers owning stock. In those days, only the Goulds and the Mellons and the Rockefellers owned stock. Now everybody buys stock. And the big majority of buyers don't pay too much attention to what they buy. Understand, I'm not predicting a big drop in the stock market. But I'm a little worried."

With Las Vegas hotel-casinos and retirement centers, Webb figures he has captured both ends of the population. "I think tourism and entertainment are the right kinds of businesses today," he says. "By the end of 1970, a truck driver will be earning $12,000 a year, plus fringe benefits, such as dentistry and a month's vacation.

"When I worked in a trade, the only vacation I got was when I was out of work, and I spent that looking for a job. Now a young truck driver knows he's going to be taken care of, so he's going to spend his money."

And what of the older folks? "They have more money than in the past, too. Fact is, over 75% of the buyers in our retirement centers pay cash."

In the full spotlight or not, the Silent Showman influences a lot of things.

Consider Las Vegas. Webb actually pre-dated Hughes' descent on the city; Hughes, who owns six hotel-casinos, wanted to come in by purchasing Webb's Sahara. And, although Hughes gets much of the credit for the cleaner, family town image that's developing (very slowly) in Vegas, Webb has a history in the town that dates back to the hoodlum days of the 1940s.

"I consulted with Hoover (J. Edgar) for a long time before we went into Vegas, because we were worried about the gangster element," he says. "Hoover encouraged us to go in."

Hughes, a Johnny-come lately as a hotel-casino owner in Vegas, no doubt recognized Webb's pioneering contribution. "We talk on the telephone a lot," Webb says, although he adds that he hasn't seen Hughes for about four years. He and Hughes, Webb says, have talked "in a general way" about a good many plans for the city. One possibility: A joint effort to build a rapid transit system —perhaps a high-speed train —from Los Angeles to Vegas.

Webb got into Vegas by accident. A bank had advanced money for the con-

WEBB

He took over contracting and soon he built so many markets, 'They thought I was a grocery man.

struction of the Flamingo Hotel, one of the first real palaces in Vegas. When the contractor ran into problems, Webb stepped in as a favor to friends at the bank.

Pretty soon he discovered the partly built Flamingo had been sold to a party named "Bugsy" Siegel. "The name didn't mean anything to me at the time," Webb says. "But I sure found out in a hurry."

Bugsy wasn't exactly vanilla ice cream and Webb wanted out. But Webb's lawyers said Bugsy had a binding contract. Bugsy said so, too, and he had a bulge under his breast pocket. Webb built.

Webb had no problem with Bugsy—in fact he paid up faster than just about anybody Webb had built for. Of course, one day Bugsy did shake up Webb a little by bragging that he'd personally killed 12 persons, adding of another mob figure in Vegas: "I'm going to kill that s.o.b., too." It didn't sound like an idle threat to Webb. Bugsy noted his shocked expression and quickly added, "Del, don't worry, we (mobsters) only kill each other."

Siegel was shot to death in Beverly Hills a few weeks after the Flamingo opened. Webb recalls the little mobster almost with fondness today. "Siegel would do what he said," he says. "Bankers, lawyers and industrialists—I never knew anyone who's word was better."

The Webb company also built the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas and eventually Webb was offered an opportunity to buy it.

"We took five years making up our minds. We consulted our Wall Street investment bankers (Lehman Bros.). We were afraid we'd have a hell of a time with the mobster element, but we figured we could run hotels and casinos on a business-like basis and not have a goddamn thing to do with the gangsters."

Del Webb may not have suffered at the hands of The Mob. But his company did get into serious difficulty once. It ran a $13 million deficit in 1965 despite revenues of $130 million.

The problem led to one of the most unhappy moments in Webb's career—a parting of the ways between himself and a man he considered like a son. (Webb has been married twice but is childless.) His name is L. C. Jacobson, a hearty fellow whose hobby was rodeo roping and who started out, like Webb, as a carpenter. He'd been with Webb since 1938 and Webb named him president of the company in 1962.

Jacobson had an interest in the Sahara in Vegas when Webb merged it into his company. And, as president, Jacobson had a major program for acquiring motels and raw land for development. That was just before the real estate market fell apart.

Jacobson left the company in early 1966 and says he was happy to go. "I'd been telling Del for five years I wanted to get out. I didn't have the same dedication he had. To me, the company was a means to an end. To Del, it's his whole life. If he has one flaw it's that he really has no other interests." Webb drives his staff hard but no one harder than himself, says Jacobson. "You've got to be a hell of a man to keep up with him. As for myself, there are some other things I wanted to enjoy doing." He now owns the Newporter Inn and Hotel in Newport Beach.

Webb reappointed himself president and went to work. Why get so active again? "I had to make one of three decisions," he says. "I could have let the company go on the way it was, I could have divorced myself from it—after all, I've personally got enough money—or I could have stepped in to help." He felt it was still his company,

Delbert Eugene Webb was born in Fresno, son of a building contractor and amateur baseball player. Baseball was much more attractive to him than carpentry (particularly since the latter paid 50 cents an hour) and young Del developed a good fastball and a yen to travel. He played semipro ball and worked part-time on construction jobs. The times were wild and Webb averaged 20 bourbons a day.

A crash at home plate wrecked his arm but he went on pitching. He pitched a game at San Quentin Prison and contracted typhoid fever. That meant a year in bed and he shrunk to 99 pounds. He swore off whiskey, a promise he's kept, and baseball.

When he got well, he headed for Phoenix with the promise of a carpentry job from a newspaper editor. But the editor really wanted Webb to play ball on an industrial team he sponsored.

Fortunately, his playing days ended with a clutch two-out pinch hit homerun to win a game. It got him fired from the team. The opponents discovered he wasn't eligible to play. Webb went back to hanging doors, as he wanted to.

When an employer skipped town, he took over contracting himself. Pretty soon he was building so many markets in Phoenix "they thought I was a grocery man." Then he remodeled a store for Sears—in fact, he remodeled it twice. Webb says: "A guy came in and says, "Hey, you know that Sears store is on fire?'

"'Hell, no,' I said, 'it's not on fire.' But I went over and sure enough the goddamn thing was on fire. It burnt four days. That was during the depression. We built that store over again. It kep' us out of the red."

Later, wartime construction contracts came Webb's way. He made a name for himself in Washington by moving 35,000 Japanese-Americans to a new camp in Arizona from California in 120 days. Webb emerged from the war as one of the largest contractors in the Southwest.

In 1945, with Dan Topping and Larry MacPhail, whom Webb had met in Washington while on government wartime construction work, Webb bought the Yankees for $2,850,000.

It was the best deal Webb ever made and he'll not only admit it, he'll brag about it. "Sure, I got a lot of publicity in that, got to know a lot of people," he says.

Webb is a pragmatist whose love of baseball didn't deter his assessment 20 years later that the Yankees had had it and it was high time to get out. He sold to CBS for $14 million.

"I saw bad things coming for baseball," he says. Ballplayers were getting orga-

continued

WEBB

I attended two inaugurals
and I'll never do that again.

nized against the owners and the baseball owners' meetings were being transformed from intimate little gatherings he could dominate, to gigantic affairs with lawyers all over the place. "The last meeting I went to there were 67 guys there."

Webb liked to have control. Some say he drove Bill Veeck, former Indians, St. Louis Browns and White Sox owner, out of baseball. "Yeah, I guess I did," he says. "I didn't think Veeck was good for baseball. He always kept everybody in a turmoil. I'd hire him but I wouldn't let him have anything to do with the purse strings."

For the $2.85 million purchase (the price was low partly because of the threat that baseball would suspend operations for the duration of the war), Webb and his partners got more than the Yankees. They got stadiums in New York, Newark and Kansas City. And they promptly sold a patch of land that came with the Newark stadium for $2 million, almost what they'd paid for the whole mess. (Webb hints that bit of land was a big reason he got interested in the Yankees.)

Now Webb is spoiled by the success of that deal. "I don't think I'll ever be back in sports. I offered $6 million for the White Sox two years ago, but they wanted $12 million. George Allen came around one day and said the Rams could be bought—for $20 million—$20 million, and you don't even get a stadium."

Webb surrounds himself with baseball souvenirs (all his offices have bats from Yankee World Series), but he seems pretty sour on the sport.

"The four divisions in the majors aren't going to work out," he says. He thinks the quality of play is slipping because so many new players have been added. "Al Kaline told me the other day that with these four leagues, 'I can play until I'm 50,'" Webb says.

Unlike his friend Hughes, Webb is a sharp dresser. He has perhaps 150 suits, many of them blue, 100 pairs of shoes and more hats than all his executives could ever wear out.

Webb has contributed to many political campaigns, but he's hardly a political kingmaker. Often, he's contributed to both sides. For example, when Barry Goldwater ran against Lyndon Johnson in 1964, Webb was on the fence. He was a longtime friend of Goldwater, both being from Phoenix, but he preferred Johnson, whom Webb also knew.

"Seemed to me that Johnson seemed to have pretty good control of that Senate," Webb says. "Now Goldwater, he jumped around too much. He went to California to school, then went up to Illinois, then worked in the store two, three years, then he decided he'd fly, then he lived with the Indians, then the store again, then he decided he'd be a politician."

Webb had given Goldwater plenty of monetary support earlier, but he voted for Johnson. "Barry Goldwater is a hell of a good senator, but he's no President," Webb says. Then, as if to keep the subject on politics, he continues: "I attended two inaugurals of Presidents, Roosevelt and Ike, and I'll never do that again." Why? Webb: "Mess, crowd around, nobody's knowing what they're doing."

One recent week Webb went from headquarters in Phoenix, where he owns a home, to his Beverly Hills residence to stay overnight, then flew off to Hawaii for a funeral, back to Los Angeles, and then to Washington to confer with George Romney, on to New York, and back to Phoenix. He had a private plane once but gave it up as too expensive and now sticks to commercial flights.

He takes a visitor around the beautifully landscaped Beverly Hills mansion, glances at the view of the city as though he hadn't noticed it before, and remarks wistfully, "I don't see much of this place. If I'm here more than one night I get restless."

And if he's not there, he sometimes gets burglarized. Once somebody got away with a bevy of autographed baseballs (the thief ignored the valuable silver cups). Another time, in broad daylight, someone drove off Webb's white Continental. "Found it curbside and waterlogged," Webb recalls.

Mr. Webb's business philosophy as written in July 1973 for an ASU professor's book.

While many people believe it's a combination of instinct and luck, success as most people define it can be explained. At least it can for me, and for most of the successful people I've been fortunate enough to know.

Hard work and a creative mind are the two main ingredients, and I would rate them about equal.

When I worked long days and delivered payrolls at night and on weekends, the creative needs of my construction business may have not been too apparent.

But since the 1940s, when we began to build communities and commercial properties for our own investments, I've spent more time thinking and administrating. Hours are still long, however.

Along the way I've made some mistakes, but the successful businessman's batting average will always be above .500.

Our company built a string of motels about the same time as one of today's largest operators, and before another.

Perhaps we should have pressed on with motels, but we bowed out in favor of large resort and convention hotels in the West, which have been successful.

We introduced the large planned retirement community idea in Arizona in 1959, and similar projects in California and Florida which have been sold to other developers because they didn't grow as fast as we expected.

But our basic, creative idea was the right one. Our largest land investment was in Sun City, Arizona, and today it is world famous and very successful.

After an almost unbroken string of 40 successful years in contracting we had some big loss years because of weather, strikes, wages increases and other reasons. But we valued our reputation enough to swallow these

(more)

losses and today we are still proud of what we build.

While you can't expect a perfect record of decisions, you must learn to respect your own judgement. Occasionally, you will really have something to talk about.

My decision to invest in the New York Yankees resulted in 20 years of profit and cherished association with athletes and notable people in business and government who follow baseball.

You must also respect your decisions in selecting associates.

If you really believe in the people you hire, then you'll pay them well, allow them to make decisions, expect their loyalty and get it.

In a practical sense, three basics are important in operating a company; 1) Earnings; 2) Cash flow; 3) Forecasts. All three tie together, and a weak spot in any one means trouble.

Since 1928 we have advanced from pencils to computers. For ourselves and others we build not only homes but cities, not only offices but huge complexes, as well as sophisticated resorts instead of motels.

We have refined our skills tremendously. Yet basics are so important.

We use an advertising phrase to demonstrate that today, even with our diverse abilities and investments, personal relationships are vital.

We are, we say, in the "people business."

It is people -- our employees and our customers -- who will determine our success.

Yet as long as our nation operates on the system it does, it will always need people with the willingness to work hard, to think, to take a chance, to trust in their ability to make the right decision and hire the right person.

Those are the people who will fit the broadest definition of "successful."

#

ARIZONA REPUBLIC APRIL 14, 1973

IC

Del Webb regales Rotarians with tales of early Phoenix

When Del E. Webb arrived in Phoenix in 1927, there were about 30,000 people, few paved roads and no air-conditioning.

He wasn't in very good shape, either, he said.

Yesterday he was in good shape and form, regaling the members of the Phoenix Rotary Club with anecdotes from a colorful career that spans almost 50 years in Arizona.

"People thought of Phoenix (in those days) as a primitive, underdeveloped desert and hot as hell," said Webb, founder of a building empire and once co-owner of the New York Yankees.

"Even electric fans were scarce as hell and we slept either on the roof or in the yard in order to get our breath."

Webb said people came to Phoenix then "either to escape the law or for their health." He came here because "I needed a new start" after a bad arm terminated his baseball career.

He was also recovering from typhoid fever, he said. He was playing an exhibition baseball game in San Quentin prison and contacted the disease from a glass of water given him by a trusty, he said.

When Webb arrived here, he said, he took a job with Crane Co. and continued to play baseball in the old Industrial League. Webb said eventually J. B. Bayless, father of the late A. J. Bayless, founder of the grocery chain bearing his name, talked him into finishing stores at 24th Street and McDowell and 17th Street and Van Buren. This launched him on a building career.

Webb also recalled building a tomb for George Hunt, then governor, in Papago Park. He said Hunt would stop at the tomb every day on his way to the capitol and peek in and say, "Well, this is where I am going to be someday."

"I thought it was a little morbid, but it was his business," Webb said.

He recalled how in the old days foot races were held down Washington on Labor Day. He was a race judge one year and said he was in no shape to judge anything since he had been drinking too much corn liquor the previous night.

He said the man who finished first was Jerry McClain, a reporter with the then Arizona Republican. McClain eventually became director of Webb's public relations department, a position he holds to this day, Webb said.

Webb is probably best known in Arizona for developing Sun City, the growing retirement community northwest of Phoenix.

"I never did anything more satisfying than building Sun City," he said.

Builder Del E. Webb Recounts His Early Days In Phoenix

By CHARLES RAYBURN

"When I arrived here in 1927 it was said that most people came to Arizona either for their health or to evade the law — and I had just got my health back," the tall man at the rostrum told the Phoenix Rotary Club today at a Westward Ho luncheon.

Del E. Webb, builder, former baseball player and once co-owner of the New York Yankees, reeled off nearly a half-century of Arizona history in humorous anecdotes from his own colorful career.

There was no message of burning political, financial, or social import — just reminiscences with dry wit characteristic of the man who has had "about as active a career as it's possible for any man to have in one lifetime," one member observed.

"People thought of Phoenix as primitive, undeveloped desert, sagebrush, rattlesnakes and hot as hell," said Webb. "Even electric fans were scarce and we slept either on the roof or in the yard in order to get a breath."

PHOENIX population was about 35,000, Van Buren was paved "from the insane asylum on the east to the railroad tracks at 19th Avenue, and Central from the railroad tracks up to McDowell, and that was about it," recalled Webb, who was born in Fresno, Calif., and came here from Oakland.

"When you went to Glendale, Tempe, or Mesa you were really out in the desert. There was no such thing as Scottsdale or Sun City. I think there was one gas station in Scottsdale run by an Indian. And I remember once getting stuck in the mud on Polk at about Second Street so bad the car had to be hauled out by a crane."

Webb recalled with wry humor "how smart I thought I was when I turned down Duncan MacDonald's offer to sell me half of his 3,600 acres in Scottsdale for a dollar an acre. He was a plastering contractor doing some work for me and he wanted to raise some money on this land he'd paid 50 cents an acre for. I advanced him $900 on his pay and told him to keep his land. The land is still there. It's called Scottsdale now, and McDonald Drive is named for the man."

WEBB HAD JUST recovered from a year-long bout with typhoid fever when he arrived in Phoenix, he recalled. He had played an exhibition baseball game at San Quentin Prison and caught typhoid from a glass of water brought him by a trusty.

He took a job with Crane Company here, which enabled him to play baseball in the old Industrial League. As a non-resident, he was not allowed to play for 30 days but was sent in to pinch-hit on the 29th day. The officals learned of it, suspended him for another 30 days. His job went with the suspension and he went to work as a carpenter on the Hotel Westward Ho construction job.

"A bum check is what kept me in Arizona," Webb recalled. Contemplating departure from this "primitive and hot-as-hell place," one Saturday evening, Webb tried to cash a check someone had given him and it turned out to be worthless. "If it hadn't been for that delay, I probably wouldn't be here today."

J. B. BAYLESS, father of the late A.J. Bayless, of the grocery chain bearing his name, "talked me into finishing stores at 24th Street and McDowell and 17th Street and Van Buren." That launched him into a lengthy series of grocery store construction jobs from which he drops such names from the past as MacMarr Stores, Piggly Wiggly, Pay 'n Takit, Bill Uhle, and Saunders Stores. "I built so many grocery stores people thought I was a grocer!"

A high point in his life was a one-hour visit with Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933, protesting the WPA as "a great leveler of ambition among men." A lifelong friendship with Roosevelt resulted from the interview "which was only supposed to be 15 minutes long."

Webb recalled building the "Governor Hunt tomb" in Papago Park and how Hunt would stop by every day on his way to the Capitol, "peek inside and say? 'Well, there is where I'm going to be some day.' I thought it was a little morbid, but it was his business."

DOTTING THE reminiscences were more names from the past such as the Mirador Ballroom, later the Sciots Auditorium, a stone's throw from the present Del Webb Building in the Rosenzweig Center; Hattie Mosher "and her running fight over taxes and the yardstick she carried and used to either pat her friends or whack her enemies"; and Phoenix' then new buildings, the San Carlos Hotel, the courthouse, the new State House.

And he sneaked in the story of judging "an Indian footrace in which the winner was a "skinny white kid named Jerry McLain, then a reporter for Ward Adams, editor of the then Arizona Republican." McLain, for many years Webb's director of public relations, grinned sheepishly. He hadn't included that in Webb's notes when he helped assemble them for the speech.

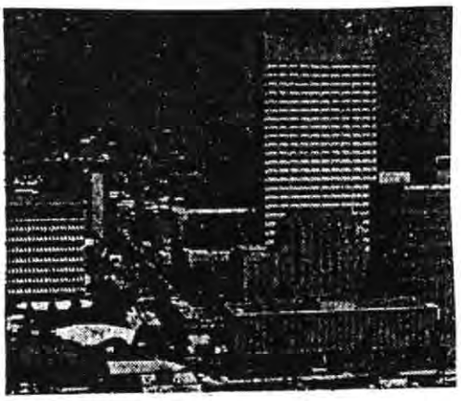
Del Webb, one of the biggest, big-time contractors

'I don't think anybody can stop progress'

By WILLIAM OVEREND

It would be a beautiful view, up there on the 17th floor, except that the smog's bad this morning, and looking east it's kind of hard to see exactly where Camelback Mountain stops and the sky begins. It doesn't matter, though, because the curtains are closed, like they almost always are in Del Webb's office, even when the sky is blue instead of brown. Del Webb says he doesn't look out the window much. He's got other things to do.

He's at his desk in his office on the top floor of the Del. E. Webb Building, 3800 N. Central, talking about Phoenix and how it's grown, and whether that's good or bad. "You have to go along with the times," Webb is saying. "I don't think anybody can stop progress. You try to stop progress and you're in trouble."



He's not quite what you'd expect. You're prepared for a tougher exterior, a lot of quick energy, fast movement. After all, this man is one of the major contractors, still always on the move, flying all over the country, seldom in the same city more than two or three days, 8,000 employes scrambling around with their hammers and slide rules all over the world, building new hotels, new towns.

But all the same, Webb is 73 years old. And even though he's a long way from the horseshoe team out at Sun City, he's got to take it a little slower than younger men. And that's what you notice first. It's almost like he's conserving his energy, possibly a trait learned long ago. He moves slowly across the room. He speaks slowly. He speaks softly, too. And his movements are deliberate, almost slow motion.

"You just can't look at growth as something bad," Webb is saying. He's sitting there, taking a phone call every few minutes, just a faint resemblance to Lyndon Johnson, about as tall, six foot four, but thinner, trimmer. He's got a hard-bottomed chair specially built for him because he doesn't like soft cushions, never has. They always make a point of what a sharp dresser Webb is, this high school dropout, how he owns 150 or so suits and keeps matching wardrobes in New York, Los Angeles and Phoenix. The suit he's wearing now is a pin-stripe, and it makes you think of Webb's baseball days and the old Yankee uniforms. It's been almost eight years since Webb sold his half of the Yankees, but reminders of those baseball years are everywhere in the office, from a pile of souvenir Louisville Sluggers in the corner to Webb himself, the way he talks.

"It's the same old question of whether or not our modern day ball player is better than the old time stars," Webb says, talking about the growth question. "Me, I like to see the modern-day players with their modern equipment, and all the benefits they've got now. Not like some of those old guys who ended up bunks." Webb starts to warm up with the baseball analogy. "Take some of the folks out Sun City," he says. "A lot of people don't want to see it grow. But you can't stop it. There's no way."

But that's exactly the point. Down there in the smog, some people have started saying maybe progress isn't so good, not when all it means is more people, more cars, more time to get to work, more kids in the schools, more freeways, less empty space. It's not just a polite little disagreement, either. It gets a bit emotional and sometimes a bit irrational down there in the traffic jams. Sometimes the people start looking for villains to put the blame on. And when that happens, sooner or later, the talk gets around to the builders, the land developers, the men like Delbert Eugene Webb.

You get the impression Webb honestly can't even understand how people can take that view. To Del Webb, growth is inevitable. It's silly to talk about stopping it. For one thing, that would be impossible. But more importantly, it would be unwise. Growth, as Webb sees it, is a positive good in and of itself. "You can't stop growth," he says. "I look at this town, and I want to see it grow. I want to look into the future, and not worry about all the problems you might have. You've got to be aggressive, and look at the good things that come with growth ...."

Webb frequently is described as a shy man. Somebody once called him "the bashful Barnum." Some others have described him as cold and impersonal. One of his former top executives, L. C. Jacobson, said after leaving the company in 1966: "To me the company was a means to an end. To Del, it's his whole life. If he has one flaw it's that he really has no other interests." It's clear in even a brief conversation that that's not true. Jacobson forgot to mention baseball. Webb constantly finds a way to bring it up, the old semi-pro pitcher-carpenter who went on to own his own big league team and big time company.

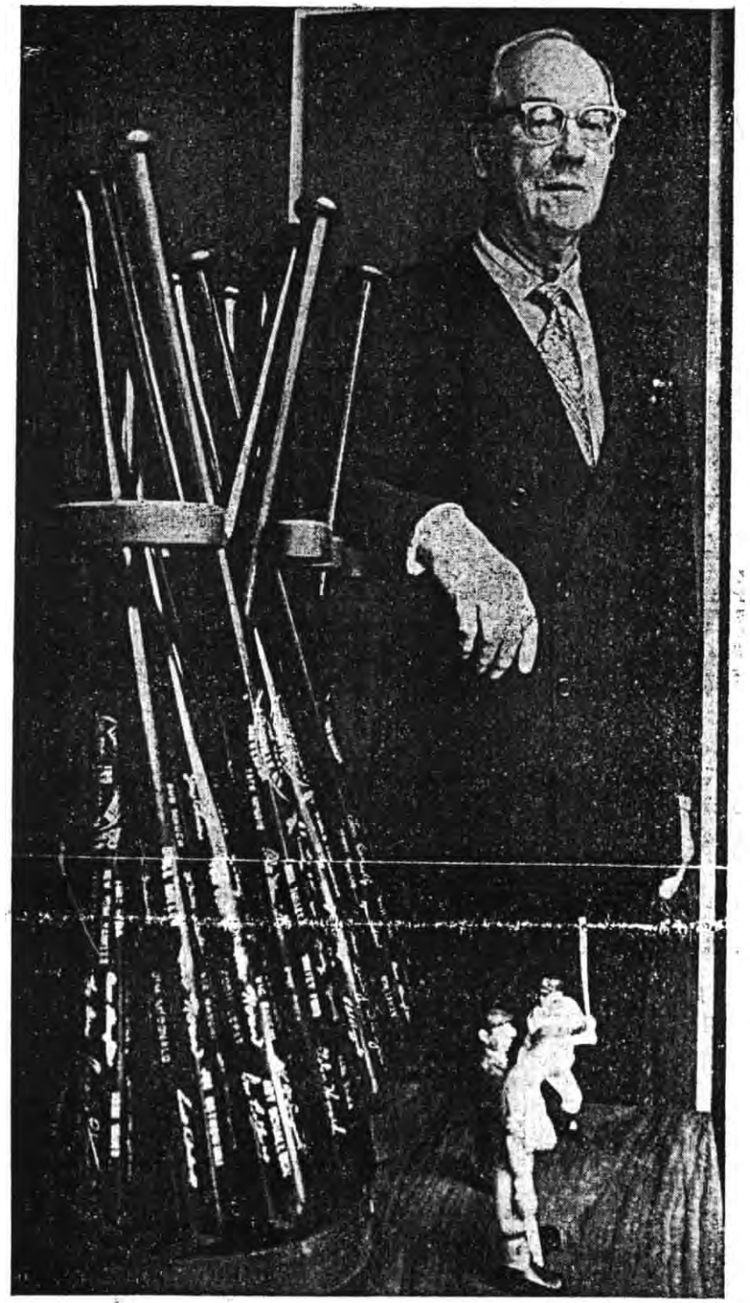
In Webb's office, for example, there are many more reminders of his years in baseball than of the buildings and the entire communities that he has built. The baseball bats are on one end table, 14 of them, each standing for a Yankee pennant or World Series win, all of them autographed, the great old Yankee names, Mickey Mantle, Yogi Berra, Whitey Ford. On the same table, a little plastic statue of Mantle, the kind you might pay 79 cents for if they sold them in a dime store.

The rest of the office is simply furnished. Junior vice presidents at companies one-tenth the size have flashier furnishings. There's a big custom-made desk, but nothing fancy. The carpet is red, walnut paneling along one wall, three black leather channel back chairs facing Webb's, two others up against the wall, all black leather. At the west end of the room, a couple of couches. Overhead, an Elaine Michelsen mural showing the pyramids being constructed, one of the few big development projects Webb missed out on. Jerry Starr was the man who selected the furnishings. He's a salesman for LBSW Office and School Products. "Yes, it was a pretty modest order," he remembers. "I'd say it pretty much fits the character of the man."

But the character of the man is a bit more elusive than that. He avoids volunteering any clues to his personal feelings. Ask Del Webb what he thinks is the greatest achievement of his life. Webb thinks a minute, then answers: "I think the greatest thing our company ever did was move the Japs out of California. We did it in 90 days back in the war." Or ask Webb whether he has any regrets as he looks back over his life. Again, a pause. Then he says he thinks he should have taken a tougher line in opposing the expansion of the major leagues.

Webb has been married twice, to his present wife since 1961. He has no children, and he says that's not a regret. He says he's wondered from time to time whether, if he had raised a family, he'd be where he is today or still maybe just a carpenter. "I guess I've been a little freer in moving around," he says. "I'm not saying it's the best way to live. But I'm used to it." Webb really was a carpenter here, 45 years ago. He left California for Phoenix in 1928. And he got his first job here helping to build the Hotel Westward Ho. Then, for a few years, it was small-time construction, but always growing.

(Continued on Page 4)



Republic photos ☆ Lud Keaton

Builder Del Webb still likes to talk about the baseball years

More about

It would be impossible to stop growth

Continued from Page 1

BACK THEN, of course, it was taken for granted that growth was good. It was right up there with motherhood and irrigation. But that was before the boom, with the 1940 Census putting the Phoenix population at just over 65,000. It was before the growth explosion of the '50s and '60s. It was before the projections of millions more new residents in the decades to come. The situation hasn't come full circle, not in the sense that those responsible now think that growth is bad. But there is consensus now that growth must be planned and that the planning has to be good. Webb strongly shares that view.

"Everybody likes to remember the good old days when you knew everybody in town," Webb's saying. "I like to remember the days when I knew the names of all the people in my company. But that's the price you have to pay. When I was first working here, I used to come home at night and try to eat my dinner, sitting there in my shorts and the perspiration would come running down and almost ruin my dinner. I look back and I don't know how some of those people lived back then. Life's not so bad now, when you think back to some of that."

WEBB'S AN expert on growth, of course. He's made a couple hundred million dollars because of it over the years. He's even got a theory about growth, what might be termed the meteorological concept of population growth. "You've got one thing here," Webb says. "You got climate. Let's go back to history. Take the Greeks. Now you know, back in those days, whenever there was a war whoever was victorious took Athens. You know why? The climate."

Phoenix is going to keep on growing, Webb says, there's no way to stop it, you simply have to plan for it. He's polite as he talks about what some people see as the problems of growth. But it's clear Webb sees it all in different terms. After all, his whole career, his every success, have been dependent on growth. That smog down there may bother some. But on the 17th floor, where the curtains are closed, Del Webb says it doesn't bother him. He says you'll never have the smog problem here that you have in Los Angeles because there's always a good wind here to lift it out.

L-4 The Arizona Republic
Phoenix, Sunday, Jan. 14, 1973

Del Webb

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC June 1972

Jan - 1972

Bayless store gave Del Webb his start

By HENRY FULLER

Razing the 40-year-old Bayless Market at Central and Moreland, to make room for Papago Freeway, not only marks passing of a pioneer store but also the birthplace of the Del E. Webb Construction Co.

Fuller

Webb, a young carpenter of Fresno, Calif., came here in 1928 to play semi-pro baseball in return for a job. The baseball stopped when it was discovered he had violated league rules by playing one day short of a required 30-day residency. He recalls he made a home run that day.

But he had a job. That was no small thing in those depression years. He was hanging doors in the new Hotel Westward Ho. That work ground to a bankruptcy halt. Next he helped veteran contractor Ed Wasielewski build some modest-size residences.

In 1931 he was working for a contractor on this Bayless Market. Before it was completed the contractor took French leave. Holding a pay check that had bounced, Webb was debating going back to Fresno when J. B. Bayless (father of the late A. J.) asked him to take over.

Bayless wanted the store finished before a rival could hold its grand opening sale. Webb said he could make the deadline. Thus was the vast Webb corporation born.

Inventorying what his missing boss had abandoned, Webb found he possessed a small concrete mixer; 10 wheelbarrows; 20 shovels and 10 picks. But he had Bayless backing his bills.

"We put the job on a 24-hour basis and finished it in 27 days to win the race," Webb told us. "That was a time when common labor cost 25 cents an hour. Bricklayers were paid $4 for a 10-hour day. Now the union scale is $8.27 an hour, plus fringe benefits. Today they lay 800 bricks an hour, as compared with 2,000 then."

The Bayless job finished to the satisfaction of both parties, the budding contractor took on all sorts of small jobs. Phoenicians of the pre-war days will recall such stores as Woolworth (downtown); Donofrio Confectionary; Eagle Drug; Fannin Hardware. Webb was glad to get modest contracts for alterations and repairs along with more Bayless work.

He did a job for a Union Oil Station. Years later the firm built a $22 million office complex for Union Oil in downtown Los Angeles.

One contract of 40 years ago was construction of the pyramid in Papago Park as a tomb for Gov. George W. P. Hunt. The governor visited the site every day to check on Webb's progress.

He began to land bigger jobs in the northern part of the state. For delivering the payroll, he would drive out of Phoenix at 4 a.m. Saturdays to jobs in Williams, Grand Canyon, Flagstaff Holbrook and Adamana. The route was over dirt roads. He was lucky to make home again by midnight.

Incidentally, on the Flagstaff job, he hired a Phoenix young man, Robert H. Johnson, as timekeeper. Five years ago Johnson was named corporation president. The tremendous expansion of Webb construction came with the war and government contracts spreading throughout the Pacific Southwest.

"Taxes sopped up much of the profits, but we were glad to pay them," Webb said "Renegotiation of these wartime contracts cut our profit margin still further. This is what led to our decision to diversify and to build for some equities in the corporation's work, such as hotels, shopping centers and office buildings."

Webb had begun erecting subdivision homes in Phoenix soon after he had established a sound financial foundation for such projects. He stepped up into the more pretentious residences — the first being in Country Club Manor for Robert Goldwater.

Home building, as a major project, was submerged somewhat after the war with a flood of huge contracts all over the nation. This role of the business grew in importance with the creation of Sun City. Other Sun Cities were started in California and Florida. But the Arizona community of active retirees has gained the greatest national recognition.

Business friends attribute Webb success to his uncanny ability to figure costs closely. That's not the whole story as we know it. He is a keen judge of human nature. By virtue of that he has been able to select competent men and women for his team.

From a handful of artisans (he being one himself) Webb today heads a business complex employing some 10,000 persons in its far-flung activities. This year, in Arizona alone, it will expend more than $8 million a month.

Not bad for a young carpenter whose total assets 40 years ago were a bad check and courage.

5-7-72

...A Look At The Fresno-Born Multimillionaire Financier

Continued from Last Page

for him, expecting only the best from them. But he asks no one to work any harder than he does himself.

He does not like to remain in one place more than a couple of days and is always ready to hop a plane anywhere in the world if there is promise of increasing the corporate wealth.

Two business transactions stand out in his memory. One was when he, Dan Topping and Larry McPhail purchased the New York Yankees, three baseball stadiums and the entire Yankee farm system for $2.8 million in the 1940s. Webb, noting he and Topping sold Yankee Stadium alone later for $10 million, called it "the greatest deal ever made."

Built Sun City

Another purchase came in January of 1960 when Webb bought up thousands of acres of Arizona cottonfields formerly owned by the J. D. Boswell Land Co., and transformed part of the land into a retirement resort area called Sun City.

Situated 12 miles from Phoenix, the controlled community was Webb's second effort at building a city from scratch. This time, it met with immediate and enthusiastic response from the 50-year-old and upwards segment across the country. Today the area is still growing and boasts of 22,000 year-round residents, many of whom look upon Webb as their benefactor, some even claiming he gave them health and happiness.

Webb, who has no anonymity among Sun City residents, admits the prospect of visiting the community which he built and which he does visit about twice a year gives him an eerie feeling.

"It's damned embarrasing, I'll tell you that for sure," he said. "When I get there the people — they all know me — why, they gather around and the women say, 'Oh, Mr. Webb, let me shake your hand,' or, 'Oh, Mr. Webb, let me kiss you.' One will come up to me and say, 'Look at John, Mr. Webb. He's a new man since coming here.' Then John says, 'Yes, Mr. Webb. I'm going to live for another 20 years thanks to you.' All that fuss embarrasses me!

"Hell, I can't even play golf out there without attracting a large gallery. I don't much like all the attention."

Fresno native Del Webb: Two days in one place is his limit.

Believes In Concept

While trying to shun the role of a savior to senior citizens, Webb definitely believes in his community and the concept.

"Originally we were going to build a community for the retired needy persons," he said.

"But we turned the idea down when our survey told us there was a real market, not for the needy, but for the guy who worked in Chicago at the power company or in Oshkosh for the railroad or in Detroit for General Motors," he said.

"This guy in Chicago never had the country club life before but, now that he is retired, he draws his pension and sells his house and moves to Sun City where he can suddenly enjoy the life he has worked so long for. No more shoveling snow in the winter for him," Webb continued.

"Hell, Barry Goldwater's uncle came to Arizona on a stretcher and now is up and walking around," he said, his voice rising to an enthusiastic but knowledgable pitch. "It's the weather. I've seen it happen there too many times before."

Webb knows a lot about the desert climate there. A doctor sent him to Arizona after he contracted typhoid fever while pitching in a semipro baseball game in the Bay Area in the mid-1920s. His weight had dropped from 204 pounds to 99 pounds. In Arizona, his health began to improve but, his baseball playing days behind him, he resumed his carpentry trade.

Company's Start

When the contractor for whom he worked took what Webb likes to call "French leave", leaving the young carpenter with a bad check and unfinished work, he made a deal with the owner of the project to finish the job. The Del E. Webb Construction Co., was born.

Following the war, the company diversified to include four divisions: construction, development, hotels and commercial. The company did so, said Webb, "to protect ourselves from the waves and valleys of the construction industry."

Webb entered the hotel business quite by accident. But he is credited with getting to Las Vegas before Howard Hughes and helping to legitimize the gambling industry there, helped by the fact that the underworld influence was on the run.

His firm was building a hotel and casino there when Webb received word the hotel property had been sold to Bugsy Siegel. "I didn't know who the hell he was," Webb admitted, "but it didn't take me long to find out that he was a notorious gangster."

Unable to get out of the construction contract, Webb continued the job.

"I'll tell you one thing about Bugsy Siegel, though," he added, his eyes fixing a convincing gaze upon the listener. "He was a helluva lot better to deal with than a lot of these bankers and lawyers and other people I've had to deal with over these past years because when he told you he'd do something, he'd do it."

Never Broke Word

Siegel, said Webb, always paid his bills when he said he would. "He never broke his word to me. Never!"

A week before Beverly Hills police found Siegel's bullet-riddled body in his plush mansion, Webb had been a visitor to his home. "I had come to get some money due us and we sat and talked for a while. We heard a noise from outside by the window and knew someone was out there. But nothing happened and I think it was because I was there. The next Friday night they killed him. Shot his head clean off."

Webb was in Vancouver that night, working on another business venture. Two days later, he was back in Phoenix, readying for still another trip.

His most recent stay in Fresno lasted less than 24 hours. "Got to fly to St. Louis on this business deal we've got lined up on Monday," he said. "Then on to Hawaii for the opening of our new hotel there. ... Mayo Clinic people once told me to relax once in a while. I told them I am relaxing. Gotta' be on the go, doing things. They didn't agree with me then but guess they do now. Hard work never hurt no man."

Del Webb Revisits Fresno: 'My Mother Owned This Damned Land...'

By Earl Dunn

What does a man whose personal wealth has been pegged at more than $100 million think and talk about?

If he is a major league baseball club owner, he probably talks about players' salaries, strike threats and club home attendance. But if he is a former major league club owner, he more than likely talks only about his present day business. There are no profits in nostalgia or reminiscence.

However, if prodded, Delbert Eugene Webb will divorce himself from the present day whirl of the corporate business world and allow himself to drift back through the years which saw a tiny construction company founded in the 1920s mushroom into one of the giants today.

Success in a large corporation is measured only by profits. The two are tied together in the corporate mind as personified by Webb.

World Within World

It should not, therefore, startle a listener to hear the soft-spoken Webb, who once owned the New York Yankees, talk about his Del E. Webb Corp., headquartered in Phoenix, Ariz., as if it were a separate world within a world. For the tall, slender Fresno-born carpenter who will be 73 years old on May 17, there is no other.

The board chairman returned recently to his native Fresno and stood on the ground his mother once owned. The discussion had been centered on his corporation and why it recently sold two large land developments in Bakersfield and Sun City, Fla. Webb said the land was sold because the taxes were going up faster than the revenue coming in and it became apparent it was time for the corporation to "get out."

Then, gesturing to the ground, he drove his message home. "My mother actually owned this damned land we're sitting on right here and she lost every damned bit of it because she couldn't pay the taxes on it," he exclaimed.

The message had an ironic twist, for Webb made the statement in his 21st floor suite atop the Del Webb Fresno TowneHouse which bears his name

Del Webb (only those who wish to raise his ire call him Delbert) is so thoroughly engrossed in the daily functions of his business that he refuses to allow himself to dwell upon any social impact, past or present, which may have been felt because of something his firm did or did not do.

Internment Housing

One of the highlights of the company's accomplishments, he tells a listener, came in 1942 when he was called upon to build a compound near Parker, Ariz., to house 36,000 Japanese who had lived in California.

"It was probably one of the most patriotic things we have ever done," he said, noting with pride that his company did what few government officials then thought was possible — build a complete "city" on the desert in 100 days. The job won Webb's construction company many more government contracts in the wartime and post-wartime years. It was the first big step toward making him a millionaire 100 times over.

Webb has been described by those who work with him as a man with a penchant for detail and standardization. He drives those who work

Continued on Next Page

GRIT (MAG.) Aug. 23, 1970
August 23, 1970

The Man Who Changed Retireme

By Establishing Sun City, Ariz., Del Webb Made Active Golden Years Possible for Thousands of Americans

By DUANE VALENTRY

IT WAS a New Year's Day sparkling in the sunshine in the dead of winter, and the crowds never stopped coming.

They still talk about what happened in January, 1961, at Sun City, Ariz. In those first 3 days, 100,000 visitors flocked to see, and homes worth $2,250,000 were sold in 72 hours. The following spring, the first residents moved in, and by the next February the "town" had 3,000 permanent residents. Today, the population stands at 14,000 persons.

Del Webb, who built this first retirement city of its kind, likes to look back on this as one of his major accomplishments. The concept, which he feels met a real need, had been on his mind years before it materialized.

Among his friends and associates, he had often heard the wail, "I've raised my children and I don't care to raise anyone else's children," and he had seen development after development cater exclusively to the young family. Single people, the retired, or soon-to-retire had to work out their living problems as best they could wherever they happened to be.

THE SUN CITY concept was new and received national publicity. Soon, its features were incorporated into every retirement center that sprang up, and this pleased Del Webb.

"The way of life we promised senior citizens emphasized independence for men and women who have reached an entirely new social strata after their places in normal community life have been taken over by others on their retirement."

Now a hale and active 70, Webb is constantly on the go between his multitude of projects. A man who has never failed to attempt the "impossible," he is trying to make Las Vegas a place the whole family can go for enjoyment.

Hardly anyone has done more building in the United States than this fabulous money-maker, who started as a $70-a-week carpenter in Phoenix, Ariz. Then, beginning in a small way by building storefronts, churches, and houses, Del Webb Construction Company rose to a major spot among contractors. Today, his fortune is estimated at about $100,000,000.

IN 1921, working as a carpenter and playing baseball on the side, he found his pitching arm growing weary. Then a sudden severe illness got him down, and his weight tumbled from 200 to 99 pounds. Otherwise, he thinks he might well be looking back over a career in the major leagues.

Instead, he came to be known as "the man who bought and sold the Yankees," during a period between 1945 and 1965, when he was half-owner of the team.

"There are only two things I know anything about," he said, "baseball and building," and he does like to talk about the game, the men who play it, and the men who used to play it. He has known them all.

Next to baseball, Del Webb likes golf and tries to get plenty of time at it despite his busy schedule. Webb, who is more than six feet tall, keeps trim and younger-looking than his years.

HIS FATHER was a Fresno (Calif.) contractor and amateur baseball player from whom his son learned both trade and game and, like his father, did both at the same time.

"I was lucky," recalled Webb. "I drew down $8 a day as a carpenter. The other players didn't have a trade, and they got only $4."

He came to be known up and down the West Coast as a pitcher with a "mean fast ball" and usually worked only for firms that had a ball team.

When Webb decided to give up the game and dedicate his life to business, his career really began to take shape. He had the ability to figure jobs closely, to obtain loyal and competent men to help in expanding, and a remarkable knack of getting along with people.

By the time the Second World War broke out, the company already was one of the largest and busiest in the Southwest, boasted an excellent financial rating, and was in a position to be of service to the government in all types of construction.

Del Webb's company constructed air fields, military installations, army and navy training bases, hospitals, and prisoner-of-war camps. As the company's activities expanded from one coast to another, they included numerous industrial plants, veterans hospitals, hotels, and warehouses.

As Young Man, Del Webb Sought Career in Baseball

Del Webb—Developer of Sun City, Ariz.

With renewed defense preparation at the time of the Korean War, Webb built technical plants for production of guided missiles and modification of fighter planes, huge B-47 Stratojet runways, vast military training facilities, and housing developments as well as many outstanding buildings in many cities.

BUT ALWAYS in the back of his mind the "Sun City concept" was forming.

"You don't begin to do the things you might like to do in a single lifetime," he said. "Our research showed these accumulated interests pile up and that almost everyone without exception has an endless list of them; yet, despite this, too many enjoyers of golden-year freedom were enjoying nothing very much because of boredom."

The reason for this, it was decided, is that "in our society there has been a distinct lack of facilities offering interesting activity and companionship for the older citizen."

Flying—as he has always done—from city to city, he found cities for every age group but the older. When these did exist they were inadequate in variety, inconvenient in location. Creative activities — among the most frequent on lists of "things I've always wanted to do"—just weren't possible for most people because the money, space, or equipment was lacking.

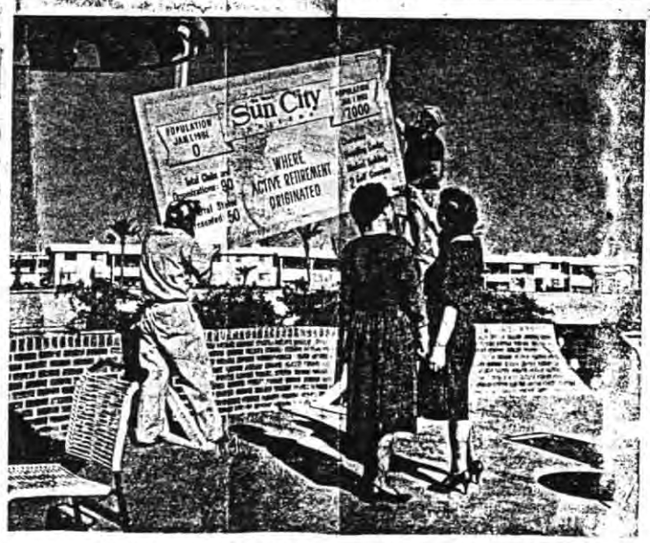
After 50, many people were lonely, his research showed. With families absorbed in their own interests, often there was little social life because contemporaries lived "clear across town" or were busy baby-sitting. Webb wanted to create a community whose unique concept would draw together people who shared the same interests and ideas and where "best friends" could live next door.

So Sun City was born, to become the model for retirement centers which have sprung up throughout the country.

SUN CITY grew fast, attracting everyone from former policemen to bank and business executives, civic leaders, and professional people. Scores of clubs sprang up, and the built-in facilities gave opportunity to those who wanted to be creative, with the community center a daily beehive of activity.

Today, Del Webb's interests are widely diversified, including oil, banking, mining, hotels, airlines, manufacturing, making motion pictures, and other enterprises in which he is financially interested. But he retains a personal interest in Sun City and its citizens and often visits there.

GRIT
Family Section



Sun City, Opened 10 Years Ago, Has Grown Steadily Into Active Community

IQ

SUN CITY, ARIZONA WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 1969

"IT'S ONE WAY TO KEEP WARM," joked Del E. Webb, (right) as he posed for series of photos symbolic of Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hospital groundbreaking Friday. His co-groundbreaker is William Boswell, whose family pioneered cotton farming on Sun City's site and whose late brother is honored by hospital name. At left is hospital corporation president William Chapman. Hospital site is block north of Grand Avenue near 103rd Avenue.

(News-Sun Staff Photo)

FRESNO, CALIF.
BEE
D. 112,104 S. 134,266

MAR 6 1964

Good Losers Get No Chapter In Winner Del Webb's Book

Except for Joe Pepitone, the New York first baseman whose error led to the Yankee's fourth and final defeat in the World Series, nobody in Dodger Stadium last October 6th felt any worse than Del (Delbert) E. Webb.

By his own admission he is a poor loser.

But it is no secret corrections calculated to make the Yankees invincible again—in the 18 years Webb has been their part owner, they have won the World Series 11 times—are in the works.

Webb's intolerance for second place is clearly reflected, not only in his personal fortune, estimated at $30 million, or in the building he opened in Fresno yesterday, but even in the way he has developed a feel for public speaking.

Until three years ago he was outwardly shy, uneasy before groups, and spoke haltingly. Today, he thrives on it, speaks at the drop of a dinner fork and is booked for talks from Boston to Los Angeles.

The words, however, still have the country boy touch. In his home town of Phoenix, Ariz., recently, a reporter covering a speech quoted Webb: "When I come to Arizona, this here fella learned me. . . ."

"It's not the words, it's their meaning," explained an associate. "His chief asset is his sincerity. He's one of the folks."

Bee Photo

Del E. Webb—A few errors and a bundle of hits.

Tall—6 feet 4 inches—and two months short of his 65th birthday, Webb still gives the impression of shyness. But along with it there is a sure sense of achievement, of pride, of a "good guy" kind of egotism. As with his TowneHouse, he has no hesitancy about having his projects named after him.

He knows, say his friends, that what he has built is good. "He makes certain of it," said one of them. "Other contractors don't come close when it comes to finding fault with a job."

Intensely loyal—at ribbon cuttings he has been known to bypass other executives and the press to chat with his construction bosses—Webb expects the same from his employes and friends. Nothing pleases him more than "a job well done," and nothing pleases him less than "any kind of inefficiency, and that includes a base on balls."

His work day begins when he rises in his Phoenix home just two miles from the palatial Camelback Mountain home of Senator Barry Goldwater—they once were neighbors and still are personal friends—and frequently ends at 2 or 3 AM the next day aboard an airliner. Morning reports, that symbol of executive arrival, are often read in the bathroom so that no time is wasted.

Though often on the go, Webb carries with him little more than his briefcase. Complete wardrobes are maintained in hotel suites in New York, Los Angeles and Phoenix.

At the latest count, he owned about 150 suits. But most of them are blue, giving the impression he is always wearing the same one. A hatmaker's dream, Webb seldom goes without one, a custom that has separated him somewhat from his top level executives. They all drive luxury sportscars. Webb prefers a standard sedan. He has found it impractical to drive the smaller model and wear his hat at the same time.

In the words of an associate, he also "is kind of a nut for shoes." Once in Tucson, Ariz., he wandered into a shorestore and began trying on all the models the salesman would show him.

"I'll take 'em," Webb was quoted as saying.

"Which pair?" asked the salesman.

"All of 'em," said Webb.

Also on his list of favorites is a "good steak, well done." Heading his list of dislikes is alcohol, which he has not touched "in years," and smoking, which he has never done. Evidence of his repugnance toward tobacco are the little No Smoking signs he has on his desks. To find his office, say his friends, look for the door that has a "full butt can" in front of it.

An avid and better than average golfer, Webb tries to play at least once a week. His handicap, he says, has "slipped" to about a 6. In a Phoenix tournament he once posted a 67 to go ahead of such old pros as Byron Nelson and Ben Hogan.

His interest in sports, though intensified since his association with the Yankees, started when he was a boy living in his native Fresno. His father, Ernest G. Webb, was an amateur ball player, and the younger Webb—until a siege of typhoid fever struck him out at the age of 25—played semi professional baseball.

Friends refer to his Yankee ownership as a "fulfillment, a vicarious involvement in the game." The major league status, they add, has also served as a "door opener" to the well known.

Apart from the satisfaction he received from building his Sun City in Arizona, a community for the elderly, Webb's social consciousness is intermingled with his business and sports interests. He goes out of his way, for example, to help financially a young man of slender means who is a likely sports prospect.

He is an ardent reader of newspapers, and "clipping stories referring to Webb that even his clipping service misses." His favorite magazine is Fortune.

Politically, Webb is a registered Democrat. But his interest in politics is confined to making "contributions where they'll do the most good, to a Republican if he happens to be a better man."

If there is a key to his success it is this search for the better man, whether in politics, baseball or construction. "He has an inborn ability to delegate authority," said a longtime employe. "He tells you exactly what he wants, then he walks away. He gives you a lot of rope."

Like Pepitone last October, Webb readily admits he has committed errors. "Maybe 80 per cent of my decisions were mistakes," he says. "But the other 20 per cent were good enough to overcome them."

IC

Time magazine examined Sun City concept in 1962

(That same issue of Time magazine also contained an article on the emergence of retirement cities across the country, with particular emphasis on our Sun City.)

Chief developer of the retirement cities is a man of restless energy named Delbert Eugene Webb.

Construction is Del Webb's business. Construction of anything and everything from a silo to a skyscraper. In 1955, casting about for ways and means to expand his burgeoning Del E. Webb Corp., he bethought himself of the retirement market.

"My grandfather, Jimmy Webb, used to grouch about being old with nothing to do," he said. "My old man used to say it was only the railroad companies that did anything for the guys that retired. It was pretty grim, being old with nothing to do."

Webb assigned one of his lieutenants to see what could be done. The man he picked for the job was Thomas E. Breen, a vice president of the Webb Corp. and, coincidentally, the son of famed Joseph Breen, long-time head of Hollywood's Hays Office. A former actor himself and one-time Marine, Breen began by reading up on geriatrics and visiting places like St. Petersburg, which depressed him with its drab rooming houses and its thousands of elderly people "just sitting around on benches." He decided that activities should be important in any program that Webb might undertake. He was also frequently assured by gerontologists that old folks hated to be cut off from the cross section of ages that make up regular communities.

But a little-publicized community that flew directly in the face of this orthodox doctrine began to interest him.

ADULTS ONLY. It was called Youngtown and was some 16 miles northwest of Webb's home office in downtown Phoenix. Since 1954, it had been growing slowely on the unusual principal that no one less than 60 was allowed to move in. Despite this geriatric heresy, and despite the lack of facilities for shopping or recreation, the houses of Youngtown were steadily selling.

Breen decided that there might be something in the age-segregation idea, no matter what the experts said. By 1959, Webb had a clear-cut proposal to decide on. Shoud he committ $2,000,000 to build a community that would be limited to residents 50 years old or more, with no school-age children, a community that would be strong in recreation and part-time employment?

Basic to the proposal was the notion that all its facilities—golf course, swimming pool, shopping center, etc.—should be installed before the first house was sold.

("There's no point in trying to sell futures to a guy whose 65 years old" argued Breen.)

Webb decided the risk was worth it and the first of Webb's Sun Cities, 30,000 acres northeast of Phoenix began to sell houses five months later.

To Webb's astonishment, 272 were sold the first weekend. Built of concrete blocks in pleasant pastel colors, the houses were priced from $8,750 to $11,600 for three bedrooms, two baths. (A house on the golf course, which snakes through the community, cost $1,450 more.) Both FHA and bank financing were offered with monthly payments varying from $73 to $114.

Sun City customers were not rich, but Webb found that more than half wanted to pay cash. The purchasers were usually men of solid substance—former engineers, successful salesmen, formen, dentists, small businessmen, schoolteachers with money in the bank, often as the result of selling the house back home. Del Webb and his staff found they had miscalculated on only one point: Instead of going to work at least part time, most Sun Citians have been happy to spend all day at play.

HEALTHY AND BUSY. There is plenty to play with. Like a laird of the manor, Webb has supplied his tenants with almost anything and everything they want to keep them on the go.

If a sufficient number want to play boccie, Webb complies and supplies an alley. There are potters wheels for the potters, easels for the painters and a proliferation of more than 90 clubs and organizations. Sun City oldsters bicycle and grow vegetables, take pictures, dance and do exercises, sing, sew, act, bowl, swim and play almost every kind of game from canasta to chess.

All this activity—organized spontaneously by Sun City residents without artificial cruise-director stimulation—seems to make oldsters healthier as well as happier.

They make fewer trips to the doctor and the death rate is actually lower than for comparable age groups elsewhere. Hypochondriacs are at a minimum. When one of Sun City's three resident doctors gets a phone call, he knows he had better get there fast.

Helping the doctors is the Sunshine Committee. Two hundred volunteers, organized by the Rev. E. Duane Thistlethwaite, 70, a retired Methodist minister, who take the sick to doctors and hospitals, lend wheelchairs, crutches and even money to widows waiting for the social security or estate funds to start coming in.

With typical Sun City initiative, the community church, an amalgam of 35 Protestant denominations, is currently raising money for a small nursing home for long-term cases.

PIONEER SPIRIT. "We love all the things you can do out here," says Dr. Chester L. Meade, 76, a tanned, lithe, white-haired man who gave up his dental practice in Mason City, Iowa, and moved to Sun City last November.

Above reprinted in a special supplement to the NEWS-SUN in honor of Sun City's 20th birthday. Thursday, January 24, 1980

His wife, Mabel, claimed, "People say, 'but don't you miss Mason City?' Those dear friends, yes, but not Mason City. We're not lonely at all, and the people are so friendly here."

"Back there," interrupted Dr. Meade, "you can play golf only a few months of the year. The rest of the time you go to the Elks Club and play two-bit rummy."

"We love children," said his wife, "but as you get older, you don't care about having a lot of them around. The fact that you can have your own yard and flowers without worrying about children tromping through is appealing. And then again, its wonderful, having everybody on the same level. Here, they're not interested in your financial status the way they are in most communities."

"I think there's the spirit of the old original settlers out here," says Dean Babbitt, one-time president of the Sonotone Corp., who moved to Sun City from a large estate in New Hampshire to which he had already retired. "People here have pulled up stakes and started over. Whether you're living on social security or a bunch of money, it makes no difference."

Underlying it all is the oldster's feeling that Sun City is a town that is their own to shape and enjoy. They have no fear of being shouldered aside by younger men. They find they are competing with no one and the camaraderie of shared age with past achievement makes for relaxed companionship.

Webb makes no claim to be motivated entirely by Christian charity. "We knew that we were taking a calculated risk," he says, "but you have to do that in the contracting business. It was a gamble, but I was pretty damn sure it would work."

He is surprised and pleased, though, that it worked so well. Retirement housing has become a major element in the Del E. Webb Corp. and it has already built similar developments at Kern City, California, just outside Bakersfield, and at Sun City, Florida, 17 miles southeast of Tampa. Sun City California, 20 miles south of Riverside, which opened officially four weeks ago has already sold 833 units.

RICHER, POORER. Webb's Sun Cities are for only a small minority of the aged. Those who are richer can buy into a specialized old age community such as Casa del Manana in California, one of the 100-odd similar projects operated by the Methodist Church.

Those who cannot afford Sun City can always go to St. Petersburg where they can sit on pastel-colored benches in the sun and stare into space.

IC

Del E. Webb, on the cover of Time magazine August 3, 1962, with a shuffleboard court behind him in the artist's drawing, revealed nationally what and who he is:

Del Webb, the hulking, slope-shouldered, long-striding, 63-year-old, who hates to be called Delbert, could not stand the life in one of his own Sun Cities for more than a few days, or a few hours.

Though he has earned some unexpected gratitude for his retirement centers, he is better known for more rough-and-tumble activies: as co-owner of the New York Yankees, as one of the largest single builders in the U.S.

THE JOURNEYMAN. A restless barnstormer by trade and temperment, he was born in Fresno, California. His mother was the daughter of a German farmer who built one of California's first irrigation systems. His father was the son of an English evangelist. But most of Del Webb's early exposure to religion came from his father's three sisters.

"Those old ladies were so religious, they squeaked," he says. "I had to go to Sunday School and church and goddamnit, I wanted to play ball. They thought baseball was trafficking with the devil, so when I finaly went out to play, I had to do it now and then under an assumed name."

His father, a building contractor and amateur ballplayer, passed on to him the tools of his two trades, a carpenter's saw and a fast ball.

By the time he was 10, Del knew his way around the scaffolding or the infield with equal aplumb. "I can't remember not being captain of the team," he says. "When we choose sides for a pick-up game, I was always one of the guys who did the choosing."

When he was 14, his father went bankrupt and Del hit the road two years later. "I've been on the move ever since," he says. "It gets in your blood and you can't stop."

Weekdays he was a journeyman carpenter on construction jobs; weekends he played semi-professional ball. Webb hit nails and nailed hitters all over the West, from Calgary down to the Mexican border, developing at the same time a taste for old bourbon and young ladies.

During World War I, he worked on the Oakland shipyards. When it was over he married his childhood sweetheart, Hazel Church. The marriage broke up in 1952 and last year Webb married pretty brunette, Toni Ince, 41, buyer for the Bullock's Wilshire department store in Los Angeles.

20 BOURBONS A DAY. Del Webb's baseball days ended in 1925 with a crunch of cracked ribs and torn ligaments sliding home from second on a short single, followed by a bout of typhoid fever that brought his weight down from 204 pounds to 99 pounds.

When he was on his feet again, he landed a job with a small contractor in Phoenix. One day, when he was working on the construction of a new grocery store, his paycheck bounced and his employer disappeared. The owner asked Webb to take over the job and the Del E. Webb Construction Company was born.

Its total assets, one cement mixer, ten wheelbarrows, twenty shovels and ten picks. By 1935, this was a $3,000,000 business.

With World War II, the Webb company moved into the big time and built most of the air stations and military installations in Arizona and Southern California. Among current projects: he is building with George A. Fuller Company, a $62 million Minuteman Missile silo complex in Montana, and with Humble Oil Company, he is working on an estimated 375 to 500-million community covering 15,000 acres southeast of Houston, which will house the employees of NASA's new center for manned spacecraft.

World War II also made another marked change in Webb's life. He was laid up with something the Army diagnosed as the flu and a doctor was routinely taking his personal history.

As Webb tells it, "When I told him I drank from 10 to 20 bourbons a day, he damn near dropped his teeth. He said I ought to cut down but I told him I'd damn well quit, and I did." And not another drop of whiskey has passed his lips since that day. "All that time I spent drinking, I could now spend working."

Del Webb works even when he plays. The New York Yankees, which he bought with Dan Topping and Larry Macphail, for $2,000,000, in 1945 (he and Topping bought out Macphail's interest for $2,000,000 in 1947), serve him well as a developer of new business via free passes, casual meetings in the ballpark and just plain publicity.

The golf course is another fertile source of new contracts and big deals; Webb belongs to no less than 14 golf clubs around the country, shoots in the high 70s.

NO SMOKING. Supervising his diversified $75 million empire in which he stepped up recently from president to board chairman in a move to make more room at the top, Webb logs between 50,000 and 125,000 miles of flying a year. Last year he flew out to Los Angeles, talked to Long Beach officials about building their 1976 World's Fair, then to Santa Monica where his company is in charge of a $55 million redevelopment program. Then he was off to Manhattan for Old Timers' day at Yankee Stadium.

He has three full-time hotel suites: In the Beverly Hilton (which he built), the Mountain Shadows Resort in Phoenix (which he also built) and Manhattan's Waldolf Astoria (which was built in 1930-1931 when he wasn't looking).

In each of them he keeps complete wardrobes as well as caches of clothes in half a dozen other hotels around the country,.

All toll, he owns 150 suites, 90 pairs of shoes (plus 52 pairs of golf shoes), numberless outsized shirts (17 3/4 neck, 37 sleeve), snarles of 58-inch ties (normal length is 52) and "a hellufa lot of hats."

Webb is a nut about smoking. All his desks bear metal signs saying "No Smoking" and he means it. And about standardization, Webb offices are run according to the blue book, which specifies even what kind of desk calendar pads are to be used and what kind of lettering must be on the door.

Above reprinted in a special supplement to the NEWS-SUN in honor of Sun City's 20th birthday. Thursday, January 24, 1980

One employee who drove a tan car when Webb wanted all company cars to be black, found his sedan had been removed from the parking lot and repainted while he was at work.

Webb is too busy to spend much time at his retirement cities, but he did manage to spare a day last week to talk with a group of medical researchers about the establishment of a research center for gerontology at Phoenix' Sun City.

"When I see what we've built," he says, "it's the most satisfying thing that's ever happened to me. An old fellow came up to me once with tears in his eyes and thanked me for building Sun City. He said he was planning to spend the happiest years of his life here."

The mere thought of staying put so long makes Delbert Eugene Webb profoundly uneasy.

Del E. Webb, of Phoenix, is president of one of the Nation's important building firms and co-owner of the N. Y. Yankees, the best in baseball. Because he always wanted to show the Yanks to Phoenix and Arizona, his club is training here this year.

ARIZONA'S MR. BASEBALL

BY JERRY McLAIN

The "*Fightingest Club in Baseball*" comes to Arizona's capital city of Phoenix this February to sharpen its claws for the 1951 test of its invincibility on the diamond.

The New York Yankees, with Ol' Casey Stengel himself at the helm, will do their spring training this year in Phoenix sunshine, ironing out the kinks, trimming down the poundage and testing the batting eyes for a third consecutive defense of their American League and world baseball championships.

Thus will be written new chapters in two different success stories.

For the New York Yankees, this will be their first spring training in the West.

And for Del E. Webb, the tall, spare Phoenix building contractor who owns and operates a half interest in this fabulous baseball organization, this will be his first opportunity to show the Bronx Bombers to the home folks.

Some of the Yankees were out here last spring . . . Stengel . . . Yogi Berra . . . Bill Dickey . . . Frank Crosetti . . . Hank Bauer . . . Jim Turner . . . Cliff Mapes . . . and a few of the others, teaching young players some of the finer points of the game in a Yankee coaching school. But this time Owner Webb puts on a full-dress presentation, from Joe DiMaggio to Phil Rizzuto, from Vic Raschi to Jerry Coleman.

Of course, the Yankees won't be the only major league baseball team training under Arizona's sunny spring skies. The Cleveland Indians are due to return this month to the mild spring climate afforded at Tucson.

Other teams are taking notice of Arizona as ideal for spring training. The San Diego Padres of the Pacific Coast League will train for the first time at Yuma, and Head Man William Starr has an option on Panther Field there for 1952.

Folks at Mesa still had high hopes during the winter of persuading the Oakland Oaks to change their minds about possible travel difficulties because of war measures and get back to Rendezvous Park to tune for defense of that Pacific Coast League championship they annexed after their first visit to Mesa last year. If the Oaks are not available, another major or minor league club will be sought to make use of Mesa's fine training facilities.

But not even Cleveland's visit to Tucson in the spring of 1949 as the then American League and World Series champions created the stir among baseball-minded Arizonans expected to follow arrival of the Yankees this month in Phoenix.

Some rather unusual coincidences led to this Yankee spring training junket to Arizona.

There was, for instance, the coincidence of a young pitcher whose arm went bad and soured him on baseball, and how many years later he became a Yankee owner. (But that's another story, and an interesting one).

There was the coincidence of Del Webb selecting Phoenix to begin a career of which baseball was no counterpart, and of his remaining in Phoenix even after he became successful beyond his fondest dreams, even after he startled the sports world with his partnership with Dan Topping in purchase of the Yankees.

Then there was the coincidence of the friendship of Webb and Topping with affable Horace Stoneham, owner of the New York Giants.

For it was this friendship that made it possible for Del Webb to arrange to bring his Yankees to Phoenix.

For four seasons Horace Stoneham has moved his Giants to this oasis in a desert land, and, while Phoenicians always root for the Yankees because of Webb's ownership, they rally behind the Giants in every National League race. No doubt the baseball followers in the Arizona capital look upon Contractor Webb as Mr. Baseball, but they also have a great affection for the likeable Stoneham.

And so sold on Phoenix and the Valley of the Sun is the Giants' owner that in agreeing to the one-year "swap" of training sites, which sends his club this year to the Yankee camp in St. Petersburg, Fla., Stoneham told his friends:

"We have found Phoenix ideal for spring training, and frankly I hesitated a long time before agreeing to this arrangement. The training field at Phoenix, the weather, and the wholehearted support of the Phoenix people have exceeded our fondest expectations in each of the four years the Giants have trained here, and the association has been completely happy.

"At the same time I have always appreciated that Phoenix is Del Webb's home town, and that he is eager to show off his team to his neighbors and friends. To that extent it was a pleasure to accede to his request for the transfer. I do want to emphasize, however, that the Giants will be back in Phoenix in 1952."

So Arizona baseball fans will be privileged to sit on the sidelines and watch the conditioning at Phoenix and Tucson of some of the American League's finest talent, not to mention witnessing the "Grapefruit League" spring exhibition games in which major leaguers test their pre-season mettle.

The Yankees play nine of their spring exhibitions in Phoenix, and the Indians will be in action nine times at Randolph Park in Tucson. Besides Yankee-Indian clashes in both cities, they are scheduled for pre-season tests with the St. Louis Browns, Chicago White Sox, Pittsburgh Pirates and Chicago Cubs.

The Arizona schedule for the Yankees: March 10, 12 and April 3, Indians at Tucson; March 11, 13 and April 2, Indians at Phoenix; March 27 and 28, White Sox at Phoenix; March 29 and 30, Cubs at Phoenix; March 31 and April 1, Pirates at Phoenix.

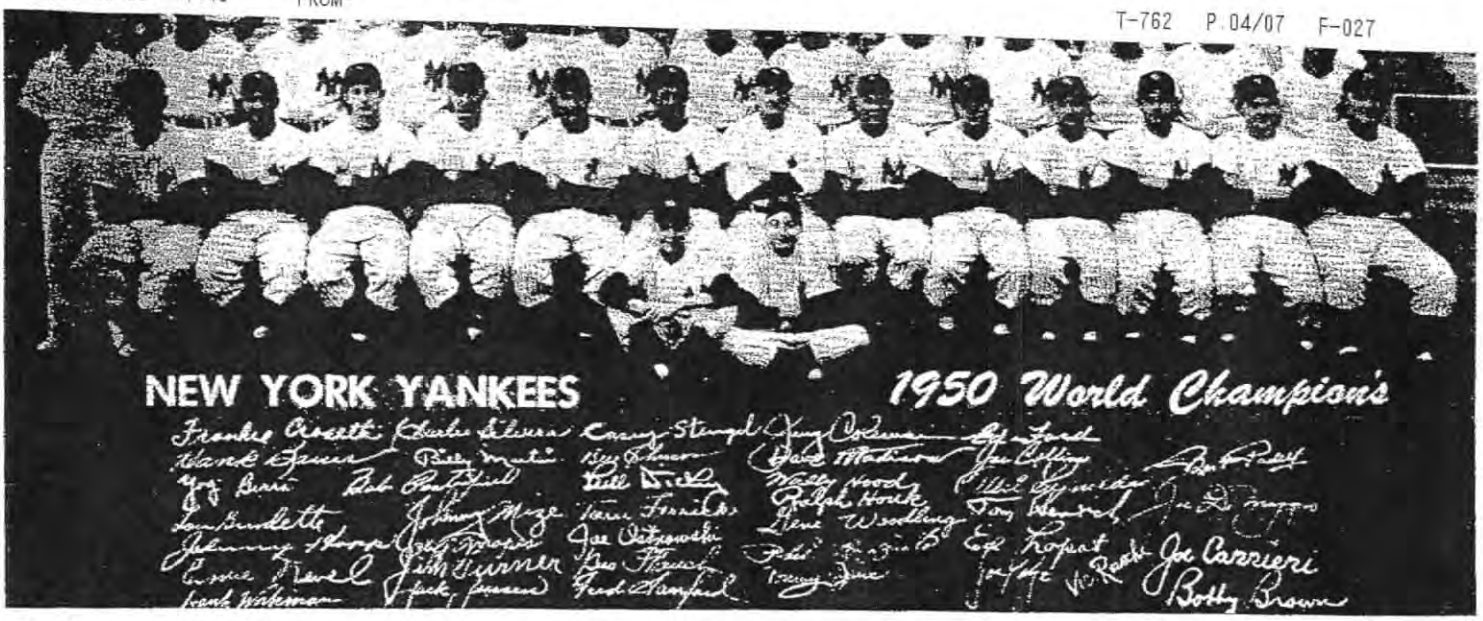
The Indians' Arizona schedule: March 10, 12 and April 3, Yankees at Tucson; March 11, 13 and April 2, Yankees at Phoenix; March 27 and 28, Browns at Tucson; March 29 and 30, Pirates at Tucson; March 31 and April 1, Cubs at Tucson.

The "Hot Stove League" has buzzed all winter about the Yankees. Were they lucky, or were they really superior champions in beating the Philadelphia Phillies four straight in the 1950 World Series?

Well, even Del Webb admits the answer probably lies somewhere between the two. The Yanks had their share of luck in the Series—as they have had for two straight seasons. But they also showed greatness in the sense that they had superlative pitching, brilliant fielding and opportune hitting from the opening of the season down to the final Series game.

The 1950 Yankees may have been a far cry from the

Young Del Webb wanted to be a ball player. Injuries cut off a promising career and turned him to contracting. But his love for the game has never diminished. Below, left, at 15, with Fresno Power Co.; center, as State leaguer; right, able pitcher.



The Yanks, no! the champs, are coming. This gallant baseball outfit will be in Phoenix for their spring training this year.

invincible Yankee machines welded together in the past. They lacked the color and the power of the Murderer's Row, and some of the Bronx Bombers of the Miller Huggins and Joe McCarthy eras.

But the 1950 Yankees led by Charles Dillon Stengel made up for that in a good many other respects.

Never was there a Yankee team with more hustle, drive and fight. Never was there a Yankee bunch who were greater opportunists. They weren't always out front, and they had to fight their way back to the top in the torrid stretch drive, but the current champions never relaxed.

They never removed the pressure from their opponents, and they never for one moment indicated they could be beaten, no matter how slim their lead was at any point.

These, then, are the Yankees who are coming to Arizona in full force—Joe DiMaggio, Phil Rizzuto, Hank Bauer, Gene Woodling, Yogi Berra, Vic Raschi, Johnny Mize, Ed Lopat, Jerry Coleman, Joe Page, Billy Johnson, Allie Reynolds, Cliff Mapes, Bobby Brown, Tommy Byrne, and all the others, including little Billy (The Kid) Martin, who batted an amazing .392 while cavorting at third base for the Phoenix Senators before he went to Oakland to help the Oaks to a Pacific Coast League pennant, then graduated to the Yankees for duty with the championship club of last season.

That the Yankees are a super-duper attraction wherever they train, there is no doubt. They have won the American League flag 17 times, and 13 of the 17 times they went on to win the World Series. Only once in 30 years have they finished out of the first division in league play.

Led by two of the game's immortals—Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig—the Yanks have smashed more records than any club in baseball history. More than 500 marks — major league, American League and World Series standards — belong to them. For nearly 30 years they have been pacesetters in batting, fielding and pitching.

The success of the Yankees has, in fact, been one of the great handicaps facing Cleveland's Indians, the pride of Tucson and all Southern Arizona when spring training time rolls 'round. The Yanks have too often been the team to beat.

Since 1901 the Indians have captured the American League flag only twice, first in 1920 under the tutelage of Tris Speaker and again in 1948 with Lou Boudreau at the helm. They came close in 1940 when they were second to Detroit, the only time in eight consecutive years the Yanks didn't finish at the top of the American League.

Although they haven't been out of the first division since 1946, the Indians were fourth last season, and Gen. Mgr. Hank Greenberg seemed impatiently awaiting the trading season with a view of strengthening the Cleveland club for the 1951 pennant chase.

The Indians produced the American League's leading pitcher last season in Bob Lemon, who won 23 while losing 11 games. It was the first time a Cleveland pitcher achieved that fame since John Allen turned the trick in 1937 with a 15-1 record, and prior to that it was George Uhle's 27-11 record in 1926 which led the league.

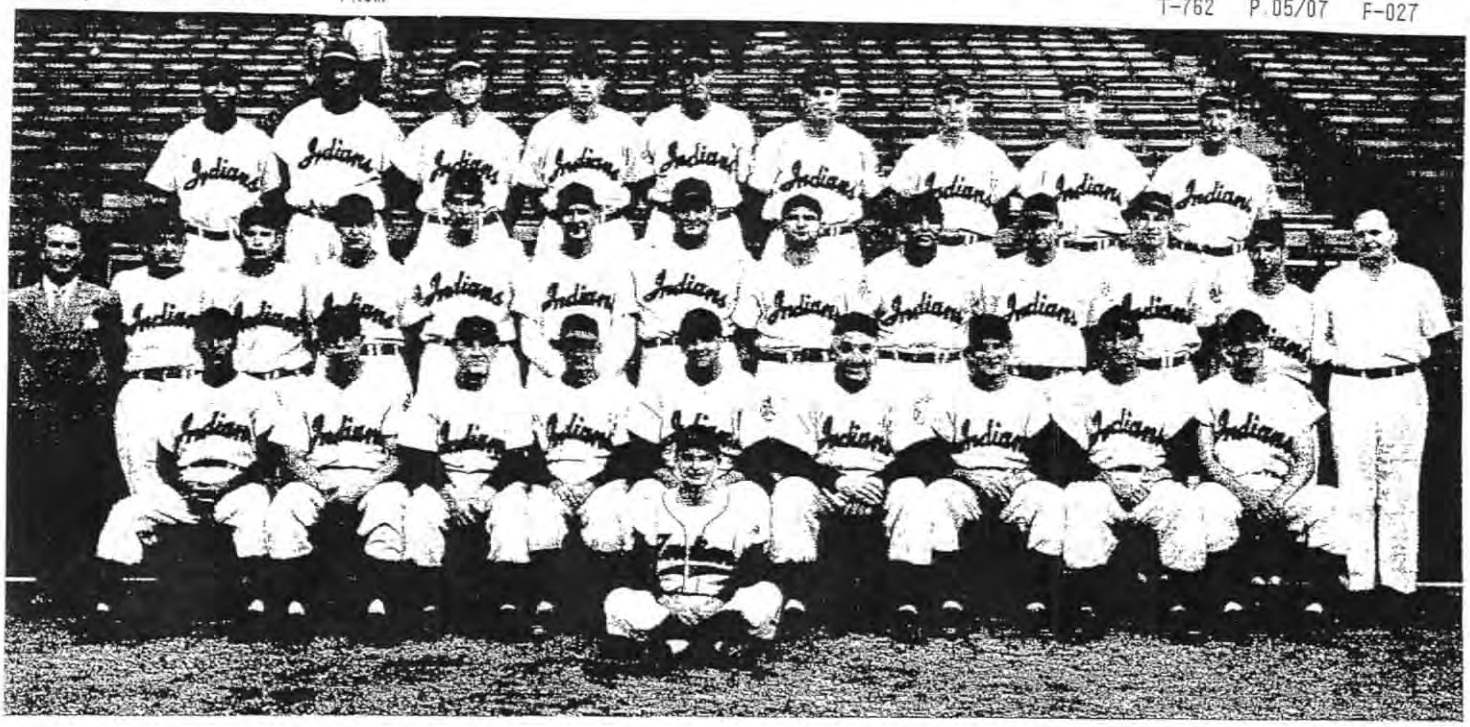
Lou Boudreau was the American League's leading batsman in 1944 with a .327 average for 150 games. His player-manager contract with Cleveland still was in force when the 1950 season ended, but he subsequently was replaced by Al Lopez, and the Indians will arrive in Arizona with a new pilot at the helm.

The training camp exchange between the Yankees and Giants has caused reverberations as far away as Florida.

So popular are the Yankees that major Florida tourist centers not only are bidding for them, but fighting among themselves over where the New Yorkers will train. The Yanks have a contract, with some years yet to run, calling for their appearance each spring in St. Petersburg, or in lieu of the Yankees a suitable major league replacement, in this case the Giants. Already the baseball-minded gentry who built a big stadium in Miami for major league exhibitions are making overtures to the Yankees.

Arizonans, of course, will try just as hard to persuade them that they should train in the future permanently in the Southwest, preferably in Arizona, as soon as they can gracefully bow out of St. Petersburg.

Their argument will be that Arizona not only provides



Down in Tucson another crackerjack club, the Cleveland Indians, will arrive this month to get ready for 1951 baseball season.

nexcelled spring training weather, but that few exhibitions n Arizona ever are rained out, and over-all attendance on he spring tour—which helps "pay the freight" for training—vill be comparable to that gained in any other part of the ation.

This spring, for instance, the Yankees will compete in exhibitions against not only the Cleveland Indians, at Tucson, but also the Chicago Cubs, Chicago White Sox, Pittsburgh Pirates and St. Louis Browns, who train in California. Since Manager Stengel resides in Glendale, California, and formerly managed the Oakland Oaks, and since Joe DiMaggio hails rom San Francisco, the Yankees are expected to be a big lrawing attraction for exhibitions in those West Coast areas.

Actually Arizona's best chance of becoming a permanent spring training site for the Yankees lies in the man who brings them here this month, Del Webb. And that brings up the story – and the Phoenix contractor often has been asked the question—of how Webb became one of the owners of the famous Yankees.

Sports writers, since Webb leaped into national sports prominence in 1945 in joining Topping in the Yankee purchase, have had a field day. They wrote about the purposeful young ballplayer of the early '20s who wound up as one of the owners of the greatest baseball organization in the world. They told how he realized the main goal in his life to get knee-deep in baseball, not as a pitcher, as he had hoped, but prominently identified nonetheless with Yanks.

But that's a bit at variance with the facts.

Some thirty years ago, while working in the Oakland shipyards, Webb was a pretty capable pitcher on the shipyard team. Former major leaguers playing with the club took quite an interest in Webb and schooled him. "It was a great opportunity to learn baseball from the ground up," he recalls. "I guess I had more good instruction than most young pitchers coming up."

In his "bush league" days Webb was a member of several pennant-winning clubs, once pitched a no-hit game, struck out 18 men in another game, and racked up six straight victories on another occasion to win a championship. As to hitting, he clouted the longest home run ever hit in the St. Helena ball park.

"The truth of the matter is, though, that rather than setting my sights on getting someplace in baseball, I had quit the game forever," he says today. "Back in 1926 I had typhoid fever, and a bad arm. I knew I was through with baseball. All told, I was laid up a year. I had a lot of time to think. The ten years I spent playing baseball was a great education and a wonderful asset. I attribute a lot of my subsequent success in business to lessons I learned on the baseball diamond. But I went to Phoenix as a carpenter, and started in the contracting business with the idea of forgetting baseball, once and for all.

"Until Dan Topping and I bought the Yankees, I saw only three games in eighteen years. One in Phoenix, one in Washington, D. C., and the first game of the 1939 World Series between the Yankees and Cincinnati as a guest of Judge Kenesaw Landis."

Then how did he happen to buy into the Yankees?

"The chance came along and I went for it, strictly from a business standpoint!"

There's more to the story than that, of course, and here's where some of the coincidences enter the picture.

While busy with World War II construction, Webb was offered an opportunity by Northern California friends who knew he once played baseball to buy the Oakland Oaks for $60,000. The contractor consulted his attorneys, and was advised the ball club might prove a good business investment. But construction matters kept Webb in Washington, and he passed up the Oakland offer.

It was in Washington, though, that Webb happened upon Larry MacPhail, an assistant to the Secretary of War. Leo Durocher had introduced them in 1938, and MacPhail broached to Webb the idea of buying the Yankees. He found Webb receptive as a result of the contractor's investigation of the Oakland offer. Webb, with others, then entered into more than a year of discussions on the Yankee purchase. Nothing came of the dickering, with negotiations finally stymied because the team was owned by the Jacob Ruppert

estate, and heirs; their attorneys could not agree on terms.

Another of the interested prospective purchasers was Topping, the New York sportsman whom Webb had met on the West Coast in the '30s. Theirs was a friendship that blossomed on the golf course. They never had seen a baseball game together.

After Webb had virtually forgotten the proposed Yankee purchase, he received a telephone call from Topping in New York. Through his own friends who were involved in settling the Ruppert estate, said Topping, he believed he could make a deal for the Yankees. He urged Webb to fly East.

Rather reluctantly the contractor withdrew from the Phoenix Open golf tournament and sped by plane to New York. In ten days of negotiations, he became an owner of the fabulous Yankees, and says today:

"MacPhail deserves a lot of credit for putting this deal together, but Dan Topping was really the one who made it possible for me to get into big league baseball because he persuaded Ed Barrow (president and general manager of the Yankees), who held the 'whip hand,' to agree to our offer."

So Webb joined in the venture strictly as a business proposition, and bought a half interest in a baseball team he had seen on the playing field only once.

They say the Yankee Dynasty, with all its trappings, was purchased for $2,850,500. That included the sprawling Yankee Stadium, and all the farm clubs. Webb and Topping became the sole owners when they bought MacPhail's interest in 1947. Today the Yankee holdings would be worth several times the original purchase price.

And this really is *big business.*

"Ball clubs used to be started by some old ballplayer getting other players together and keeping his books in his hip pocket," says Webb. "It is far beyond that these days."

He recalls that the Yankees paid more last season to the Oakland Oaks for two young players, Jackie Jensen and Billy Martin, than was asked for the Oakland club and its entire holdings less than a decade ago.

"Why, when the Yankees won the fourth and final game of the 1950 World Series before nearly 70,000 spectators in Yankee Stadium, some 75,000,000 to 100,000,000 people were listening to the game on the radio and an estimated 38,000,000 were watching it on television in cities throughout the East. Perhaps we could have sold a million seats instead of 70,000 had we had them to offer."

Mindful that the club owners receive little more than actual expenses for the first four games of any World Series (most of these profits being divided among the players), Webb declares: "I told Dan I never was happier over losing several hundred thousand dollars than when the Yanks won the fourth game in Yankee Stadium last October 7 and produced another championship. That's just what three extra games would have meant to us and the owners of the Phillies.

"I felt the same way about it when we won the Series in five games in 1949. Yet the extra two games would have meant hundreds of thousands in gate receipts to the club.

"That's what I mean by big business. An important late-season game, rained out and necessarily played later as part of a double-header, can cost the Yankees anywhere from $50,000 to $100,000 or more in gate receipts."

And professional baseball is profitable, too, for the players who wear Yankee uniforms.

Webb with Casey Stengel and young star, Bobby Brown.

Webb admits to a quality in his baseball-playing days which later was to mark his success in construction—a shrewd business sense. He quickly found he could make more money playing with outlaw clubs, and working at the same time as a carpenter, than he could as member of a coast league team. In fact, Webb was such a student of the business side of baseball that at the age of 16 he was playing-manager of a team.

But the financial rewards of that day were a far cry from the handsome returns the Yankees, for instance, enjoy today. As in the case of all major league players, they are covered by a pension plan comparable to that of any big business concern. And not only are the Yanks' salaries attractive for the eight months they train and play ball, but for almost thirty years there's been a season-end "bonus" in World Series money.

That's because the first four teams in both American and National Leagues share in division of the World Series money allotted to the players, and the Yanks have been among those first four for 29 of the last 30 years. They've been in the Series seventeen times, second six times, third five and fourth once.

Best example of what that kind of winning can mean to the individual is Frank Crosetti, a Yankee since 1932. The onetime great infielder finished his playing career in 1947, but stayed on as a coach. And since 1932 Crosetti has drawn shares in Series money aggregating something like $67,000.

Joe DiMaggio, a Yankee since 1936, besides his top-drawer salary, has shared in the Series cash to the tune of about $55,000.

The 1950 World Series sweep provided each Yankee regular, including the manager and coaches, with a $5,737.95 bonus.

But while winning ball games is important to the financial side of the ledger, Del Webb has discovered that as a Yankee owner, baseball can't all be strictly business.

"After my first press conference in New York—which, incidentally, seemed like bedlam with reporters firing questions and photographers shooting pictures—I found I had to quit being so stiff and loosen up a little bit; be more of a sport. I could see it wasn't all hardboiled business in baseball, especially when I started meeting some of the fellows I hadn't seen for years and with whom I used to play ball. In fact, I'm still meeting fellows I haven't seen for years.

Municipal Stadium, Phoenix, where Yanks will be training.

"And I can tell you that once you've played baseball, you always afterward have the bug, which I still have. You may think you can get away from it—I thought I could—but you can't. You're always interested, for it is truly the great American sport."

Businessman Webb, with his home in Phoenix, his baseball interests in New York, and his contracting business spread over the nation from the Pacific-Northwest to the Atlantic Seaboard, is one of America's most traveled executives. They say he lives on an itinerary.

But busy as he is from January to January, he never has failed to find time to make a Spring trip or a western trip with the Yankees, and when his construction business permits, he attends the big days in Yankee Stadium.

As vice-president of the Yankees, he is considerably closer to the actual operations of the baseball empire than the distance from Phoenix to New York might indicate.

"I keep in close touch, of course," he smiles proudly. "But Dan Topping, our president, is in complete charge. The club is his to run. Dan, in turn, is ably assisted by our general manager, George Weiss."

Although it may not be generally known, some of the important financial decisions concerning the Yankee operations are made in Phoenix. That's because Webb's investment has brought another Arizonan into the Yankee picture —Robert A. Becker, director and treasurer.

Oddly enough, Becker was born a half mile from Yankee Stadium. But he moved as a youngster to the Arizona mining town of Bisbee, was reared there, and came back to the big New York ball park via Phoenix, where he is Webb's right hand man and secretary-treasurer of the construction firm.

Becker began his business career with an Arizona bank, attained a high executive post, then joined Webb in the field of construction and subsequently in baseball. His visits to Yankee Stadium are, for him, too few, but his interest in the club is constant.

Ask either of these men what makes the Yankees great.

They point out that the so-called baseball experts, the sports writers, generally agreed before the start of the season—as they had in 1949—that the Yanks couldn't finish better than third, perhaps even back in the second division. They emphasized that injuries hit the team in 1949, and the ineptitude of some of the star players found the Yankees limping at times last season. Then they chuckle as they remind you that when the final out was registered, the Yankees still were the champions.

"Joe DiMaggio wasn't particularly effective as a hitter until late in the season, but he had the punch when we needed it," Owner Webb recalls. "Joe Page had one of his bad years. Tommy Henrich's bad knee limited him to a pinch-hitter's role.

"But we had incomparable Yogi Berra behind the bat, the great infielding of Gerry Coleman and little Phil Rizzuto, the fine pitching of veterans like Raschi and Reynolds, Byrne and Lopat, and the rookie sensation, Whitey Ford. We had the consistent hitting of Coleman and Bauer, and the booming bats of DiMaggio, Berra and big Johnny Mize when home runs were needed.

"And then we had Casey Stengel. I think he always does a great job of handling his men—and they all love him. They all wanted to play for him, and he had a good, fighting organization from the start."

Webb recalled this statement from a visiting manager:

" x x x They put a Yankee uniform on a player who appears to be bread-and-butter class . . . the next thing the opposition knows he's beating their brains out!"

That kind of spirit is a great thing, says the Phoenician.

"Anyone who has played baseball, from the sandlot player to high school, college, and into the big leagues, learns in the game what it means to be a regular guy, or a heel. It teaches courage; it gives you guts. It develops the kind of teamwork and organization on which many businesses and enterprises are founded in the U. S.

"Baseball is a living example of what our national sport will do for us as Americans. It is a great example for everybody in every walk of life, and I think it had its telling marks in World War II, when our boys did such a grand job. I think baseball is playing its part today, in that our men overseas get a great lift out of listening to baseball broadcasts, and it gives them something to think of, and still another reason to want to win the peace and get back home where they can enjoy our way of life."

Treasurer Becker recalled that last spring LIFE magazine ran an article titled, "I Hate The Yankees," in which the team which had just won the American League championship was berated as a kind of trust fund which won pennants year after year by the simple expedient of buying up all the talent in sight regardless of cost.

And Becker pointed to LIFE's fine editorial reply at the close of the 1950 season, when the editors said:

" x x x Let's face it. The Yankees won this year without any abundance of talent, with nothing much except the kind of heart which makes champions, and nobody can help loving. x x x Three teams—Detroit, Boston and Cleveland—should have beaten them, but none of the three could do it. x x x The Yankees really had no right to win this year except from force of habit. We take everything back and congratulate the Yankees on their habits."

Thus, it seems, there is something intangible, but nonetheless powerful in merely being a Yankee.

It makes the strong, and usually turns the weak, into factors of strength.

Now and then the formula fails. But such experiences serve all the more to stress the strength of the psychology of the New York Yankee uniform, the New York Yankee clubhouse, and the New York Yankee spirit.

Del Webb Corporation News

Listed as WBB on the New York and Pacific Stock Exchanges
Internet: http://www.delwebb.com

6001 NORTH 24TH STREET
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85016
(602) 808-8000
FAX (602) 808-8097

Contact: Sandy Painter
(602) 222-4343

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 25, 2001

THE ARIZONA CONNECTION:
NEW YORK YANKEES HAD LONG HISTORY IN *THE DESERT* WHEN OWNER WAS LEGENDARY PHOENIX-BASED BUILDER DEL WEBB

PHOENIX -- It's not so strange that the New York Yankees will be playing the first game of the World Series in the desert. In fact, the Yankees relationship with Arizona goes back more than five decades when the "pinstripes" were owned by Phoenix business mogul Del Webb.

Webb's ownership role with the Yankees came during one of the team's most fabled eras -- from 1945-65. With dynamic players like Joe DiMaggio, Whitey Ford, Don Larsen, Mickey Mantle and others on the team, plus managers like Casey Stengel, baseball's most storied franchise won the World Series 10 times in the 20-year stretch Webb owned them.

Webb's passion was always baseball, but he also made an extraordinary impact on the nation's landscape. In 1960 Webb opened the first Sun City retirement community and began to revolutionize the concept of retirement with his active adult communities that now stretch from coast to coast.

"I applied the rules of baseball to business," he used to say.

No better statement exemplified the blending of Webb's two worlds. He grew up with a hammer in one hand, a baseball glove on the other. Webb went on to own one of the largest development firms in the country and the best-known baseball team in the world.

"Baseball is a living example of what our national sport will do for us as Americans. It is a great example for everybody in every walk of life...," Webb once said. "It teaches courage; it

gives you guts. It develops the kind of teamwork and organization on which many businesses and enterprises are founded."

Webb was the majority owner of the Yankees, purchased in 1945 with partners Dan Topping and Larry MacPhail for $2,850,500. The deal included not only the team, but ownership of Yankee Stadium and all the Yankees farm clubs as well.

Under his ownership, the Yankees were a perennial powerhouse winning 15 American League Pennants and 10 World Series Championships (five of those set the record for consecutive title from 1949 to 1953).

"Del was an ideal owner," once remarked Yankee great Yogi Berra. "He left the business of baseball to the pros, knowing they would make mistakes, but that's the way it is and should be." In addition, Webb gave the general manager free reign to sign the players and the coaches to run the team on the field.

Saturday's first game of the 2001 World Series against the Arizona Diamondbacks won't be the first time the Yanks have played in Phoenix. During his tenure as owner, Webb brought "the Fightingest Club in Baseball" to town for spring training in February 1951 courtesy of then New York Giants owner Horace Stoneham.

Webb and Stoneham "swapped" training sites that year so Webb could show off his team to the supportive hometown crowd while the Giants headed to Florida. It was the only year the Yankees, fresh from their 1950 World Series win, trained here.

Phoenix baseball fans got to see DiMaggio, Berra, Phil Rizzuto, Hank Bauer, Billy Johnson, Allie Reynolds, Bobby Brown and little Billy (The Kid) Martin play and tried hard to make Phoenix the team's permanent spring training camp.

There were other "firsts" in Webb's career as owner including the team's first night game at Yankee Stadium and the debut game of Yankee legends Mickey Mantle, Roger Maris and Berra in the 1950s.

As a young man in Fresno, Calif., Webb learned carpentry as a hobby while pursuing baseball. When his father fell upon some financial trouble, Webb was forced to quit high school and become a carpenter's apprentice but only worked for companies with a baseball team.

His dreams of playing professional baseball ended at the age of 26 when he contracted typhoid fever. In order to recuperate, Webb moved to Phoenix.

The event proved to be a turning point in his life. Forced to put away his glove, Webb poured all his energy and talents into carpentry. In 1927, he began the Del Webb Company. Despite the ensuing Depression years, the company quickly grew, and by the mid-1930s it had offices in 12 states.

Webb is best known for creating Sun City, an innovative community that was designed exclusively for retirees, which opened near Phoenix in 1960. The event changed forever the way society would view retirement and for this he was recognized on the cover of *Time* magazine.

Webb also built or made improvements to some of baseball's best-known facilities including Yankee Stadium and Chicago's Wrigley Field. His firm built the 44,000-seat Anaheim Stadium for the Los Angeles Angels owner Gene Autry in 1966. Webb-built Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City brought baseball to the game's smallest market, helping the sport reach out to new fans in the 1970s.

Hotel development would provide additional opportunities for the company's success. He and Howard Hughes would become instrumental in polishing the image of Las Vegas.

4444 NEW YORK YANKEES HAVE LONG HISTORY IN THE VALLEY 4444

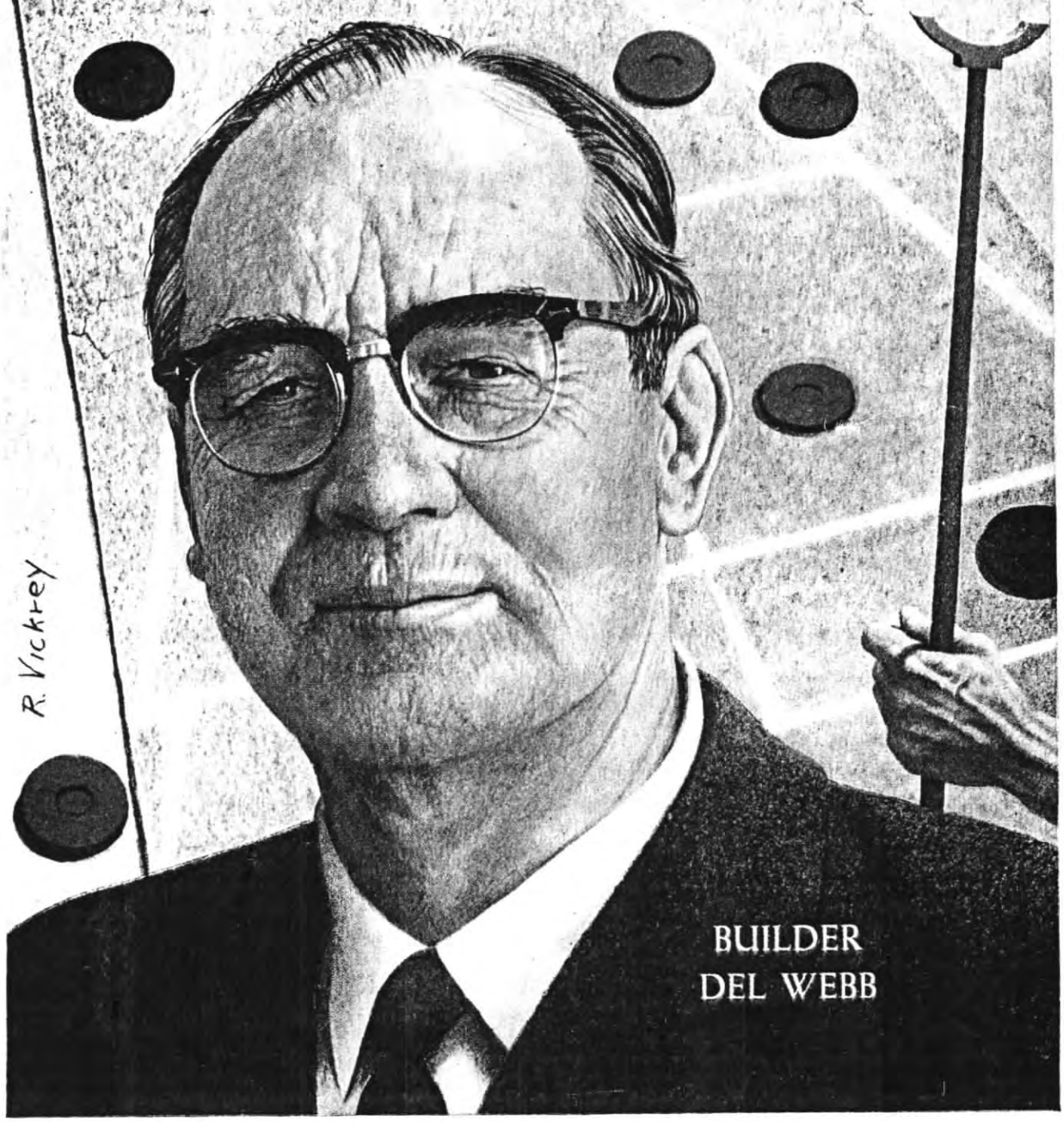
Webb died in 1974. Today, the company Webb founded is the nation's leading builder of active adult communities for people 55 and older and is part of Pulte Homes (NYSE: PHM). Del Webb also operates multi-generational and country club communities in Nevada and Arizona. Four of Del Webb's communities are currently ranked in the top 10 of the best-selling master planned communities in America.

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS AUGUST 3, 1962

THE RETIREMENT CITY
A New Way of Life for the Old

TIME

THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE



R. Vickrey

BUILDER
DEL WEBB

VOL. LXXX NO. 5

HERB MC LAUGHLIN

DEL WEBB WITH SUN CITY OLDSTERS
Wheels for potters, easels for painters, and a place in the sun.

MODERN LIVING

THE FAMILY

A Place in the Sun

(See Cover)

He was not what anybody would call an old man. His hair was grey, but it was far from white; his face was lined but not wrinkled. He looked down at his strong, freckled hands:

"I don't know what to do with myself these days," he said. "I'm supposed to be old—I was 65 last fall—but God knows I don't feel old. The company is right about the retirement age, I suppose; it has to make places for younger men. But what happens to us?"

He was sitting on the porch of his son's house in Fair Haven, N.J., watching his granddaughter perambulate her favorite doll in the summer sunshine, but he might have been anywhere in the U.S. His cry and his question are being heard more often and more urgently everywhere—in Southern drawl and Northern twang, in city and suburb, cold-water flat and executive suite.

Time & Money. The man on the porch is a member of the U.S.'s fastest-growing minority—the so-called aged. Because of modern medicine, U.S. citizens are living longer. In the first half of the 20th century, life expectancy at birth increased 17.6 years for men and 20.3 years for women. Today 17.4 million U.S. citizens are 65 or over. Between 1950 and 1960, the over-65 population increased about twice as fast as the total population. Between 1920 and 1960, the number of people 75 or more increased by 279%, and the number 85 and older increased by a phenomenal 920%. Estimates are that by the year 2000 the number of U.S. citizens past the normal retirement age of 65 will have doubled, and they will make up 10% of the population—comprising in all a body of people larger than the present population of Spain, or more than triple that of Australia.

At 65, the man on the porch can expect 12.7 more years of life. He has money, or at least a modest income. The 17 million Americans over 65 have an aggregate annual income of $32 billion—nearly $9 billion from social security; $5.3 billion from private sources such as interest, dividends, rents, etc.; $11 billion from retainers or consultation fees, odd jobs and other employment; the rest from annuities, life insurance, public aid, company and Government pensions. And their total income will be increasing as the oldest generations (who tended by and large to depend on relations for support) die out, and as the effect of the huge expansion in company retirement plans makes itself felt. Today there are some 22 million employees covered by private pensions, and an estimated 1,000,000 are added yearly. The total sum paid out on pension plans in 1935 was only $100 million; last year it was $1.8 billion.

Too Old to Work. But what does the man on the porch do with his money and his time, finding himself, as Walter Reuther once put it, "too old to work and too young to die"?

The most productive society in the world is slowly realizing that it has not found the answer, or answers. The problem has crept upon the nation and caught it almost unawares—the unanticipated result of shifts that in themselves seemed to be clearly progressive. Partly, it has arisen from the policy of progressive management in industry, which has standardized 65 as a retirement age for janitors and vice presidents; partly, it is a result of the U.S.'s increasing urbanization. Back in 1900, 600 out of every 1,000 Americans lived on farms, where grandparents remained part of the family even if it meant moving into the attic bedroom. In 1960, only 87 in 1,000 Americans still lived on farms, and there is no room for three generations in a city apartment or a suburban housing development.

In a society that tends to judge who a man is by what he does, the vigorous oldster suffers a special stress. Says Boston Gerontologist Natalie Cabot: "Nobody ever suddenly becomes Negro or Jewish, but people do suddenly become retired. They become a minority almost overnight, and it hits them hard, usually within the first three weeks." A retired man finds himself not only without a job but without an "identification tag": someone accustomed to thinking of himself as a railroad man or an insurance executive is often seriously disoriented when he finds that he is no longer anything at all.

Staying Put. Surveys show that most oldsters (90%) stay put in the town where they have always lived before retirement overtook them. But few any longer live with their children. This traditional solution is packed with hazard in

GREY VILLET—LIFE

SITTERS IN ST. LOUIS

contemporary America. The young people's sense of their right to live their own lives conflicts with the Biblical injunction to "honor thy father and thy mother." The old folks' conviction that "I don't want to be a burden" conflicts with "after all I've done for them, they owe it to me."

"The kinship relationship of the older person has changed," says Professor Emeritus Ernest Watson Burgess of the University of Chicago. "My grandfather lived on a farm. His sons would come to him for advice about farming. Daughters would ask grandmother about how to raise their children. Now the son goes to the agricultural agent for advice, and the one thing the daughter knows is—she isn't going to raise her children the way her mother raised her."

Often the oldsters take their diminished income and move into a back-street boardinghouse or walk-up flat, clinging to the places they have known, while the winters grow colder and old friends fewer. Often they feel increasingly isolated and rejected as the visits from children become rarer—seeing the doctor more and more often, penny-pinching their fixed income against the upward-creeping cost of living, and trying to keep something by against the high cost of dying.

In fact, the old in general are less afraid of dying than of contracting a long and expensive illness that would make them a disastrous burden to their families or force them into the charity wards. People who might be able to live reasonably well on a modest income do not dare to spend it, feel compelled instead to scrape and save every penny against the day that they may fall ill.

It is this fear—and its crippling effect on the spendable income of the aged—that has made medicare, in one form or another, a compelling social need and a political issue. The long-drawn battle in Congress that led to the recent defeat of the Anderson-Javits bill was in part a dispute over how the need should be met. Some still argue that it is enough to rely largely on private insurance plans, but in a recent study the Brookings Institute concluded: "The fragmentary evidence available suggests that health insurance does not meet more than one-sixth of total medical costs of the insured or one-fourteenth of the total for all the aged."

Doing Nothing. Some 2.4% of the nation's 65-and-over oldsters have been forced to give up the fight for self-reliant existence and have entered one of the thousands of institutions for the aged that range downward from expensive private adequacy to public squalor. Whether they are in converted Manhattan brownstones or onetime country estates, mental and physical deterioration usually comes fast amid the frayed checkerboards, the flickering television sets and the cold tea. In one such home on the Eastern seaboard, a former foreman said softly to a visitor last week: "I can't think of anything useful I can do any more, and I don't want to sit around doing nothing. So I just sleep for longer spells, hoping it will end."

But one out of every ten oldsters has had enough energy and gumption—or is sufficiently rootless—to pull up stakes, sell the house, dispose of the furniture, and often strike out for a place where he can warm his thinning blood in the hot sun. Many of the less well-off have flocked to such geriatric capitals as St. Petersburg, Fla., where 28.1% of the population is 65 or over.* The more affluent might choose the expensive isolation of a palm-fringed plot in the Virgin Islands or a Pacific beach front in Southern California.

Geriatric Heresy. But for the growing army of active oldsters willing and able to cut out and start a new life, a dramatically successful solution has grown up during the past few years: the "retirement city," restricted to people of a certain age.

Chief developer of the retirement cities is a 6-ft. 4-in., 63-year-old maelstrom of restless energy named Delbert Eugene Webb (*see box*). Construction is Del Webb's business—construction of anything and everything from a silo to a skyscraper—and in 1955, casting about for ways and means to expand his burgeoning Del E. Webb Corp., he bethought himself of the retirement market.

"My grandfather, Jimmy Webb, used to grouch about being old with nothing to do," he says. "My old man used to say it was only the railroad companies that did anything for the guys it retired. Well, it's pretty grim, being old with nothing to do." Webb assigned one of his lieutenants to see what could be done.

The man he picked for the job was Thomas E. Breen, a vice president of the Webb Corp. and, coincidentally, the son of famed Joseph Breen, longtime head of Hollywood's Hays Office. A former actor himself and onetime marine, Breen began by reading up on geriatrics and visiting places like St. Petersburg, which depressed him with its drab rooming houses and its thousands of elderly people "just sitting around on benches." He decided that activities should be important in any program that Webb might undertake. He was also frequently assured by gerontologists that old folks hated to be cut off from the cross section of ages that make up regular communities. But a little-publicized community that flew directly in the face of this orthodox doctrine began to interest him.

Adults Only. It was called Youngtown, and was some 16 miles northwest of Webb's home office in Phoenix, Ariz. Since 1954 it had been growing slowly on

* Other cities with a high proportion of oldsters: Miami Beach (pop. 63,145), with 28.2%; Clearwater, Fla. (pop. 34,653), with 20.7%; Santa Cruz, Calif. (pop. 25,596), with 25.1%; Lake Worth, Fla. (pop. 20,758), with 28.8%.

J. EDWARD BAILEY

DANCERS IN DETROIT

ERNEST E. RESHOVSKY

RIDERS IN FRESNO'S CITIZENS VILLAGE

FRED WARD—BLACK STAR

CARDPLAYERS IN ST. PETERSBURG

In Southern drawls and Northern twangs, the cry is the same.

the unusual principle that no one less than 60 was allowed to move in. Despite this geriatric heresy, and despite the lack of facilities for shopping or recreation, the houses at Youngtown were steadily selling. Breen decided that there might be something in the age-segregation idea, no matter what the experts said.

By 1959 Webb had a clear-cut proposal to decide on: Should he commit $2,000,000 to building a community that would be limited to residents 50 years old or more with no school-age children, a community that would be strong on recreation and part-time employment? Basic to the proposal was the notion that all its facilities—golf course, swimming pool, shopping center, etc.—should be installed before the first house was sold ("There's no point in trying to sell futures to a guy who's 65 years old," argued Breen). Webb decided the risk was worth it, and the first of Webb's Sun Cities—30,000 acres northeast of Phoenix—began to sell houses five months later.

To Webb's astonishment, 272 were sold the first weekend. Built of concrete blocks in pleasant pastel colors, the houses were priced from $8,750 to $11,600 for three bedrooms, two baths. (A house on the golf course, which snakes through the community, cost $1,450 more.) Both FHA and bank financing were offered, with monthly payments varying from $73 to $114. Sun City customers were not rich, but Webb found that more than half wanted to pay cash. The purchasers were usually men of solid substance—former engineers, successful salesmen, foremen, dentists, small businessmen, schoolteachers—with money in the bank, often as the result of selling the house back home.

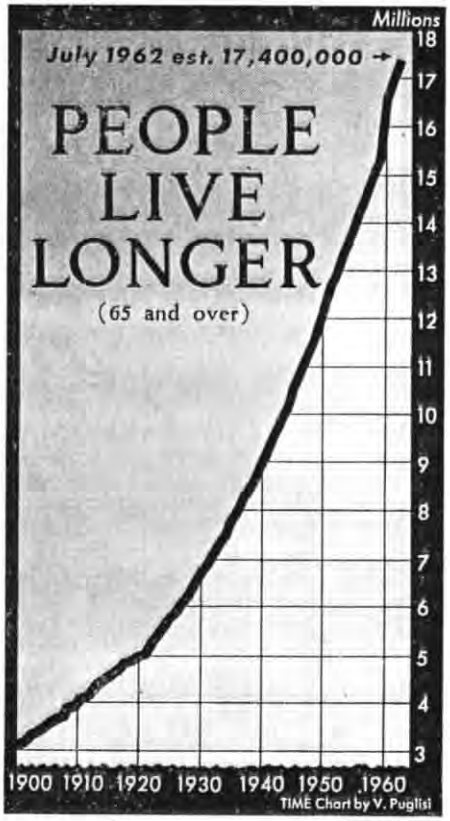
Del Webb and his staff found that they had miscalculated on only one point: instead of wanting to work at least part-time, most Sun citizens have been happy to spend all day at play.

Healthy & Busy. There is plenty to play with. Like a laird of the manor, Webb has supplied his tenants with almost anything and everything they want to keep them on the go. If a sufficient number want to play *boccie*, Webb supplies an alley. There are potter's wheels for the potters, easels for the painters. In a proliferation of more than 90 clubs and organizations, Sun City oldsters bicycle and grow vegetables, take pictures, dance, do exercises, sing, sew, act, bowl, swim, and play almost every kind of game from canasta to chess.

All this activity—organized spontaneously by Sun City residents without artificial "cruise-director" stimulation—seems to make oldsters healthier as well as happier; they make fewer trips to the doctor, and the death rate is actually lower than for comparable age groups elsewhere. Hypochondriacs are at a minimum; when one of Sun City's three resident doctors gets a call, he knows he had better get there fast.

Helping the doctors is the Sunshine Committee—200 volunteers organized by the Rev. E. Duane Thistlethwaite, 70, a retired Methodist minister—who take the sick to doctors and hospitals, lend wheelchairs, crutches, and even money to widows waiting for their social security or estate funds to start coming in. With typical Sun City initiative, the community church (an amalgam of 35 Protestant denominations) is currently raising money for a small nursing home for long-term cases.

Pioneer Spirit. "We love all the things you can do out here," says Dr. Chester L. Meade, 76, a tanned, lithe, white-haired man who gave up his dental practice in Mason City, Iowa, and moved to Sun City last November. His wife Mabel



chimed: "People say, 'But don't you miss Mason City?' Those dear friends, yes, but not Mason City. We're not lonely at all, and the people are so friendly here."

"Back there," interrupted Dr. Meade, "you can play golf only a few months of the year. The rest of the time you go to the Elks Club and play two-bit rummy."

"We love children," said his wife. "But as you get older, you don't care about having a lot of them around. The fact that you can have your own yard and flowers without worrying about children traipsing through is appealing. And then again, it's wonderful having everybody on the same level. Here they're not interested in your financial status the way they are in most communities."

"I think there's the spirit of the old original settlers out here," says Dean Babbitt, onetime president of the Sonotone Corp., who moved to Sun City from a large estate in New Hampshire to which he had already retired. "People here have pulled up stakes and started over. Whether you're living on social security or a bunch of money, it makes no difference."

Underlying it all is the oldsters' feeling that Sun City is a town that is their own to shape and enjoy. They have no fear of being shouldered aside by younger men. They find that they are competing with no one, and the camaraderie of shared age and past achievement makes for relaxed companionship.

Webb makes no claim to be motivated entirely by Christian charity. "We knew we were taking a calculated risk," he says, "but you have to do that in the contracting business. It was a gamble, but I was pretty damn sure it would work."

He is surprised and pleased, though, that it worked so well. Retirement housing has become a major element in the Del E. Webb Corp., and it has already built similar developments at Kern City, Calif. (just outside Bakersfield), and at Sun City, Fla. (17 miles southeast of Tampa). Sun City, Calif. (20 miles south of Riverside), which opened officially four weeks ago, has already sold 833 units.

Richer or Poorer. Webb's Sun Cities are only for a small minority of the aged. Those who are richer can buy into specialized old-age communities such as the Casa de Mañana in La Jolla, Calif., one of 100-odd similar projects operated by the Methodist Church. The La Jolla colony has fewer recreational facilities than Sun City, but its chief feature is guaranteed until-death medical care, including treatment in the colony's hospital. The price can be high: as much as $27,500. For this, plus a monthly $200 maintenance charge, a buyer receives lifetime tenancy of an ocean-view cottage, free meals in the community center, free linens, and cleaning service every two weeks.

In most other church-sponsored groups, the custom has been to demand a "founder's fee," which means the tenant has to pay a proportionate share of the building cost of the entire project. In some cases, he also has to agree to remain in the project for life, and to assign the community all personal assets in exchange for permanent care until death (many oldsters find this humiliating and restrictive of their freedom of choice).

Those who cannot afford Sun City can always go to St. Petersburg, where they can sit on pastel-colored benches in the sun and stare into space, or tell each other what they did yesterday. In St. Pete, they can have their blood pressure taken for 35¢ at a street-corner booth, or play shuffleboard on 107 courts. They can listen to free band concerts almost any day in the year, or dance most evenings for a quarter, or "Eat Like a King for $1.60"—or less.

Lonely in the Sun. And this is important, for 85% of them are living on less than $5,000 a year, 11% on less than $1,000. "What you do," explained one octogenarian, "is sleep good and late in the morning. That way I eat a breakfast for lunch about 11 o'clock, and then I don't have to eat lunch at all. Sure I'm

Man on the Cover: DEL WEBB

DEL WEBB, the hulking, slope-shouldered, long-striding 63-year-old who hates to be called Delbert, could not stand the life in one of his own Sun Cities for more than a few days—or a few hours. Though he has earned some unexpected gratitude for his retirement centers, he is better known for more rough-and-tumble activities as co-owner of the New York Yankees and as one of the largest single builders in the U.S.

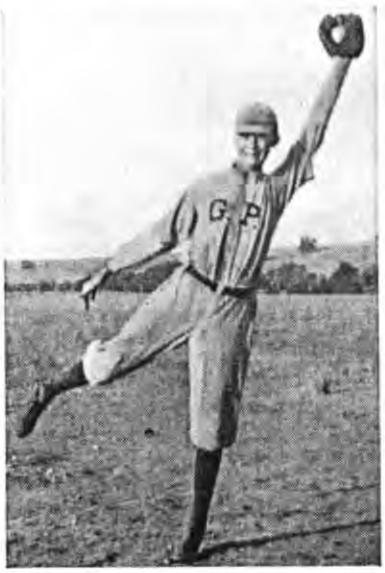
The Journeyman. A restless barnstormer by trade and temperament, he was born in Fresno, Calif. His mother was the daughter of a German farmer, who built one of California's first irrigation systems. His father was the son of an English evangelist, but most of Del Webb's early exposure to religion came from his father's three sisters. "Those old ladies were so religious they squeaked," he says. "I had to go to Sunday school and church, and—goddammit—I wanted to play ball. They thought baseball was trafficking with the devil, so when I finally went off to play, I had to do it now and then under an assumed name."

His father, a building contractor and amateur ballplayer, passed on to him the tools of his two trades—a carpenter's saw and a fast ball. By the time he was ten, Del knew his way around a scaffolding or an infield with equal aplomb. "I can't remember not being captain of the team," he says. "When we chose sides for a pick-up game, I was always one of the guys who did the choosing."

When he was 14, his father went bankrupt, and Del hit the road two years later. "I've been on the move ever since," he says. "It gets in your blood and you can't stop." Weekdays he was a journeyman carpenter on construction jobs; weekends he played semiprofessional ball. Webb hit nails and nailed hitters all over the West, from Calgary down to the Mexican border, developing at the same time a taste for old bourbon and young ladies. During World War I, he worked in the Oakland shipyards; when it was over, he married his childhood sweetheart, Hazel Church. The marriage broke up in 1952, and last year Webb married pretty, brunette Toni Ince, 41, buyer for the Bullock's-Wilshire department store in Los Angeles.

20 Bourbons a Day. Del Webb's baseball days ended in 1925 with a crunch of cracked ribs and torn ligaments, sliding home from second on a short single, followed by a bout of typhoid fever that brought his weight down from 204 lbs. to 99 lbs. When he was on his feet again, he landed a job with a small contractor in Phoenix. One day, when he was working on the construction of a new grocery store, his paycheck bounced, and his employer disappeared. The grocer asked young Webb to take over the job, and the Del E. Webb Construction Co. was born. Its total assets: one cement mixer, ten wheelbarrows, 20 shovels and ten picks.

By 1935, this was a $3,000,000 business. With World War II, the Webb company moved into the big time, built most of the air stations and military installations in Arizona and Southern California. Among current projects, he is building with George A. Fuller Co. a $62 million Minuteman missile silo complex in Montana, and with Humble Oil Co. is working on an estimated $375-$500 million community, covering 15,000 acres southeast of Houston, which will house the employees of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's new center for manned spacecraft.



BALLPLAYER WEBB (1913)

World War II also made another marked change in Webb's life. He was laid up with something the Army diagnosed as flu, and a doctor was routinely taking his personal history. As Webb tells it: "When I told him I drank from ten to 20 bourbons a day, he damn near dropped his teeth. He said I ought to cut down, but I told him I'd damn well quit. And I did. Not another drop of whisky has passed my lips since that day. All that time I spent drinking, I could now spend working."

Del Webb works even when he plays. The New York Yankees, which he bought with Dan Topping and Larry MacPhail for $2,800,000 in 1945 (he and Topping bought out MacPhail's interest for $2,000,000 in 1947), serve him well as a developer of new business via free passes, casual meetings in the ballpark, and just plain publicity. The golf course is another fertile source of new contracts and big deals; Webb belongs to no less than 14 golf clubs around the country, shoots in the high 70s.

No Smoking. Supervising his diversified $75 million empire, in which he stepped up recently from president to board chairman in a move to make more room at the top,* Webb logs between 50,000 and 125,000 miles of flying a year. Last week he flew out to Los Angeles, talked to Long Beach officials about building their 1966 World's Fair, then to Santa Monica, where his company is in charge of a $55 million redevelopment program. Then he was off to Manhattan for Old Timers' Day at Yankee Stadium. He has three fulltime hotel suites—in the Beverly Hilton (which he built), the Mountain Shadows Resort in Phoenix (which he also built), and Manhattan's Waldorf Astoria (which was built in 1930-31 when he wasn't looking). In each of them, he keeps complete wardrobes, as well as caches of clothes in half a dozen other hotels across the country. All told, he owns 150 suits, 90 pairs of shoes (plus 52 pairs of golf shoes), numberless outsize shirts (17¾ neck, 37 sleeve), snarls of 58-in. ties (normal length is 52 in.) and "a helluva lot of hats."

Webb is a nut about smoking (all his desks bear metal signs saying NO SMOKING, and he means it) and about standardization. Webb offices are run according to "The Blue Book," which specifies even what kind of desk calendar pads are to be used and what kind of lettering must be on the door. One employee who drove a tan car when Webb wanted all company cars to be black found his sedan had been removed from the parking lot and repainted while he was at work. Webb is too busy to spend much time at his retirement cities. But he did manage to spare a day last week to talk with a group of medical researchers about the establishment of a research center for gerontology at Phoenix's Sun City. "When I see what we've built," he says, "it's the most satisfying thing that's ever happened to me. An old fellow came up to me once with tears in his eyes and thanked me for building Sun City. He said he was planning to spend the happiest 40 years of his life there." The mere thought of staying put so long makes Delbert Eugene Webb profoundly uneasy.

* New president is 49-year-old LaVergne Jacobson, who signed on with Webb in 1938 as a $25-a-week timekeeper.

lonely. But it's better to be lonely here in all this sunshine than back in Cincinnati. The old neighborhood's gone now."

At St. Pete's Municipal Pier one recent evening, 94-year-old Bill Robinson was on the stage quavering *Let Me Call You Sweetheart* into the microphone. Three ladies were talking in the back of the room. "I can sleep up a storm," said one, "especially if it's raining." A man joined them. "Got up about noon," he said. "Went down to Williams Park and read the paper. Went home and took a nap. Ate at the Driftwood—soup, roast beef, carrots, mashed potatoes, Jell-O, coffee for $1.25. Went to prayer meeting. Heard a lecture. Moseyed out here to see who's here."

Arnold Baker, a 75-year-old former engineer on the Maine Central Railroad, watched the square dancing at the Senior Citizens' Center (this produces several heart attacks a year) and winked at some of the women who were acting kittenish. "You can have a lot of fun in this town if you don't just sit down and die," he said. "You got to keep on the move. I play cards a lot, take a girl out to dinner now and then."

New Help. The more lavish retirement centers will probably never be within the reach of most people who retire. But in recent years, the U.S. has slowly gotten around to helping with the housing of what the politicians like to call "our senior citizens." In 1956 Congress passed a law making public housing funds available to housing projects for the elderly. Subsequent laws and amendments authorized direct loans for private, nonprofit housing of old people—sponsored by church groups, labor unions, individuals, etc.—at extremely liberal rates (interest as low as 3⅜% on mortgages running as long as 50 years). There is also an FHA mortgage insurance program to be applied to old-age housing, under which a nonprofit organization needs only about 2% in working capital to finance an old-age housing project. In addition FHA mortgage insurance is also available for recreational facilities in old-age projects, as it is not for ordinary multiple-dwelling developments.

Utilizing one aspect or another of this federal support, a variety of new projects has begun. One is a new cooperative apartment community called Leisure World, about 25 miles south of Los Angeles, and designed eventually to provide some 6,750 units. Along with their apartments, Leisure Worldlings are supplied with free drugs, 24-hour visiting-nurse service, laboratory facilities, and a staff of ten fulltime doctors and 26 registered nurses—all at a cost of roughly $100 a month after a relatively modest down payment of $963.

LARRY MULVEHILL

SUN CITY, ARIZ., FROM ALOFT
Among the pastel blocks, the spirit of original settlers.

Satellite Units. Leisure World is frankly aimed at the infirm: all electrical outlets are placed two feet above the floor to minimize stooping; all stairs are replaced by ramps. Designed to provide a busy life for the more active (but making provision for the hovering possibility of illness) is Olympia, whose organizers visualize it as a kind of Le Corbusier "Green City" of high-rise apartment buildings set in the green New Jersey countryside near Freehold, served by its own shopping center, medical and recreational facilities.

The United Church of Christ intends to sponsor an elaborate series of projects diametrically opposite to Webb's concept of entire cities for the elderly. The United plan is to scatter clusters of dwelling units through an existing city—some in downtown areas, some on the outskirts—to keep the oldsters near their families and integrated in the community. The satellite units will have a centrally located core containing health services, a common dining room, and recreational center. With FHA support, the United Church figures that people with as little as $1,800 a year income can afford to live in United Church projects. The first one is scheduled for Vermilion, a resort town some 35 miles from Cleveland, with others to follow in Ohio. Still other United Church projects are planned for Baltimore, Santa Clara, Calif., Sarasota, Fla., and Walnut, Iowa.

Village & City. One of the biggest projects set up under the newly liberalized federal financing is California's Senior Citizens Village near Fresno. Like Webb's Sun City, it is an oldsters-only community, with many recreational facilities. But unlike Sun City, it is nonprofit and consists entirely of apartments. Furthermore, medical consultation is provided as part of the package (but no hospitalization or drugs), and its pastel-colored, concrete-block buildings are designed for a lower-income-level oldster (apartments start at $70.50). Senior Citizens began moving into the Fresno village last December, and today more than three-quarters of the 557 units are occupied. The second of what is planned as a chain of such villages is under construction—the Portals Senior Citizens Village, some 100 miles north of Los Angeles.

Father of the Senior Citizens Villages is tall, silver-haired George Henry McLain, 60, fiercely mustachioed and fiercely dedicated to the old people's cause. The Depression of the '30s gave him his lifework. "My father applied for an old-age pension, and what with all the humiliating things they made him do to get his piddling $15 a month, I channeled my anger into the area of aiding the elderly." For the past 23 years he has been at it, and to the 60,000 members of his California League, McLain is "Mister Senior Citizen," who has judiciously wielded the voting power of his elders and their children to win concession after concession from the California legislature. His latest effort was a proposal for a $100 million bond-financed revolving fund aimed to provide low-interest loans for old-age housing, which was resoundingly defeated by the voters in last June's primary. McLain will try something else.

McLain does not think his "villages" are in competition with Webb's "cities," which, he says, "are for the more affluent elderly who can more than afford to pay for them. Our aim is to create low-cost, quality rentals, and at the same time, like Sun City, give the old folks a good, busy life. It's got to be like a long vacation on a cruise ship—never a dull moment."

The final solution is not yet in sight. But at least planners have begun to fumble at solutions. The issue has become —and it should—an immediate concern for every U.S. citizen. After all, statistically speaking, any voter in the U.S., if he is not already, can look forward to being 65.

'NO RETIREE, HE'—

Del Webb Began Building When Paycheck Bounced

Del Webb, developer of Del Webb's Sun City east of Ruskin, and other retirement communities in the Far West, is the subject of cover articles in the Aug. 3 edition of Time Magazine.

Webb

A painting of Webb decorates the cover and in addition to an article on retirement problems and how Webb is solving them, there is a biographical piece which is printed in full as follows:

"Del Webb, the hulking, slope-shouldered, long-striding 63-year-old who hates to be called Delbert, could not stand the life in one of his own Sun Cities for more than a few days — or a few hours. Though he has earned some unexpected gratitude for his retirement centers, he is better known for more rough-and-tumble activities as co-owner of the New York Yankees and as one of the largest single builders in the U.S.

The Journeyman

"A restless barnstormer by trade and temperament, he was born in Fresno, Calif. His mother was the daughter of a German farmer, who built one of California's first irrigation systems. His father was the son of an English evangelist, but most of Del Webb's early exposure to religion came from his father's three sisters. 'Those old ladies were so religious they squeaked,' he says. 'I had to go to Sunday school and church, and — xxx — I wanted to play ball. They thought baseball was trafficking with the devil, so when I finally went off to play, I had to do it now and then under an assumed name.'

"His father, a building contractor and amateur ballplayer, passed on to him the tools of his two trades—a carpenter's saw and a fast ball. By the time he was 10, Del knew his way around a scaffolding or an infield with equal aplomb. 'I can't remember not being captain of the team,' he says. 'When we chose sides for a pick-up game, I was always one of the guys who did the choosing.'

"When he was 14, his father went bankrupt, and Del hit the road two years later. 'I've been on the move ever since,' he says. 'It gets in your blood and you can't stop.' Weekdays he was a journeyman carpenter on construction jobs; weekends he played semiprofessional ball. Webb hit nails and nailed hitters all over the West, from Calgary down to the Mexican border, developing at the same time a taste for old bourbon and young ladies. During World War I, he worked in the Oakland shipyards; when it was over, he married his childhood sweetheart, Hazel Church. The marriage broke up in 1952, and last year Webb married pretty, brunette Tony Ince, 41, buyer for the Bullock's-Wilshire department store in Los Angeles.

20 Bourbons a Day

"Del Webb's baseball days ended in 1925 with a crunch of cracked ribs and torn ligaments, sliding home from second on a short single, followed by a bout of typhoid fever that brought his weight down from 204 pounds to 99 pounds. When he was on his feet again, he landed a job with a small contractor in Phoenix. One day, when he was working on the construction of a new grocery store, his paycheck bounced, and his employer disappeared. The grocer asked young Webb to take over the job, and the Del E. Webb Construction Co. was born. Its total assets: One cement mixer, 10 wheelbarrows, 20 shovels and 10 picks.

"By 1935, this was a $3 million business. With World War II, the Webb company moved into the big time, built most of the air stations and military installations in Arizona and Southern California. Among current projects, he is building with George A. Fuller Co. a $62 million Minuteman missile silo complex in Montana, and with Humble Oil Co. is working on an estimated $375-$500 million community covering 15,000 acres southeast of Houston, which will house the employes of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's new center for manned spacecraft.

"World War II also made another marked change in Webb's life. He was laid up with something the Army diagnosed as flu, and a doctor was routinely taking his personal history. As Webb tells it: 'When I told him I drank from 10 to 20 bourbons a day, he near dropped his teeth. He said I ought to cut down, but I told him I'd quit. And I did. Not another drop of whisky has passed my lips since that day. All that time I spent drinking, I could now spend working.'

"Del Webb works even when he plays. The New York Yankees, which he bought with Dan Topping and Larry MacPhail for $2.8 million in 1945 (he and Topping bought out MacPhail's interest for $2 million in 1947), serve him well as a developer of new business via free passes, casual meetings in the ballpark, and just plain publicity. The golf course is another fertile source of new contracts and big deals; Webb belongs to no less than 14 golf clubs around the country, shoots in the high 70s.

No Smoking

"Supervising his diversified $75 million empire, in which he stepped up recently from president to board chairman in a move to make more room at the top,* Webb logs between 50,000 and 125,000 miles of flying a year. Last week he flew out to Los Angeles, talked to Long Beach officials about building their 1966 World's Fair, then to Santa Monica, where his company is in charge of a $55 million redevelopment program. Then he was off to Manhattan for Old Timers' Day at Yankee Stadium. He has three fulltime hotel suites — in the Beverly Hilton (which he built), the Mountain Shadows Resort in Phoenix (which he also built), and Manhattan's Waldorf Astoria (which was built in 1930-31 when he wasn't looking). In each of them, he keeps complete wardrobes, as well as caches of clothes in half a dozen other hotels across the country. All told, he owns 150 suits, 90 pairs of shoes (plus 52 pairs of golf shoes), numberless outsize shirts (17¾ neck, 37 sleeve), snarls of 58-in. ties (normal length is 52 in.) and 'a heluva lot of hats.'

"Webb is a nut about smoking (all his desks bear metal signs saying NO SMOKING, and he means it) and about standardization. Webb offices are run according to 'The Blue Book,' which specifies even what kind of desk calendar pads are to be used and what kind of lettering must be on the door. One employe who drove a tan car when Webb wanted all company cars to be black found his sedan had been removed from the parking lot and repainted while he was at work. Webb is too busy to spend much time at his retirement cities. But he did manage to spare a day last week to talk with a group of medical researchers about the establishment of a research center for gerontology at Phoenix's Sun City. 'When I see what we've built,' he says, 'it's the most satisfying thing that's ever happened to me. An old fellow came up to me once with tears in his eyes and thanked me for building Sun City. He said he was planning to spend the happiest 40 years of his life there.' The mere thought of staying put so long makes Delbert Eugene Webb profoundly uneasy."

*New president is 49-year-old LaVergne Jacobson, who signed on with Webb in 1938 as a $25-a-week timekeeper.

Webb Got Yankees As Bargain

(Fifth And Last Of A Series.)

By ORIEN W. FIFER JR.

Del Webb dearly loves to win.

He demonstrated this trait early in life, and it has remained with him all through the years. So what could be more nourishing to this than having a big piece of the New York Yankees baseball team? The piece, in fact, is exactly one-half.

He had been a good ball player in his youth. A million other American kids were, too, but to only a few came the opportunity to move into the big leagues as an owner. Webb's business ability (his knack of making money) provided the opportunity for him.

This is the way the story goes:

During World War II Webb was one of the busiest contractors doing business for Uncle Sam. He hopped in and out of Washington like a guy on a yo-yo, picking up contracts for air fields, air plants and what not.

AN OLD FRINED told him:

"The Oakland ball club is for sale. You could pick it up for $60,000."

Webb talked with his legal eagles and they thought it might be a pretty good investment tax-wise, so Webb decided he would think about it, anyway. He was in Washington a little later when one of his attorneys called him and said the Oakland folks wanted an answer "yes" or "no," and right away.

"I think we were negotiating our job at the Kingman Air Base," said Webb, "and I told the attorney we were too busy and just tell 'em to forget it. But in a way that got me to thinking about buying into baseball."

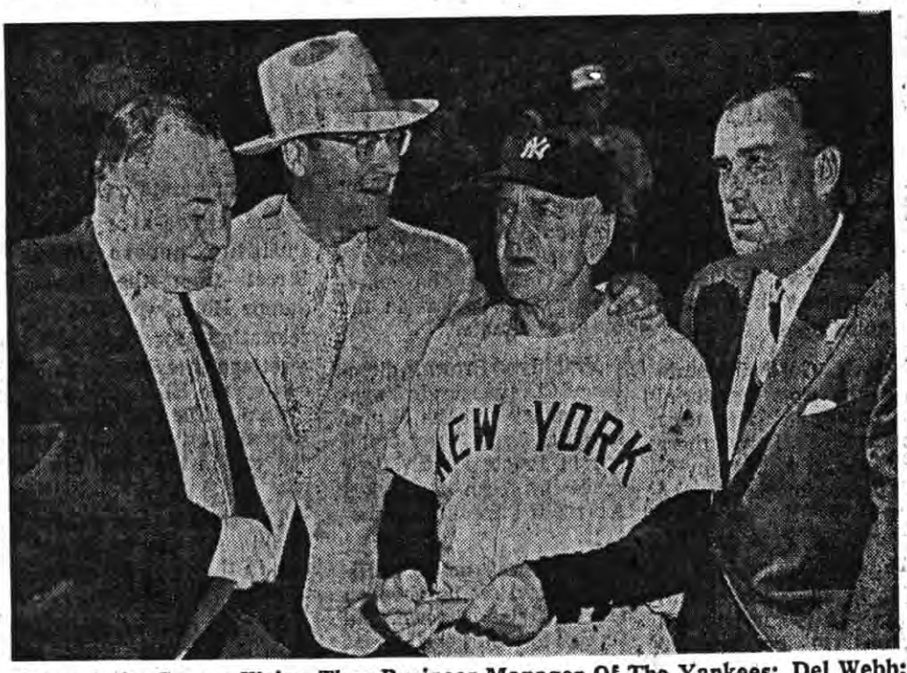
This was in 1942.

Webb had most of his contacts in Washington with the War Department, headed by the late Bob Patterson, and one of Patterson's assistants was Larry MacPhail, one of the most controversial figures in baseball. Webb had known Larry several years, and naturally at their meetings they started talking about the sport they both loved.

MacPHAIL SAID he had an idea the Yankee ball club could be bought. He had conferences with Webb and several other folks with money, and they spent about a year talking of the possibilities.

The estate of Col. Jake Ruppert, who had owned the Yanks, was a mixed up affair, with three heirs—two nieces and a nurse. Webb recalls that about seven attorneys were involved in the affair, and it looked like the deal could not possibly be put together.

In the late winter of 1945, Webb, as was his custom, was playing in the Phoenix Open golf tournament in the pro-amateur grouping. Webb was playing his usual good game when a messenger reached him on the seventh green of the Phoenix Country Club course to tell him he had a long distance call from Dan Topping, a New York millionaire.



From Left: George Weiss, Then Business Manager Of The Yankees; Del Webb; Casey Stengel, Then Manager; And Dan Topping

Topping had some interesting information. He said he thought the Yankee deal could be revived (he was one of the first group trying to get the team). There was an angle in the case, naturally. Topping knew the daughter of one of the guys handling Ruppert's estate. And Topping had gone to school with one of the attorneys representing Ruppert's nieces.

WEBB QUIT the golf tournament, went home, packed his brief case, and took off for New York. MacPhail was involved in the negotiations, but Webb credits Topping with swinging the deal.

Out of the proverbial clear, blue sky it was announced 10 days after Webb reached New York that the Yanks had been sold. The price? An incredible $2,600,000. The incredible part was the bargain price.

MacPhail put up $300,000. Webb and Topping split the remaining cost which, if my arithmetic is any good, would put a $1,275,000 tab on each.

Webb and Topping had an ugly run-in with MacPhail in later years and gladly bought him out for $2 million. They had had enough of him.

The sale involved the team and Yankee stadium, lock stock and barrel. Also the Kansas City team of the American Association and its stadium. Also the Newark team and its ball park.

WEBB WAS NO longer just picking up marbles. This was to be a bonanza of major proportions.

In every year since Webb and Topping took over, the Yanks have made money.

In 1954 they sold Yankee stadium for $6 million, and then leased it back on a long-term basis. They peddled the Kansas City property and the Newark property, too, for a sackful of cash.

Like most successful businessmen, Webb is apt to dismiss the art of money making as of lessor importance than the accomplishments i tcan bring.

"It's not the money-making that's important," he told me. "It's the things that can be done with the money."

Webb thinks baseball is the finest sport in the world. He loves to hob-nob with his ballplayers, or any ball players, for that matter. And one of the highlights of his life was a trip he made to Japan with the Yanks in 1955. Tremendous crowds greeted the team, Casey Stengel and others in the entourage, even though they had just lost the World Series to Brooklyn.

WEBB CAN also take a lot of credit for the superb farm system operated by the Yankees. He had seen youngsters develop in his own contracting business through guidance and encouragement. Why not use the same system with ball players? It certainly has worked.

He worked out a switch with the New York Giants a few years ago whereby the Yankees came to Phoenix for their spring training. Not many Phoenix residents ever get to see the Yankees play, so Webb thought it would be a fine idea to get the champs out here.

It must have been a terrific source of satisfaction to him to know that the guy who had been hanging windows in the Hotel Westward Ho back in 1928 could now bring a multi-million dollar ball club to his adopted town.

The Webb - Topping touch didn't produce a winner in their first year nor their second. But the Yanks were just getting up steam, thus pleasing Webb's love of winning. They won the

pennant and the World Series in 1947, and again in 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, and 1953.

THEY WON the American League pennant in '55, and took it and the World Series in '56. The pennant was all they got in 1957. But '58 was the old, old story. Pennant and Series. No dice in 1959. Pennant only in 1960.

Considerable furor, to put it mildly, was created by Webb and Topping when they announced that Casey Stengel was retiring at the end of the 1960 season.

Prodded by newsmen, Casey chose to say he had been fired. Webb insists that Casey had agreed to retirement a year previously, the retirement to take affect after the 1960 season. Webb says the Yanks wanted Ralph Houk to take over for the older man, but that Houk was getting restless. Casey picked up $150,000 and walked away.

"We didn't want to lose Houk," Webb said.

Casey, now a banker in Glendale, Calif., and Webb are good friends. Webb frequently drops in at Casey's office to chat. They don't talk about money.

THE YANKEES, of course, are not a one-man organization.

Neither is Webb's contracting firm. He has his Mantles and Marises, and one of these in particular came to him as a young man.

He was from Tucson and he knew a little about contracting. Now he wanted enough money to get on to California, where he figured the opportunities were greater than in Arizona.

He stood in Del Webb's outer office in Phoenix, and pleaded with Webb's secretary, Amy Jo Hafford. Hiring, she said, was being done "in the field" by superintendents, so why didn't he run along.

LaVergne Christopher Jacobson didn't buy that kind of advice; he wanted to see Webb personally, and finally Webb opened the door of his office and let the young chap walk in.

They clicked.

Jacobson went to work for $25 a week as time keeper, and the relationship that began 22 years ago has been mutually profitable for both men. Jacobson is now executive vice-president of the Del E. Webb Corp.

HE IS the only partner Webb has ever had. It's a three-to-one arrangement; until the company's stock was put on the public market a year ago, Webb had three-fourths of the company and Jacobson one-fourth. Now they own proportionate shares of stock.

One-man organizations may be all right for filling stations or hardware stores. But the big outfits that decorate the skylines of major cities are usually smooth-working teams, with one man directing.

That's why any story of Del Webb and his mammoth organization lists many who have been associated with him closely over the years. They dream up things like the highly successful Sun Cities of Phoenix, Florida and California; of tremendous land acquisition deals; of skyscrapers and dwelling places.

Lineup of the Webb team reads: Jacobson, Ashton, Johnson, McCollom, Hetherington Jr., Breen, Kuentz, Mohr, Wartes and Miller, not to mention the Jerry McLain of another piece.

EACH HAS a success story of his own. But this is essentially the Del Webb story, and he is the playing manager.

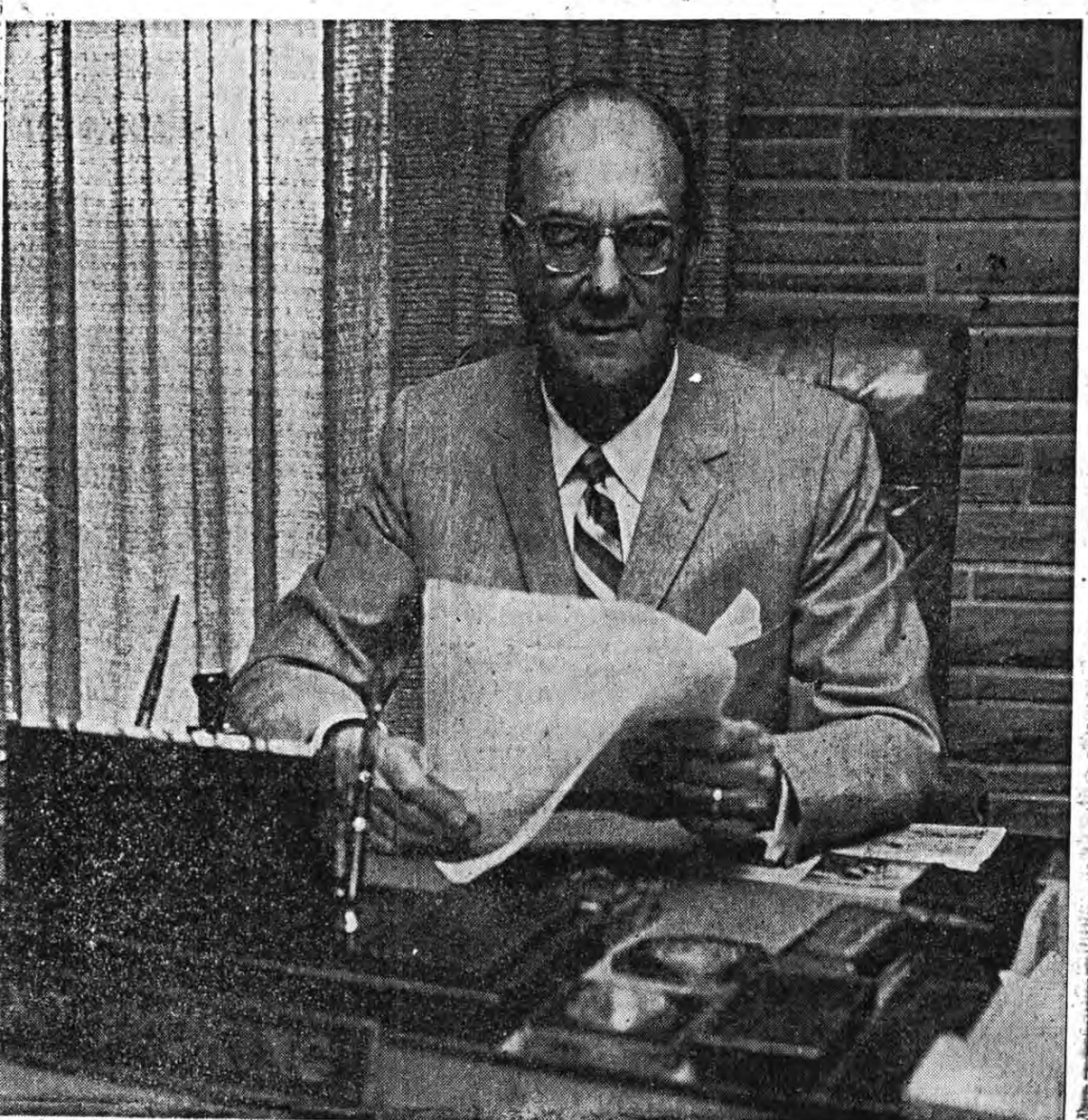
One of his old sidekicks, Bob Becker, is dead. So are Webb's parents. His two younger brothers are with the organization in California.

If Webb, as a young ball player, hadn't slid into home plate and wrecked his pitching arm, he might be sitting around today swapping yarns with other baseball has-beens.

Instead, that injury put him out of baseball and into the contracting business.

Now he doesn't even have time to count his money.

Webb Builds Vegas Hotel



DEL WEBB AT WORK—Seated in an immaculate office, with signs proclaiming "No Smoking" Del Webb peruses the many contracts he executes. Webb doesn't drink, smoke or gamble.

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC SEPT. 19, 1961

IC

Webb Fame Rode Foul Ball

(Third of a Series)

By ORIEN W. FIFER JR.

A foul ball made Del Webb famous.

It was during the 1955 World Series in Yankee stadium when a foul ball from the bat of Pitcher Don Larsen conked Webb on the head.

He was seated in a box, and for some unexplainable reason practically every cameraman—news and TV—caught the action.

This was the way millions of TV viewers got their first good look at the co-owner of the Yankee team. And sports pages throughout the country carried still shots of the painful event.

WEBB WAS not hurt badly, probably because he was wearing a hat.

Of course his name had been known from coast to coast because of his tremendous contracting empire. And everybody knew he and Dan Topping owned the Yanks.

But not until then did he become a real personality to 70 million baseball fans.

Del Webb is not a back-slapping extrovert. He speaks softly. Many people have sized him up as being cold, hard to know. Actually, when his face is in repose, he might easily pass for one of those old time bankers who would just dare you to get a loan.

And then when he smiles his face takes on the friendliness of a corner grocer.

I FLEW to Los Angeles to interview Webb. He's a hard guy to pin down, and if it hadn't been for his public relations chief, Jerry McLain, I might still be lost in the wilds of that enormous city.

The interview was originally scheduled for the Beverly Hilton Hotel, one of those hostelries that really deserve the overworked name of "swank." Webb built it. This meeting was transferred to the Webb corporation office some miles away.

Mr. And Mrs. Del E. Webb

Jerry and his brother, Wally, Los Angeles, who is made in the same mould as the other McLain boys—gentlemanly, reserved and successful—warned me of one thing. Don't blow smoke in Webb's face.

I sat in the outer office, stashed my cigarettes in a side pocket, and waited.

Webb came in a little later, followed by a soberfaced man.

"That's his doctor," said Jerry.

I WONDERED if I would have to wait while an examination was conducted in the inner office. Instead, the doctor was a close personal friend, Dr. Bayard T. Horton, recently retired from the Mayo Clinic. He was just visiting.

Webb's Los Angeles office is a duplicate of the one he has in Phoenix and at the Yankee office in New York. Desks are identical, color schemes are likewise, and each desk carries a big metal sign saying "No Smoking."

In the corner of each office is a rack filled with 10 black bats. They represent the American League and World Championships the Yankees have won since Webb and Topping took over. Each is polished beautifully, and autographed by Yankee players.

Dr. Horton is one of Webb's best fans. He describes him as one of the most remarkable men he has ever met.

"He can be as hard as a rock if the occasion demands," says Dr. Horton. "Or, as soft as a drifting fog."

Webb invited us to join him and the doctor at lunch.

I thought we would surely go to some plush restaurant where waiters would bow and scrape at the sight of the multi-millionaire. We got in Webb's Ford and he drove. Deep in conversation he edged through a red light and didn't stop at a railroad crossing. But nevertheless we arrived safely at our luncheon spot.

Heaven help me for saying it, because Webb picked up the check, but the restaurant was a little hole-in-the-wall with four booths and a well scuffed floor.

"They have good pie here," said Webb.

HE ORDERED a hamburger well done. That's the way he eats his steaks and his hamburgers. He'll send his steak back a couple of times in fashionable restaurants if it isn't done the way he wants it.

This hamburger suited him just fine. Then he made away with a huge wedge of cream pie. And then we talked.

It was somewhat of an imposition to take a couple of hours of his time, for after all, he was still on his honeymoon. Only a few weeks earlier he had married Toni Ince, a Los Angeles millinery designer, whom he met on a blind date and courted several years. Webb was divorced from his first wife in 1953. No scandal was attached to it, and she still lives quietly in Phoenix.

I was interested in the precision with which Webb carries out his schedule on a coast-to-coast basis. He has to have the endurance of a fullback to carry on, for he is 62. He showed me his schedule he followed in July.

IT MADE me weary just to read it.

July 1-3 New York; July 3 Houston; July 4-5 New York; July 6 Houston; July 6-10 New York; July 10-12 San Francisco; July 12-13 Reno; July 13 Denver; July 13-14 Washington; July 14 New York; July 14 Los Angeles; July 24 Phoenix; July 25 Los Angeles; July 27 New York; July 30 Los Angeles.

And through it all he never seems to be hurried. He can't stand to arrive at an airport more than a few minutes before plane time, even though this causes some of his aides to have gray hair.

Webb is such a familiar figure at the Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport that he often just drives up in his own car, leaves it at the entrance, and walks on in. Porters know him so well they'll take the car to a garage and save the ticket until he returns.

Once they failed to see him, so the car sat there with its motor running for many hours before the cops hauled it away. He was slightly put out when he returned and found his car had been impounded for improper parking.

Webb's golf clubs have had about as much transcontinental travel as he. He takes them on almost every trip, hoping to get in a few holes or at least bit some balls during his rare spare time. He never carries any other luggage. Just a brief case and the clubs. He keeps clothes—shirts, socks, underwear, shoes and suits—in apartments in Phoenix, Los Angeles, Chicago and New York, so there is rarely a need for a suitcase.

Webb's signature is a combination of hen scratching and Dali art. Nobody can read it—except the banks.

Once he went to a restaurant and signed the check. A new waitress looked at it, then after Webb left, she consulted the cashier.

"This guy signed his name then scratched it out," she said.

This is Del Webb's signature. No one can read it except the banks.

(Tomorrow—Webb builds the Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas, and has to do business with Bugsy Seigel, racketeer.)

(Thursday—Webb buys an interest in the New York Yankees baseball team, and gets back into baseball with a bang.)

Opportunity Taps For Webb

(Second of a Series)

By ORIEN W. FIFER JR.

A BUM CHECK kept Del Webb in Phoenix.

He didn't write it. He just tried to cash it at a bank, and was promptly told it was no good.

Had it not been for this little detail, Del might have ended up at Grand Canyon as a small-time contractor. But instead that bouncing check actually started him on a career that can only be called fabulous.

It was in 1928 when the Webbs arrived in Phoenix, determined to find a greater opportunity than that which thus far had presented itself in Fresno, Calif.

He got a job quickly.

It was as a carpenter on the Hotel Westward Ho. It was the first skyscraper Webb had worked on, and perhaps he faintly dreamed that some day he would be responsible for a hundred more. His immediate task, however, was to support himself and his wife.

He started out at $7.50 per day and then was raised to $10. The superintendent on the job, Al Campbell, was a friend of Webb's father back in Fresno, and the young worker and Campbell clicked. The two of them hung hundreds of windows in the hotel, finishing up the last windows the day before the hotel's formal opening.

Webb did some ball playing. Not much, but sufficient to bring in a few extra bucks. He pitched in a game at Prescott that left his right arm and shoulder sorer than a boil. So he quit.

Then Webb hooked up with a chap who was to change his whole life. It hadn't been planned that way.

Del went to work for this man. The job was building a modest grocery for J. B. Bayless. It wasn't anything like the modern supermarkets now operated by J.B.'s son, A. J. Bayless. But it was a job for Webb, who had been in Phoenix six months.

"THE GUY I worked for was kinda on a shoe string," Webb recalls. "We would need material, and he'd show up with a board or two and then disappear.

"After we used the boards we would just sit around and wait. It looked like we never would get the building finished.

"One Friday afternoon I drew my pay check from this guy and walked down to the bank. I figured I'd check out and maybe go up to the Grand Canyon, where I heard there was some work.

"The bank refused to cash the check, saying it wasn't any good. Well, I didn't know what to do, but I knew I would have to hang around town until Monday to make the guy pay off.

"The next day Mr. Bayless came to me and said: 'You seem to know what you're doing. Why don't you go ahead and finish this building?' →

"From then on I was in the contracting business."

Webb finished that building and then built others as Bayless expanded. But don't get the idea that Webb went in for fancy offices and valuable equipment.

His first office was a two-by-four frame structure at 218 N. Ninth St. The sign overhead "Del E. Webb . . . Contractor" was about as big as the front of the office.

Webb was an organizer, dating back to his marble playing days, and he organized his timing and his business. He started slowly: groceries, homes, remodeling jobs. And one of his first buildings was the Arizona Fire Building at Second Avenue and Adams, a structure recently razed to make way for the new telephone building.

ONE OF HIS first filling station projects was for the Union Oil Company, a job costing a few thousand bucks. He must have done quite a job, because nearly 30 years later he built the company's $22 million headquarters in Los Angeles. He didn't bid on it; just negotiated the deal with the president of the company.

Here's an indication of the modest scale on which he operated in his early days:

Bids were asked on construction of the Adamana overpass in northern Arizona. The bidder was also required to list his equipment which would be available for the work.

Webb listed:

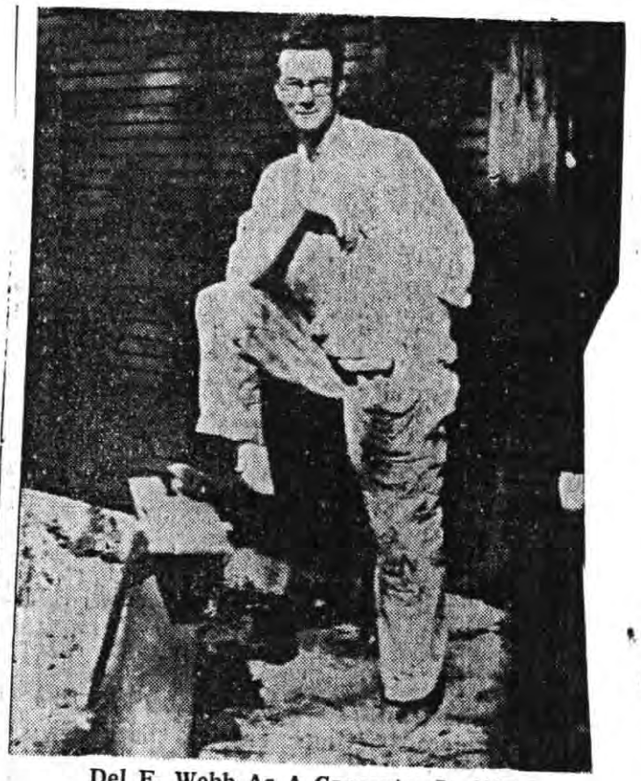
One cement mixer (1 bag size); 10 wheelbarrows, 20 shovels and 10 picks.

A list of all the things he built in the days immediately preceding and after World War II would reach from the top of this page to the bottom. Sufficient to say they included the Gov. George W. P. Hunt Mausoleum in Papago Park; Fannin's Hardware Store (he and Gov. Paul Fannin have been close friends for many years); remodeling jobs on the Sears, Roebuck and Montgomery Ward stores, later constructing new buildings for both companies; Hanny's Switzer's, J.C. Penney's.

HE WAS a major factor in booming Phoenix.

And still he had time to learn to play golf. One of his first golfing buddies was Art Nehf, former New York Giants pitcher, who died a few months ago. They played the Biltmore course, and Del became a 5 handicap player. In other words, the natural ability he had for baseball was shifted easily to golf.

Brochures put out by the company a few years ago carried



Del E. Webb As A Carpenter In 1927

a staggering number of completed projects. And the keynote of the message in them boiled down to this:

"We don't bluff. We can prove we can do as good a job as any other contractor in America."

That motto still holds. But today Webb's outfit is a sweeping, nationwide contracting organization that has structures in practically every principal city.

During the war he built army camps, flying fields (Luke, Williams), internment camps, hospitals and other military installations. He scarcely had time to think of his old love—baseball. In fact he had seen only two major league games in 15 years when lightning struck.

But that phase of Del Webb's career is a separate story.

First let's try to give a further concept of the company's massive building record.

After the war, the firm built hospitals for veterans (including the one at Seventh Street and Indian School); industrial plants and warehouses in 26 states; technical plants for the construction of guided missiles and modification of fighter planes. His company built $35 million in housing projects at the U.S. Air Force Academy and at Vandenberg Air Force Base; nuclear field laboratories for development of the Redstone rocket, and he has also changed the skyline of Los Angeles considerably.

DURING ALL this time Webb was hopping around the country in the company's plane or by commercial airlines. And day after day each project boss would have to send Webb a progress report. He read 'em too. And if he didn't like wha he read he picked up the tele phone, and things would begi to pop.

I asked Webb how much con struction, in terms of dollars had been turned out since h started in business. He didn' know. But his aides came u with this: Nearly $1 billion!

Quite a record for a kid wh went to high school only eigh weeks.

(Tomorrow — Webb gets hit on the head and becomes a national celebrity. How does Webb operate in his Los Angeles office?)

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC SEPT. 16, 1961

Del Webb Equally Skilled In Carpentry And Baseball

The name of Del E. Webb is widely known throughout Arizona and the rest of the nation for two things. One is his company's tremendous construction record, and the other his co-ownership of the New York Yankees baseball team.

But what about the man himself? How did he achieve such prominence in two widely separated fields? What type of personality is he, and what are his personal habits?

This is the first of a series of articles which will go into his early background, his family life, and the obstacles he overcame while heading for success. The series is similar to the profile recently carried on State Sen. Harold C. Giss, D-Yuma, one of the most powerful men in the Arizona Legislature. Others on persons prominent in various fields of endeavor in Arizona will follow.

By ORIEN W. FIFER JR.

A slender, tall youngster knuckled down in a marble game.

He was the champ in the neighborhood, and he had a couple of buckets filled with marbles just to prove it. They were buried in the back yard of his home.

Right now he was not interested in winning more marbles. He was conducting tryouts for a team which would take on the best marble shooters in another part of town.

This was Del Webb's first attempt at organization and it was successful. He was 10 years old.

Even at that early age he had developed a competitive spirit that was to carry him far in what is often referred to as life's long journey. There was nothing particularly in his background to indicate this development unless it might possibly hace come from his grand father on his father's side.

Back in the late '80's, Grandfather Webb was a minister in England, almost a contemporary with the famous evangelist Gypsy Smith. Grandpa took a post in faraway Australia, and en route there he wooed and won the captain's daughter. They were married by the captain aboard ship.

That was not a meteoric courtship, however, because it took a couple of months or so to reach port.

At any rate, Grandpa and Grandma eventually came to America and settled on the West Coast. Grandpa was not a fiery exponent of the Gospel.

(Continued on Page 4A, Col. 4)

DEL E. WEBB

Daily News-Sun

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC SEPT. 16, 1961

More About Del Webb Loved To Play Baseball

(Continued from Page 1)

He was a quiet, dedicated pastor in the Christian faith.

Del Webb's father, Ernest G. Webb, and his mother, Henrietta Susan (Forthcamp) Webb, were what are known as solid citizens of Fresno, Calif., when Del was born May 17, 1899. They were not poor, nor were they well-to-do. But Del's father was a skilled carpenter, and between his marble playing the youngster learned to use the hammer, chisel, planer and saw.

It was to come in handy sooner than he thought.

Del's father was quite a baseball player, and he took time also to teach his oldest son. The father also expanded into the sand and gravel business, but when Del was 13 some suppliers left the elder Webb holding the sack on a whopping load.

WEBB'S BUSINESS went down the drain. There were two younger sons, Hal and Marvin at home, so Del dropped out of his first year in high school at the end of two months, and got a job.

He was tall for his age, and he was a good carpenter, so any hesitancy his employers might have had about hiring the kid vanished after they saw him handle the tools. He also picked up some side money playing baseball with semi-pro outfits. He was a right-handed pitcher, and in one game he pitched and his dad played first base.

As he grew older his ability on the baseball diamond began to overshadow his carpentry skill. He didn't play ball with a bunch of amateurs. He eventually pitched for Oakland and Salt Lake City in the Pacific Coast League, and also with some outlaw clubs up and down the coast.

He grew constantly until he hit 6 feet 4 inches, and he carried 200 pounds around. It was muscle and bone. No fat.

Once, using the same determination he had shown in early life, he ran like mad stretching a three-bagger into a home run. The catcher was blocking the plate, but Del ploughed into him with the impact of a fast freight.

about six feet and dropped the about six feet and dropped the throw-in ball. Webb was safe. But it was a costly run. He hurt his right shoulder in the collision, and it never was the same.

It didn't stop Webb's career right then, for he could ease up a little in his pitching and make up for it with his bat. He batted left-handed and was good enough to pinch hit and, at times, play in the outfield.

It was the custom in those days for semi-pro (or all pro) ball teams to play exhibition games in California prison compounds.

Del, still somewhat green, missed a bus and arrived at San Quentin Prison after his teammates were in the dressing room putting on their uniforms. A trusty was assigned to steer him around.

Del had some money and jewelry with him, so he turned to a guard and asked:

"Should I give these things to this guy to keep?"

"Don't you know where you are?" asked the guard.

Before going on the field, Del asked the trusty for a drink of water, and the convict returned with a glass full. He was holding the glass with his fingers close to the top. Del drank the contents, said "Thanks," and went on out to play.

Two weeks later he came down with a violent case of typhoid fever, thanks to the typhoid carrier who had given him the water.

This was a critical ailment, as everybody knows. And before he could throw off its effects he had lost half his weight, plus one pound. The previously husky young giant was a mere 99 pounds when he finally crawled out of bed.

Recuperation was slow. Weeks and weeks later, however, he had regained most of his weight and returned to the ball fields. He hadn't lost his enthusiasm for the game. But his arm and shoulder just wouldn't cooperate.

Del had married Miss Hazel L. Church of Oakland several years earlier. He had heard about Arizona from friends.

IN FACT, Ed Harrington, then managing editor of The Republic, was possibly more than others for Webb's decision to come to Phoenix. Harrington had been interested in baseball for some time, paying particular attention to the team at Bisbee and others in a twilight league. He had heard of Webb, and thought he could line up some pretty good pitching jobs for him.

Webb and his wife loaded down an old Nash automobile with his carpenter tools, his pitcher's mitt, and the other few material possessions they had acquired and set off for Phoenix.

This may have been in striking rebuttal of the advance so freely advanced by Horace Greeley about "Go West, young man." But the time Del Webb was to go West again was a few years off, and under far different circumstances.

The couple arrived in Phoenix in 1928. And Webb was 28.

(Tomorrow—Del Webb gets a job at his carpentry trade and plays some baseball, although he finally quit it because of an ailing arm. Then he started on his career as a contractor.

(Tuesday—Webb receives unusual publicity at a World Series game.)

IG

Aug 1-1961

MR. AND MRS. DEL E. WEBB
They Met On A Blind Date

Phoenician Del Webb Weds L.A. Designer

RENO, Nev.—Del E. Webb, millionaire builder, hotel chain magnate and part owner of the New York Yankees baseball team, yesterday wed Toni Ince, Los Angeles millinery designer in a Reno hotel suite.

He is 62 and she is 40.

The ceremony was performed by Justice William E. Beemer. It was the second marriage for both.

The couple reportedly will make their home in Phoenix, headquarters of Webb's nationwide construction firm. Webb refused to say where they would spend their honeymoon.

The marriage climaxed a romance that began on a Halloween blind date seven years ago, Webb said.

Webb was divorced from his first wife, Hazel Church, Sept. 18, 1953, in Ely, Nev. They had been married for more than 25 years.

IC

7-9-61

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, JULY 9, 1961.

Personality: Boss in Baseball and Building

Del Webb, Co-Owner of Yankees, a Giant in Construction

By RICHARD RUTTER

As the major league baseball season passed the traditional half-way mark last week, the New York Yankees were being given some fervent moral and vocal support by one of their strongest rooters more than 2,000 miles from Yankee Stadium. He was Del E. Webb of Phoenix, Ariz., contractor and builder, who also happens to be co-owner of the Yankees baseball club.

Helping to cheer the Yankees home in first place and into the World Series is a rather old story now for Del Webb, but one that has lost none of its excitement. He comes by his interest in baseball and building naturally, with a professional background in both dating back more than three decades.

Beginning with a box of carpenter's tools, Mr. Webb built a $43,000,000 organization specializing in land development and general contracting, with ownership and operating interests in nearly 60,000 acres of land, sixteen hotels and hotel sites and five shopping centers across the country. Last year the new Del E. Webb Corporation "went public," offering $12,000,000 in stocks and bonds to investors. That was a fitting step in a business career that began in 1928, the year that the Del E. Webb Construction Company of Phoenix came into being.

Being a carpenter in the middle of a desert—and with slim financial resources—would not seem a very promising way to start on the road to becoming a millionaire. But Del Webb knew what he was doing. It was the happy meeting of the right man in the right place at the right time.

Learning His Trade

But before he arrived in Phoenix the future construction executive had already learned his trade—the hard way. His father, Ernest G. Webb, was a contractor in Fresno, Calif., where young Del worked on his father's projects. He also played baseball as a pitcher in the summer, returning to his saw and nails during the off-season months. Del was good enough in the world of sports to win a full-time berth on the Oakland Acorns, but he didn't make the major leagues.

In 1926, after a battle with typhoid fever, Del Webb picked up his carpenter's kit and with his wife, the former Hazel Church, a Fresno girl, moved on to Phoenix. Although not many realized it at the time, that desert city was destined soon to be the center of a building boom.

Mr. Webb worked six months as a carpenter before getting a chance to complete work another contractor had started on a small grocery store. That gave him his first impetus and he set up his own contracting concern. Specializing in the construction of commercial buildings, schools and homes, the Webb organization kept its activity localized around Phoenix until the mid-Ninteen Thirties. Then a Los Angeles office was established as West Coast headquarters.

By the time World War II began, the Del E. Webb Construction Company was the largest in Arizona and in a good position to handle some of the big Government contracts that were being parceled out.

Projects Varied

One industrial project involved the construction of plants in twenty states for the Kraft Foods Company. The Webb concern was selected to build the Union Oil Center complex in downtown Los Angeles, the Texaco building in that city, the Beverly Hilton Hotel and the Union Bank Building in Beverly Hills. The company put up the Pabco plant for the manufacture of floor coverings on the East Coast; it redesigned and reconstructed the Kansas City Athletics ball park.

In the early Nineteen Fifties, Del E. Webb Construction Company started an intensive diversification program under the direction of L. C. Jacobson, executive vice president. Mindful of the cyclical nature of the construction business, the company went into the development field to build for its own account. It acquired land; built and sold houses; developed shopping centers, motels and complete communities.

What is the secret of this success? Del Webb has a ready answer: "I just apply baseball to business and it works."

Mr. Webb, even now at the age of 62, is very much the executive who makes the decisions. A self-educated man, he is a constant reader and requires daily reports from all the projects in progress throughout the far-flung organization. These are more than likely to be read in a jet airliner, since he travels exclusively by air.

Tall, slender, bespectacled and soft-spoken, Del Webb has retained his life-long interest in baseball. When the word got out in 1945 that he, together with Dan Topping and Larry MacPhail, had acquired the New York Yankees, some of his acquaintances were skeptical of the accuracy of the report. "Del Webb, one of the owners of the Yankees? It doesn't make sense," was the reaction. "Why, that's the richest club in baseball."

But it did make sense. For the great and unrealized ambition of Del Webb's youth had been to be a major leaguer. He finally made the grade, twenty years later and not as a player in the House That Babe Ruth Built, but as one of the proprietors.

For recreation, Mr. Webb turns also to golf. He is a better-than-average player. One of his most thrilling moments on the links occurred the day he posted a 67 in the Phoenix Open a few years ago and saw his name written on the scoreboard above those of defending champion Byron Nelson and the great Ben Hogan who shot 69 and 70, respectively.

These days, the busy Mr. Webb probably doesn't have as much free time to devote to sports as he might like. Hardly a week passes without the announcement of some ambitious new project involving the Webb organization.

The other week, for instance, the Del E. Webb Corporation announced it had joined forces with Henry Crown, Chicago industrialist, and the Exchange Building Corporation to develop a 4,100-acre site in the Goleta Valley near Santa Barbara, Calif. The plan envisions a complete townsite, an industrial park, housing, two eighteen-hole golf courses and an institutional area for science-oriented research foundations.

In recent weeks Webb has also disclosed plans for:

¶A $63,000,000 joint venture with the George A. Fuller Company of Los Angeles and New York to construct a missile base in the Montana wilderness.

¶Multimillion-dollar shopping centers, such as Chris-Town in Phoenix, Grossmont in San Francisco, each with more than fifty stores and shops, and each with parking space for more than 5,000 cars.

¶A retirement community at Stockdale, near Bakersfield, Calif.

¶A $31,000,000 missile silo complex near Wichita, Kans.

¶The Towne House, a 400-room hotel in downtown San Francisco.

The Sun City Story

Del Webb naturally is proud of all his projects but he takes special pride, perhaps, in Sun City, Ariz. This is a pioneering community for retired persons, twelve miles northwest of Phoenix on a part of more than 30,000 acres controlled by Webb. It was opened to the public on Jan. 1, 1960. It contained, then, a country club community and recreation center, swimming pool and cabanas, a golf course, a shopping center, motor hotel, model homes and apartments. By the end of 1960, some 1,470 houses and 272 apartments had been sold for a total of about $14,500,000.

The second phase of Sun City, planned for 1,975 additional homes and cooperative apartments, opened last Jan. 29. This has a new golf course and an elaborate recreation center with a full-size stage, banquet facilities and craft and club rooms with workshops for gem and stone cutting, photography, ceramics and woodworking.

Del Webb plans another Sun City near St. Petersburg, Fla.

"If I ever go broke," Del Webb said once, "I'll know why." The chances of such an event ever happening appear exceedingly remote at this point. It would be something like the Yankees finishing tenth and last in the American League. Any bets on that

The New York Times

Second to no man as a Yankee rooter is Del Webb, at left, shown with Horace Stoneham, right, of the Giants and Walter O'Malley of the Dodgers at meeting of club owners.

Carpenter in Desert in 1927, He Found Road to Wealth

1928

'I Could Listen To Him All Night'

April, 1964

By DON DEDERA

PHOENIX

Obviously, the old pro was enjoying telling the youngsters how he did it.

Del Webb, Arizona's most successful carpenter's helper, was speaking before an Arizona Junior Chamber of Commerce dinner for outstanding young men.

He told how he, a sore-armed baseball player, was lucky to get a job rough framing Phoenix' Hotel Westward Ho. Today, still athletic in his 60s, Webb with his quiet, natural understatement is one of the compelling story-tellers of our time.

He seems almost surprised it all happened to him. And the genuineness of the man is enriched by his country-boy lingo: "When I come to Arizona . . . this here fella' learned me . . ."

With his baseball career ended, he said, he threw his competitive energies into building. In 1927, his company kept office in two rooms over apartments below, and Webb was seldom there.

On Saturdays, he delivered the payroll in person. He'd be on the road at 4 a.m. in Phoenix and complete the round at 2 a.m. Sunday, because some of his jobs were in Flagstaff and there wasn't a square foot of pavement between.

Phoenix was Hattie Mosher's battleground and A. J. Bayless' oyster. Hattie, an eccentric heiress in feathered hats and sweeping skirts, threw bricks at Webb whenever he started to build something on her land, which was everywhere. Webb put up the first couple of grocery stores for the young Bayless, "and afterward built so many grocery stores everybody thought I was a checkout clerk."

Webb took on a lot of federally supported projects in the 1930s: the college at Tempe, Phoenix Union High School, the state Capitol. "I ruined my signature," he said, signing 12

DEL WEBB
Full of Anecdotes

sets of plans with 150 sheets, and 12 sets of specifications with 1,240 sheets in 'em."

Other, larger work came his way. Woolworth's. Bartlett Dam. Republic and Gazette. St. Joseph's Hospital.

In World War II, Webb won a reputation for speed. He built Luke and Williams air bases and Fort Huachuchuca for the military. One day he was flown to San Francisco where two generals told him he was to house 35,000 Japanese internees on a Colorado River desert hardly fit for rattlesnakes.

"I was up all night, and before morning the lumber was moving out of California," said Webb. "A building went up every 14½ minutes, and we finished the whole town in 100 days."

After the war the Webb company adopted a policy of land ownership and development. Not, said the boss, that he couldn't make mistakes:

"One time, Duncan MacDonald, a plasterer, he offered me 3,600 acres out in Paradise Valley for $1 an acre, and when I asked my banker, Sylvan Ganz, about it, he said, 'Del: Are you crazy? That's where I go rabbit hunting!' And so the next time I saw MacDonald I said I'd lend him $1,800 and let him KEEP his land!" Paradise Valley today is selling at $8,000 per acre.

Two Webb enterprises, of all his worldwide game, are especially close to him. He thinks of the Sun City retirement community as a frontier of human dignity, a philosophy of life far more important than $12 million in boards and bricks and rye grass. "I remember," said Webb, "the old man standing out in the sunshine who said, 'Mr. Webb, you have just learned me to live.'"

And the Yankees. His Yankees. Sixteen pennants and 13 World Championships. "And when the Dodgers beat us four straight I was never so damned mad in my life."

Webb's anecdotes ran on and on. A Yogi Berra story; a Kennesaw Mountain Landis story; an Allie Reynolds story. He spoke 45 minutes and as he sat down, with kind of an apologetic salute, the Jaycee on my right said, "I could listen to that man all night."

1-22-57

IC LOS ANGELES TIMES, Sports Section, Tuesday, Jan. 22, 1957

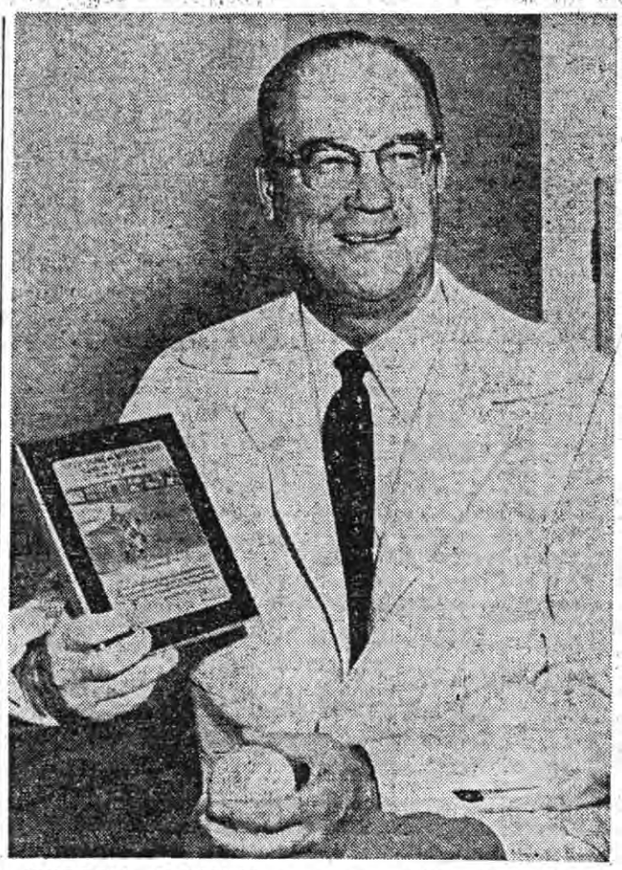
ROUNDABOUT WAY

Webb Parlays Hammer to Fortune

BY JEANE HOFFMAN

This is a slightly roundabout way of looking at it, but it's possible that if Del Webb hadn't been hit with both typhoid fever and a bum check within the space of two years, he might not be the co-owner of the New York Yankees today — and an Aga Khan of Khanstruction, who's worth his weight in baseball diamonds.

The onetime carpenter and former Modesto and Salt Lake pitcher, one of the most fabulous figures in sports, is about the only citizen extant who can fly from coast to coast with just a briefcase—because he maintains a permanent suite AND wardrobe at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York, the Beverly-Hilton in California, and the Sahara in Phoenix.



TYCOON—Del Webb, co-owner of New York Yankees, poses with plaque presented to him by Don Larsen of World Series perfect-game fame. Webb, a former minor league pitcher, has large holdings. Times photo

Keeps on Move

Webb, a tall, genial 57-year-old enigma who "never stays more than two days in one place," and who's really named Delbert — "but only my mother and Bing Crosby ever called me that"—admitted he doesn't actually "know how much I'm worth. And if I did," he grinned, "I wouldn't tell you!"

But it's a known fact that he built his Del Webb Construction Co. from a one-hammer job into a tremendous outfit which at its peak has employed 25,000 people; which built the Flamingo, Sahara and Beverly-Hilton Hotels; which just started that little $20,000,000 Union Oil job locally; which is building the new Howard Hughes addition in Culver City; the Diamond Match Co. Building in Chico, and the new Texaco edifice on Wilshire Blvd.

With Dan Topping, his Yankee partner for 13 years, Del owns the controlling interest in the Automatic Canteen Co. — those little portable deals you find in airports, where a dime will get you everything from doughnuts to dinners. The two are building a chain of motels from San Antonio to San Diego. Del owns complete shopping centers in Tuscon and Phoenix; oil wells in four States, is the figure behind a new oil and uranium company in Colorado, and the principal owner of the Phoenix-Arizona Brewing Co.

"It keeps me kind of busy," smiled Del at the Beverly-Hilton.

"I suppose the bum check really started me," he reminisced. "I'd been a minor league pitcher without much future when a bout of typhoid fever sidelined me. I was 25. When a fellow is flat on his back for a year he thinks of many things. All I could think of was that I was going nowhere fast in baseball.

"When I recovered, I decided to quit baseball and go to Arizona for a fresh start. I had friends there, and it looked like a good spot to recuperate. My dad had been in construction work but went broke when I was a kid. He taught me carpentry when I was 10, so I got a job in Phoenix working on the Westward Ho Hotel. I played a little industrial ball on the side.

"I was working as foreman on the erection of a grocery store when two things happened simultaneously: I hit a homer that won the game for our team, then got suspended by the league because I hadn't been on the squad long enough to be eligible. And I got handed a bum check for the grocery job.

Gets More Work

"Fed up, I had intended to leave Phoenix that Friday night and try my luck elsewhere, but I was forced to hang around till Monday to have that check made good. When I went down to get my dough the owner said to me, 'Webb, can you finish this store for us? The construction company is about to go broke.'

"So I finished it. Then they handed me two more jobs to do. That was 1928 and the start. I had no idea that some day I'd wind up building a complete city of 2000 homes and shops as I did for the Magma Copper Co. or realize my dream of owning the Yanks."

4-26-50

Journal American NEW YORK

The Catbird Seat by Red Barber

Webb-Topping Combine Pairs Two Opposites, But They Form A Real Partnership.

TWO MEN AND A TEAM

BOSTON, April 25.—There was a complete set of Kipling at our house when I was a boy. I must have read "The Light That Failed" at least ten times. One of the poems began:

"East is East and West is West
And never the twain shall meet . . ."

I used to puzzle over those lines until it became for me a thesis of the difference of people, of just how assorted we are, and how far chance reaches in bringing any two of us together.

DAN TOPPING

Sitting in the office of Dan Topping, with Dan's partner, Del Webb perched on a chair, I was glad of Kipling's sentence. It helped bring into focus the paradox of this partnership. Had one thought of finding two men from as opposite poles as possible, matching them successfully into an harmonious team, he couldn't have bettered the Topping-Webb combination.

One was born into great wealth and has never had to worry where the next dollar was coming from. The other always had to worry not only about the next dollar but also about the next dime. One was well educated; the other got one year of high school. One always liked sports, while the other tried to make a living playing baseball, couldn't do it and became embittered so that for years he wouldn't see a game.

It took World War II, a common liking for golf, the same trait of being restless, a fellow named MacPhail, and thousands of other factors to bring about the partnership that today rules the Yankees and their empire.

Illness Made Him A Bitter Man:

Del Webb's grandfather was a preacher. His dad was a construction man, who lost everything when Del was 14. Del had been working for his dad learning to be a carpenter since he was 10. When he was 16 he wanted to be a ball player, the family with the ministerial restraints strongly alive, didn't approve, so young Del left home, and stayed gone. For 9 years he tried to make it as a pitcher. In 1924 he hurt his arm, and in 1925 he was ill the entire year with typhoid fever.

All those months, as he lay in bed, he grew increasingly bitter at what he regarded as his lost years in baseball. When he was able to get on his feet he resolved never to see another game. He had $100, an old car, and his carpenter's tools. Starting in Arizona he began working with his hands, and he has steadily built and built until The Del Webb Construction Co., is in business all over the United States. And out of the money from his construction business has come his partnership in the Yankees, and he is deeper in baseball than even as a boy he ever dreamed he could be.

It took President Roosevelt to get Del straightened out about that year in bed. Del was doing a great deal of building for the War Department, and he got acquainted with MacPhail at that time, but also he had some visits with the President. The President asked Del once had he ever been ill for a long time, and if so, what had he learned from it. For, said Mr. Roosevelt:

"An illness can be a turning point for a man. I was laid up four years, and those years changed my thinking; in fact, changed this country's thinking."

"And," mused Webb, "I began to study it out, what The President had said about illness. I can see now my year was a big turning point, and without it I wouldn't have

I am."

Dan Topping is the exact opposite of an Horatio Alger hero. Dan's grandfather was Daniel Gray Reid, who formed the American Can Co., and U. S. Steel. Dan went to private schools and to the University of Pennsylvania.

Webb came on from nowhere. He had to go get his, and he was driven by an unlimited horizon. Topping was born into wealth, and his success is just as much a story as is that of his partner. In a sense, Dan's is more of a story, for few indeed are the wealthy boys who work and conserve and even add to their inheritance.

Topping was restless. He always wanted to work even though he knew from the start he never had to work a day in his life. He also had a great liking for sports, particularly for golf, in which he did well. At one time he ranked in the country's top ten players.

Dan went into advertising for eight or nine years, but it didn't suit him. He was in several business ventures, but he didn't like business. He liked sports and sports people. He had a friend named Shipwreck Kelly, and Kelly had a partner named Red Cagle, and these two halfbacks had interests in the Brooklyn football Dodgers. It wasn't long until Topping got involved in this football deal and wound up buying everybody out.

It Was MacPhail Who Started It:

Larry MacPhail became general manager of the baseball Dodgers in '38. He and Dan clicked. Dan always liked baseball better than football. He and Larry often talked about an association.

The war came. MacPhail went into the Army and Topping enlisted as a private in the Marines—he came out a major and was in the Pacific 26 months.

After the death of Jake Ruppert, MacPhail formed a syndicate of ten in an effort to buy the Yanks. Topping was in on the deal, and got Webb into it too, by an accident of a golf conversation. Dan and Del were playing in '43 at the Bellaire Golf Club in Beverly Hills. Del said some friends of his were after him to buy into the Oakland team. Dan said if he was going into baseball, why not go into a real big team, like the Yankees—that MacPhail was trying to buy them. Del said okay.

"Funny thing," said Webb, "but that syndicate deal flopped . . . Too many were in it. But the deal went dead until Dan came home for two weeks from the Pacific. Remember, Dan?"

"Yeah. I got in from Pearl Harbor, and after a day or two I had nothing to do, and was restless. I happened to know the family of Mr. Ruppert and the lawyer for the estate, and I had a hunch. I called MacPhail down at Washington and asked him if he minded my trying. He said for me to go ahead."

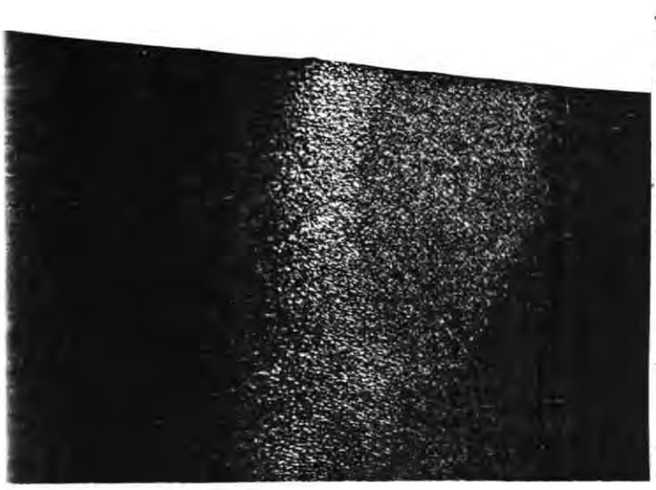
"So I jumped into it," Topping went on, "and before long it was lined up. I called MacPhail again at Washington and told him he better get up here right away, and I called Webb out in Arizona and told him to fly in. And the three of us bought the Yankees."

MacPhail sold his interest to Topping and Webb, and it was announced in the Yankee clubhouse immediately after the Yankees had won the Series from Brooklyn in '47. Topping became the new president.

"We were bad the next year—1948—but we won last year. That was our team that won last year, and a lot of people didn't think we could do it, and a lot of people laughed when we picked Stengel as our manager. I am very proud of our success last year."

Webb said, "Dan worked mighty hard. He's the best partner a man could have." Topping grinned at him.

"Oh, East is East, and West is West . . ."



THAT ARENA AGAIN— That plan to build a big all-sport stadium in Los Angeles—with Del Webb of Phoenix as one of the chief backers—popped up again with a report that arangements were being made to buy Pan-Pacific Auditorium in the coast city.

Should the purchase go through, the news story said, the old Pan-Pacific would be razed and Webb and his associates would build their new multi-million dollar plant on that site.

Webb told this writer and others when the deal was first reported, many months ago, that he'd been approached on the idea and was receptive, but wasn't to be considered a leading figure.

Charlie Cord, one of the owners of Pan-Pacific, later was quoted as saying that the negotiations seemed to be cooling off. He said he "understood" Webb was in the group seeking to purchase the arena, but hadn't seen anybody's money yet.

The Los Angeles Examiner, however, quoted Bob Becker, treasurer of the New York Yankees and of Webb's construction company, as saying the deal still was on the fire.

Johnson recalls Webb, Yankees

R.H. JOHNSON:
Namesake of many local landmarks reminisces about his tenure with Del E. Webb

JEANNE WINOGRAD
DAILY NEWS-SUN

STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

R.H. Johnson and Marjorie Klinefelter were on hand at the Sun Health Foundation Golden Recognition Luncheon at Union Hills Country Club Wednesday.

Del Webb and R.H. Johnson. They're not just streets and buildings.

R.H. Johnson — for whom R.H. Johnson Boulevard and the recreation center in Sun City West are named — was reminiscing recently about a Yankees game he once attended with Webb — the man for whom a street, hospital and construction company were named. Webb died in 1974.

Johnson, now a Diamondbacks fan, was attending a Sun Health Foundation luncheon Thursday with his fiance, Marjorie Klinefelter, when he recalled his baseball days with Webb. Johnson is president of the Del E. Webb Foundation, which regularly gives grants to Sun Health.

Johnson worked for Del Webb Corp. for 48 years. For 20 years during that period, Webb owned the New York Yankees.

"Fortunately, we were able to get back for a couple of New York Yankees' games in those days," Johnson said. "At one game, I didn't have a ticket as I followed Del into the game. He got through the turnstile first and kept going. The guy at the stile asked for my ticket, and I said, 'I'm with him,' pointing at Del. The guy said, 'Yeah, everybody is with him,' and wouldn't let me in."

"At one game, I didn't have a ticket as I followed Del into the game. He got through the turnstile first and kept going."

R.H. Johnson

The game was a 1958 contest between the Yankees and the Los Angeles Dodgers. Johnson waited patiently at the entrance for eight innings.

"Finally Del sent a runner out. I got in to see the last inning," Johnson said with a chuckle.

Phyllis Street, a volunteer and former president of the Sun Cities Area Historical Society in Sun City, said Webb became part owner of the Yankees at a cost of $2.8 million in 1945.

"Del Webb had been interested in baseball all his life," Street said. "When he'd apply for a job, he'd ask if they had a baseball team. If the company didn't have a team, he'd go on to another company. He played baseball until he got injured and ill, and that was the end of his baseball playing. Later, someone suggested he move to Phoenix to recuperate from typhoid fever."

Johnson also has a work history with his fiance.

"We worked together for 41, now going on 42 years," Johnson said of Klinefelter.

The couple became engaged earlier this year, although they haven't set a wedding date yet.

The engagement was followed by another noteworthy event in Johnson's life. On Aug. 3, he received an honorary Ph.D. in human letters from Arizona State University.

The historical society's Street said she researched the information on Webb's ownership of the Yankees using an updated version of the book "Del Webb: A Man, A Company," which the historical society is selling. The book will be available at the society's Nov. 14 luncheon at the West Valley Art Museum. For information about the book or the luncheon, call 974-2568.

Jeanne Winograd can be reached at jwinograd@aztrib.com or by calling 876-2532.

Where the Buck Stops

Despite the passage of three years and an upturn in fortunes, at Del E. Webb Corp. they're still squabbling over who nearly wrecked the company.

RARELY DO THE DETAILS of inside corporate fights get beyond the doors of the executive suite, even when one party stalks out in a huff. The loser, for the sake of appearances, keeps his mouth shut. The winner, eager to guard his company's image, pretends nothing has happened. After a while, both parties begin to forget that the fight occurred.

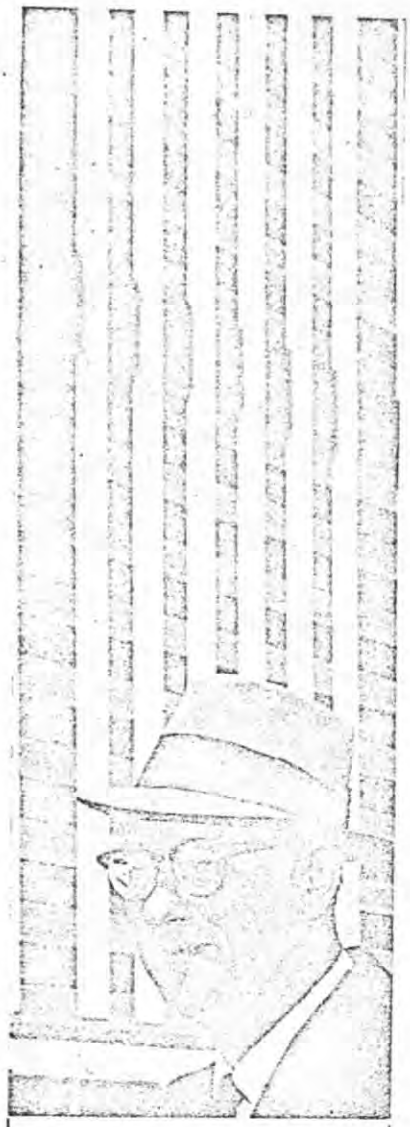
Sometimes, however—when the combatants are exceptionally strong-willed men, say, or when they were once close personal friends—the wounds never heal, and the gentlest probing, even after the passage of a number of years, can break the stitches and start the blood flowing again. This is what happened a few weeks ago when FORBES began poking into the improving prospects of the Del E. Webb Corp., the Phoenix, Ariz.-based real estate, construction and gambling casino company.

The company was founded in 1928 by Del E. Webb, the 69-year-old former co-owner (with the late Dan Topping) of the New York Yankees baseball team. A former minor-league pitcher, Webb became a carpenter, branched out into general contracting, into real estate and finally into Las Vegas gambling casinos. In 1960, under the sponsorship of Lehman Brothers, the corporation went public, though Del Webb himself still retained 43% of the common. Thereafter, the company's revenues went through the roof, rising from $42 million in 1960 to $166 million in 1966.

Double Trouble

But Webb Corp. had been getting in over its head. Despite steady profits from the construction business and the gambling casinos, Webb Corp.'s net dwindled from a high of $4.6 million in 1963 to a $13-million loss in 1965. The common stock, brought out at 5¼ in 1960, rose to 17 in 1962, then slumped to 2 in the next four years. Burdened with debt and vast undeveloped land holdings, a working capital deficit and large debt maturities, Del E. Webb Corp. by late 1965 was in serious danger of going under.

Webb himself was no longer very active in the company's management. Though he still retained the titles of chairman and chief executive, he had long since pretty much turned over the management of the company to a longtime personal friend, L. C. (Jake) Jacobson. In January, 1966, however,



Ex-carpenter Del Webb, shown outside his Phoenix headquarters, is a proud man, views his company in very personal terms. Hence his unwillingness to let bygones be bygones with former president L.C. Jacobson, whom he feels let him down.

Jacobson suddenly left the company. Company press releases carefully omitted any suggestion that his departure was less than amicable. But today company insiders are less reticent: There *was* strife, they say. In the months that followed Jacobson's departure, a raft of other executives—including one senior vice president, one executive vice president and several vice presidents—also departed. Whether they were fired or resigned depends upon whom you ask.

With Jacobson gone, Webb resumed personal charge of the company and installed former construction division head Robert H. Johnson as president. By selling off huge chunks of real estate and trimming back the company's debt, Webb edged $1 million into the black in 1967 on revenues of $151 million. With further gains expected in 1968, the stock has moved back up to around 12.

Tit for Tat

The affair still rankles, however. When asked recently what went wrong, Webb and executives at Phoenix headquarters made no effort to gloss over any internal conflict. Neither did Johnson. "Jake just bit off more than he could chew," said Johnson. "He couldn't seem to think in terms of anything smaller than 25,000 acres."

Confronted with a statement like this, Jacobson's reticence vanished as quickly as Webb's, and he promptly denied that his management was at fault. "If they had listened to me at the time," said Jacobson, who now owns and operates the big Newporter Inn at Newport Beach, Calif., "they would have sold all that land a lot earlier and wouldn't have had to take those big writeoffs."

What nobody disputes is that an appallingly large number of projects went sour at once. Webb Corp. bought 3,000 acres of ranch land adjoining its highly publicized Sun City, Ariz., retirement community, for instance, to provide room for expansion, planning to farm the property in the interim. But the farming venture didn't pan out. "There was always something," recalls Johnson, "poor weather, bad market conditions, you name it." The land was finally sold at a loss.

And that wasn't all. Two other Sun City communities, in Florida and Southern California, proved slow in developing, imposed a drain on profits, and so large parcels of California land bought for expansion were sold off. A joint housing venture with Kern County Land in Bakersfield, Calif. turned sour and was sold off, as were two office buildings adjacent to Los Angeles International Airport. In Houston, a $200-million housing-commercial project aimed at attracting NASA personnel bogged down when Congress trimmed the space budget, and Webb had to sell out to Humble Oil. A hotel, office complex in Fresno, Calif. is probably still running at a loss.

Ex-carpenter "Jake" Jacobson, also a proud man, started with Webb in the 1930s but never shared Del Webb's very personal attachment to the company. He left it a wealthy man, today speaks in self-defense.

Del Webb will not disclose the exact loss on each of these ventures. But in 1965 and 1966, despite healthy construction and gambling profits, Webb Corp. reported combined losses of almost $14 million.

"We might have been able to make it if only one or two of these projects had gone sour," says Johnson, "but we didn't have the resources to handle so many at once." To make matters worse, the real estate market dropped off sharply around the end of 1965, so that when Webb began to retrench, it had to do so in a soft market.

Webb Corp. officials blame Jacobson for most of the company's overexpansion. They allude to his optimistic, gambling nature (it was he who got the company into Las Vegas) and his resentment over Webb's enormous personal publicity. Webb himself, though willing to take some of the blame ("I can't duck it entirely; I put him in charge"), nonetheless thinks Jacobson was at fault.

According to Jacobson, however, Webb was the expansionist. "I kept telling him I didn't want to expand that fast," says Jacobson. "But he insisted on going ahead. He's got quite an ego, you know. He likes to see his name on top of buildings." Jacobson claims that, although he was left in charge, he had to clear every important move with Webb, including all the projects that turned sour. Present and former executives say, however, that all Webb wanted was "Jake's assurances that everything was all right," and that bright enthusiastic reports were what he usually got.

Jacobson says that he had proposed a plan of retrenchment at least two years before he left the company. His plan, he says, was to sell off properties in packages, instead of piecemeal. He claims, for example, that by selling the ailing Fresno hotel-office complex and the successful Rosenzweig Center office building in Phoenix as a package, the company could have netted a profit. "I talked to Webb many times about this," says Jacobson. "One day he'd agree to it, then a week later he would take it back and we were right back where we started from. He just couldn't bear to part with the properties."

Who's to Blame?

Whatever blame Jacobson must shoulder, he can also be credited with making the move that saved the company. Webb Corp. moved into gambling in 1961 through Jacobson's Las Vegas connections. Webb had constructed casinos in Las Vegas in the 1940s. But it was another thing to become a casino owner. Webb was the first public company to do so. Jacobson takes credit for moving toward sprucing up its image by introducing strict bookkeeping controls and closed-circuit TV cameras above the counting-tables to discourage so-called "skimming." In any event, the company's four large casinos—the Sahara, the Mint, the Thunderbird and the Sahara-Tahoe—accounted for at least $68 million of Webb Corp.'s $151 million of revenues in 1967, and by Jacobson's reckoning, netted around $5 million to $6 million last year vs. total net of only $1 million. Without the casinos, Webb would probably have gone bankrupt.

The company is now trimmed down and is beginning to expand again both in the U.S. and in Latin America. The concentration is mainly on construction and the Nevada hotels, not on long-term housing and land developments. In the first half of 1968 Webb Corp.'s revenues rose from $68 million to $81 million, its profits from 4 cents to 10 cents per share.

Whether Jacobson or Webb was to blame for the company's trouble, however, the final responsibility was Del Webb's. Then, as now, he was both chairman and chief executive officer. In business as in politics, the buck stops there. ■

done deals | TOP HOME SALES OF THE PAST WEEK

A former Wrigley chewing-gum executive, a banker, a surgeon and a founder of a commercial airline company are among the buyers and sellers in this week's priciest home sales.

$3,806,000

Eulogeo LLC, a Delaware limited-liability company, purchased an 8,497-square-foot home originally built in 2009 at the Arcadia subdivision on the south side of Camelback Mountain in Phoenix. The home was sold by William Ray Jr. as the sole managing member of 4701 N. Launfal LLC, an Arizona limited-liability company. Ray is also sole managing member of Ray Holdings Corp. in Phoenix.

$3,750,000

A.G. Atwater Jr., as trustee of the A.G. Atwater Jr. Trust, paid cash for a four-bedroom, 6½-bath, 9,016-square-foot home on the 11th fairway of the Paradise Valley Country Club in Paradise Valley. The main house offers a formal dining room, family room, study and chef's kitchen with butler's pantry. The master bedroom includes a sitting room, lavish bath with steam shower and jetted tub. Outdoor amenities include fireplace, ramada, barbecue, pool, spa, lush landscaping and golf course. There is also a guest house and four-car garage. Atwater, a former chewing-gum executive, bought a house near the Paradise Valley Country Club in 2005 for $2.46 million. Atwater once headed the subsidiary of the Wm. Wrigley Jr. Co. that sells Hubba Bubba bubble gum. He bought the current home from M.A. Lund, a banker, and his wife, Karen.

$2,500,000

Joseph G. Abdo and his wife, Sara, bought an 8,590-square-foot home, built in 2009, with 660-square-foot pool on the west side of the Mountain Shadows Golf Club in Paradise Valley. Joseph Abdo is a surgeon practicing in Arizona. The home was sold by JPMorgan Chase Bank in Newport Beach, Calif.

$2,165,000

Judson Macor and his wife, Diane, both of Calgary, Alberta, paid cash for a four-bedroom, six-bath, 5,913-square-foot home at the Desert Mountain-Chiricahua Golf Course in Scottsdale. It features an open floor plan, theater room, a pool, spa, barbecue, fire pit and wrap-around patio and deferred equity golf membership to the Desert Mountain Club. Judson Macor formed AirSprint Inc. in Canada with friend Phil Dewsnap in 1999. He is CEO and chairman and has grown the business to more than 100 employees nationally who operate more than 20 aircraft. The home was sold by SF7 LLC, an Arizona limited-liability company, managed by Mark Harrison, as president and director of Kenwood Development Inc. in Scottsdale.

$1,700,000

Meant2Be LLC, an Arizona limited-liability company, paid cash for a 6,679-square-foot home, originally built in 2007, with a pool at the Cantatierra subdivision west of the Eagle Mountain Golf Club in Scottsdale. The home was sold by Richard and Mary Inderrieden. The Inderriedens are founding members of the Brophy Legacy Society, which provides support for Brophy College Preparatory in Phoenix.

Researched by John McLean and the Information Market.

Building owner faces short-sale dilemma

Question: The loan on our small office building in Gilbert is $850,000. The bank has approved a short sale of $700,000 to a buyer from California. As a condition of approval, however, the bank is requiring us to sign a promissory note to pay the $150,000 short-sale deficiency in monthly payments over three years. The bank says that if we don't agree to make these payments, it will simply do a foreclosure sale and sue us for the $150,000 deficiency. The bank knows that we are collectable because they have our loan application, which lists our personal assets. We consulted with an attorney who said that the anti-deficiency statutes don't protect owners of office buildings. Should we let them do the short sale or just let the office building go into foreclosure?

Q&A
CHRISTOPHER COMBS

Answer: First, the lawyer that you consulted is correct. The anti-deficiency statutes do not protect owners of office buildings after foreclosure; and they protect only homeowners who own a home located on 2½ acres or less that is utilized as a dwelling. Second, I would recommend that you close the short-sale transaction because that will "stop the bleeding." If there is no short sale, the bank is under no obligation to immediately institute foreclosure proceedings, and many banks are postponing foreclosure sales indefinitely because they don't want to have to pay the property taxes, association dues, repair/maintenance, etc. In other words, if the foreclosure is not held for another year, the value of your office building could decrease to $600,000 with a deficiency of $250,000. Third, after the short-sale transaction closes, if you have available funds, you may be able to negotiate a one-time cash payment for less than the $150,000 promissory note.

Christopher Combs is a real-estate attorney with Combs Law Group PC. Reach him at azrep@combslawgroup.com. Consult a legal or tax adviser before making decisions.

Retirement area Sun City turns 50

REAGOR

Continued from D1

Sun City's 50th

Fifty years ago, developer Del E. Webb opened his first Sun City retirement community just as retirees were beginning to flock to Arizona for its warm weather.

Del Webb's company, which was bought by Pulte Homes in the late 1990s, changed the way Americans retire and helped make Arizona a destination.

The original Sun City continues to draw residents, as do the three newer Sun Cities west of it in the Valley.

Death takes Sun City's founder

Del E. Webb, founder and chairman of the board for the Del E. Webb Corporation, died Thursday in the Mayo Clinic at Rochester from complications following exploratory surgery. He was 75.

His body was cremated Friday in Rochester, and his ashes scattered over his beloved Arizona, in accordance with his wishes.

Born May 17, 1899, in Fresno, Calif., to Ernest and Henrietta Forthcamp Webb, he was equally at home with a hammer or a baseball as a boy.

WHEN the senior Webb's construction company declared bankruptcy, his young son quit school to work as a carpenter weekdays and pitch semi-professional games on Sundays. However, a seige of typhoid fever and an injury while sliding into home base reduced the youth's chances for an athletic career.

Seeking a new climate and new opportunities, he moved to Phoenix and found work with a small contracting company. Despite a worthless Friday paycheck from a disappearing contractor, the 29-year-old carpenter opened a modest construction business in July 1928.

Thus was born the Del E. Webb Construction Co., with total assets of one cement mixer, 10 wheelbarrows, 20 shovels, and 10 picks.

HOWEVER, he was a bright man with competent employes, and his business boomed.

He specialized in the construction of commercial buildings, schools, homes, and hotels. In the 1950s, the company entered the development field, acquiring land, building and selling homes, and planning commercial sites.

In 1945, Mr. Webb fulfilled a boyhood dream by joining Dan Topping in buying the New York Yankees. This found him in a dominant role at major league council tables as a leader in solving American League and baseball realignment, expansion, and legislative problems.

UNDER the two owners the Yankees won 15 American League championships and 10 World Series crowns. However an opportunity to sell his Yankee interest to CBS in 1965 saw the contractor close a 20-year ownership career.

His love for sports never was relinquished. He joined Phoenix business friends in the early '30s to establish the Phoenix Open and once shot a 67 in an opening program to have his name written above champions Byron Nelson and Ben Hogan, pros of the day.

In 1960, the Del E. Webb Construction Co. became the Del E. Webb Corporation and launched the world-famous Sun City retirement community.

WITH corporate headquarters in Phoenix, the Webb interests soon included airlines, banking, mining, manufacturing, and oil. Major hotels are centered in Hawaii and the West, but firm projects expand to Iowa and Florida.

He was an officer and director of Bing Crosby Producers, Inc., the Sun Country Broadcasting Co., Arizona Airways, and Arizona Brewing Co.

Hotels include the Sahara and Mint in Las Vegas, the Sahara-Tahoe in Lake Tahoe, Newporter Inn at Newport Beach, Calif., Kuilima Hotel in Oahu, Hawaii, Primadonna Club in Reno, and the TowneHouse and Mountain Shadows here.

Survivors include his wife, Toni, Phoenix, and a brother, Halmer, North Hollywood, Calif.

NEWS-SUN

The Combined YOUNGTOWN NEWS and SUN CITY SUN

10¢ per copy

Arizona's Pioneer Retirement Community Newspaper

40 Pages
3 Sections

Vol. XVII No. 102 — Sun City, Arizona — 977-8351 — Tuesday, July 9, 1974

IC

From: Public Relations Department
Del E. Webb Corporation

P. O. Box 4066
Phone AL 8-7441
Phoenix, Arizona

5101 San Fernando Road West
Phone CH 5-7551
Los Angeles 39, California

BIOGRAPHY
Del E. Webb, President

(think this bio is pre-Sun City days)

Del E. Webb, a native of Fresno, California, where he was born May 17, 1899, is a builder whose rise to national prominence not only in construction but in baseball has been something of a phenomenon. As a youth he had aspirations to be a baseball major leaguer, and it was only after he quit a rather promising diamond career because of a sore arm that he decided to concentrate upon carpentering

Today he is president of Del E. Webb Corporation, with headquarters in Phoenix and a West Coast office in Los Angeles. But Mr. Webb also is widely known as co-owner with Dan Topping of New York of the New York Yankees of the American League.

Webb learned the carpentry trade as a boy from his father, the late Ernest G. Webb, a Fresno, Calif., contractor who also was in the sand and gravel business. And when his father suffered business reverses, Del cut short his formal education and started playing professional baseball and working at the carpentry trade.

Today Mr. Webb still numbers among his close friends many men who went on from teams in his circuit to become major league stars. In baseball, always aiming for the majors, Webb found he could pick up valuable pointers on the game from old-timers formerly in the big league. He found, too, that the professional and semi-pro play was more profitable from a salary standpoint than even a full-time carpenter's job, and it was typical Webb acumen to always look after the business phase of his activities.

(more)

In the middle 1920s, after recovering from a severe siege of typhoid fever which left him an ailing baseball arm and reduced his weight to a frail 99 from his usual 200 pounds, Webb decided he wasn't making progress in California. At the urging of a friend, he bundled his wife and his few possessions into a car and headed for Phoenix, Arizona.

There he established his home and--with little more than a saw and hammer, and the ability to use them--he began to lay the groundwork for the founding of a national construction business with Phoenix as its headquarters.

Webb's zeal as a carpenter gained the friendship and respect of a Phoenix grocer who gave him the opportunity to finish construction of one of his stores on which progress by another contractor hadn't been satisfactory. That gave Webb his start, and other jobs followed in rapid succession, as the grocery chain was expanding.

Ability to figure jobs closely, to obtain competent men to help in expanding, and his knack of getting along with people began to boost the business of Webb's firm. When war came the company already was one of the largest and busiest in the Southwest, boasted an excellent financial rating, and was in a position to be of service to the government in all types of construction.

During World War II, when speed was the watchword, Webb's company built in record time some of the biggest of the West's military installations, including air fields, army and navy training bases, hospitals and prisoner of war camps.

With its headquarters remaining in Phoenix, and district offices in Los Angeles and Chicago, the Webb construction activities quickly spread from border to border and coast to coast. After the war the firm built hospitals for veterans, industrial plants and warehouses in twenty-six states. When the Korean action called for renewed defense preparations, the Webb firm constructed technical plants for production of guided missiles and modification of fighter planes, huge runways for B-47 Stratojets, and tremendous new

(more)

military training facilities at bases in the Southwestern U. S. and on the Pacific Coast.

As the United States entered the space age, Webb designers, engineers and builders kept pace by completing such projects as a multi-million dollar radar system manufacturing plant for Hughes Aircraft in California, a modern engineering laboratory for Hughes scientists in Arizona, and nuclear field laboratory facilities in California.

The Webb Corporation recently completed for the government the largest rocket test stand ever built, at Edwards Air Force Base. A $62,000,000 contract to install Minuteman missile facilities in Montana, awarded early in 1961 to Webb and a California builder, was the second hugh missile project the Webb firm had undertaken...the first was near Wichita, Kan. only months earlier.

A solid background in home building helped win such post-war housing contracts as the giant development for U. S. Air Force Academy personnel in Colorado, and attractive Capehart homes for officers and airmen at Offutt, Whiteman and Vandenberg Air Force Bases. These expansive military projects are in addition to scores of civilian housing developments in Arizona, California and other states, and an entire town in Southwestern Arizona built for the Magma Copper Corp.

When in January, 1945, Mr. Webb joined Dan Topping of New York in purchase of the fabulous New York Yankees, it was for the contractor the realization of a youthful ambition to become a major leaguer. Today he is prominently identified with major league baseball activities, and is regarded as a leading spokesman among American League club owners and those promoting the best interests of baseball.

Probably few leaders in American business have interests more widely separated and endeavor to personally and regularly oversee them. Mr. Webb's

(more)

baseball interests are centered in New York, but extend also to Yankee farm clubs throughout the nation.

And, though his home and construction business headquarters in Phoenix are distant from his baseball interests and many of his building projects, he can inspect progress one day on one of the company's West Coast jobs, and next day be in the Yankee office or on the site of an Atlantic Seaboard project, for he travels exclusively by air.

His business interests, besides construction and baseball, extend to oil, banking, mining, hotels, airlines, manufacturing and other enterprises in which he is financially interested. Yet financial success hasn't placed him beyond the reach of his co-workers, and a sense of humor has been of great help in his relations with capital and labor.

Mr. Webb is recognized as a keen judge of human nature. He pays better than average salaries, but demands--and gets--results. He works hard and insists that his men do likewise, and the quiet yet firm manner in which he does it results in harmonious cooperation. His philosophy is the Golden Rule.

Outside of baseball, his interest in sports is chiefly limited to a game of golf when time away from his business and travel permits. He plays to a five handicap, and one of his great moments in golf came when he shot a 67 in the Phoenix Open a few years ago to see his name written on the scoreboard above those of Defending Champion Byron Nelson and the immortal Ben Hogan, who had 69 and 70 that day.

# # #

IC

DEL E. WEBB MEMORIAL GARDEN DEDICATION Sept. 17, 1987

BELL RECREATION CENTER SUN CITY, AZ. 85351

AS WE DEDICATE THIS MEMORIAL GARDEN IT IS ONLY FITTING THAT WE TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO REMINISCE ABOUT DELBERT EUGENE WEBB.

WE KNOW DEL WEBB AS THE MAN WHO BUILT THE SUN CITIES AND WE HAVE HEARD AND READ ABOUT HIS EARLY BEGINNINGS. BUT HOW MANY OF US REALIZE THERE WERE MANY DEL WEBB'S WE NEVER HEARD ABOUT?

DID YOU KNOW, DURING WORLD WAR II HIS COMPANY BUILT IN RECORD TIME SOME OF THE WEST'S BIGGEST MILITARY INSTALLATIONS, AIR FIELDS INCLUDING OUR OWN LUKE AND WILLIAMS, AND FORT HUACHUCA, AS WE KNOW IT TODAY, WAS BUILT IN LESS THAN 90 DAYS; ARMY AND NAVY TRAINING FIELDS WERE CONSTRUCTED FROM SCRATCH AND MANY HOSPITALS CAME INTO BEING UNDER HIS DIRECTION. HE BUILT VA HOSPITALS, INDUSTRIAL PLANTS AND WAREHOUSES IN 26 STATES. DURING THE KOREAN CONFLICT, TECHNICAL PLANTS WERE BUILT FOR THE PRODUCTION OF GUIDED MISSILES AND MODIFICATION OF FIGHTER PLANES ALONG WITH HUGE RUNWAYS FOR THE B-47 STRATOJETS. WEBB'S PASSION FOR HONESTY WON HIM THE DISTINCTION OF BEING THE ONLY BUILDER AWARDED GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS ON THE BASIS OF HIS WORD AND A HANDSHAKE.

THE WEBB COMPANY WENT ON TO BUILD MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR RADAR MANUFACTURING PLANTS AND AN ENGINEERING LABORATORY IN ARIZONA FOR THE HUGHES AIRCRAFT COMPANY AND A NUCLEAR FIELD LABORATORY IN CALIFORNIA. THEN CAME THE LARGEST ROCKET TEST STAND EVER BUILT AT EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE; A 62 MILLION DOLLAR INSTALLATION MINUTEMAN MISSILE FACILITY IN MONTANA; A 31 MILLION DOLLAR TITAN

SILO NEAR WITCHITA. AND TO MENTION A FEW CLOSER TO HOME, THERE WAS THE COLLEGE AT TEMPE, PHOENIX UNION HIGH SCHOOL, ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL AND NUMEROUS OFFICE COMPLEXES.

IN HOME BUILDING WEBB WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR POST WAR HOUSING FOR THE U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY PERSONNEL AT OFFUT, WHITEMAN AND VANDERBURG AIR FORCE BASES. THESE WERE IN ADDITION TO CIVILIAN HOUSING IN ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA AND FLORIDA. NOT TO MENTION AN ENTIRE TOWN IN SOUTHWESTERN ARIZONA, SAN MANUEL, BUILT FOR THE MAGMA COPPER CORPORATION. IT IS EASY TO SEE THAT MR. WEBB WAS INDEED A MASTER BUILDER.

His business interests extended to oil, banking, mining, hotels, airlines, and manufacturing to mention a few. A man of many interests.

MR. WEBB CONTROLLED ONE OF THE NATION'S LARGEST CONSTRUCTION OPERATION IN THE COUNTRY: HE HEADED OR SAT ON BOARDS OF 31 CORPORATIONS AND HAD PARTNERSHIPS OR MAJOR INTERESTS IN INNUMERABLE COMPANIES. NOT BAD FOR MAN WHO STARTED OUT WITH A HAMMER AND A WHEELBARROW.

WITH ALL OF MR. WEBB"S INVOLVEMENT, AN OVERWHELMING NUMBER OF PEOPLE NEVER HEARD OF HIM AND WE HAVE TODAY, PEOPLE RIGHT HERE WHO ASK, "WAS THERE REALLY A DEL WEBB?" ONE NATIONAL WRITER DUBBED HIM THE "BASHFUL BARNUM."

MR. WEBB WAS A QUIET, UNASSUMING MAN WHO PREFERRED TO AVOID PUBLICITY. HE STOOD 6'4" AND LOOKED AS LEAN AS A RANGE RIDER AT 200 POUNDS. HE COULD EXUDE THE SAME SORT OF LEVEL-EYED LACONIC WESTERN CHARM, SOMEHOW SUGGESTING OF SAGEBRUSH AND WIDE OPEN SPACE OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH GARY COOPER. HE WAS EQUALLY AT HOME

WITH PRESDIENTS AND KINGS AS HE WAS WITH CARPENTERS AND CONSTRUCTION WORKERS. HE NEVER LOST THE COMMON TOUCH.

WHAT WAS HIS SECRET OF SUCCESS? HE APPLIED THE RULES OF BASEBALL TO BUSINESS. BASEBALL TAUGHT HIM THE VALUE OF HAVING A HAPPY TEAM. HE SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH ONE OF THE MOST LOYAL, CLOSELY KNIT AND TALENTED GROUP OF EXECUTIVES IN THE BUSINESS. He RECRUITED HIS TEAM MEMBERS YOUNG, STARTED THEM AT THE BOTTOM AND BROUGHT THEM UP THE CORPORATE LADDER ONCE HE KNEW THEIR POTENTIAL. HE ESTABLISHED AN ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK WITH FREEDOM FOR OTHERS TO DO UNDER HIS DIRECTION.

IN SPITE OF HIS BUSINESS ACUMEN, HE COULD DRIVE HIS SECRETARIES UP THE WALL - HE WAS FOREVER LOSING PAPERS, PLANE TICKETS, FORGETTING WHERE HIS NEXT APPOINTEMENT WAS, MISPLACING OFFICE KEYS (HE EVEN GOT LOCKED IN THE OFFICE A COUPLE OF TIMES AND HAD TO BE RESCUED) AND HE NEVER HAD ENOUGH MONEY IN HIS POCKETS TO BUY A CUP OF COFFEE. YES, HE HAD HIS HUMAN SIDE TOO.

ANOTHER DEL WEBB WAS THE SPORTSMAN. A LONG TIME LOVE OF BASEBALL EVENTUALLY LED TO HIS BEING NOT ONLY CO-OWNER OF THE NEW YORK YANKEES ALONG WITH DAN TOPPOING BUT PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN LEAGUE. BY HIS OWN ADMISSION, HE WAS A POOR LOSER. DURING HIS 20 YEAR REIGN AS CO-OWNER, THE TEAM NEVER HAD A LOSING SEASON FINANCIALLY AND DID ALMOST AS WELL ON THE FIELD WINNING 15 LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIPS AND 10 WORLD SERIES CROWNS.

A SECOND LOVE WAS GOLF AND PLAYING TO A 7 HANDICAP AT AGE 70 HE WAS WELL KNOWN ON GOLF COURSES ALL OVER THE COUNTRY. HE PALYED WITH CHAMPIONS AND SOMETIMES BEAT THEM.

HIS LOVE OF SPEED ATTRACTED HIM TO CAR RACING AS A SPONSOR OF MANY DRIVERS. AND HE TRAVELLED FAST - ALWAYS BY PLANE.

ANOTHER DEL WEBB WAS THE HUMANITARIAN. HE GAVE GENEROUSLY BUT QUIETLY AND WITHOUT FANFARE - ESPECIALLY IF IT WOULD HELP A BOY OR GIRL. AT HIS DEATH, THE BULK OF HIS ESTATE WENT TO THE WEBB FOUNDATION WHICH IS DEDICATED TO THE FURTHERANCE OF GOOD HEALTH AND SCIENCE.

ON THIS CONSTITUTION DAY I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK OF THOSE 55 DELEGATES IN PHILADELPHIA AS 55 DEL WEBB'S OF THEIR DAY. ALL LEADERS WITH THE COURAGE OF THEIR CONVICTIONS - ALL WORKING TO RECONCILE UNITY WITH DIVERSITY.

IN THE YEARS TO COME; WILL WE BE ABLE TO SAY, "WE THE PEOPLE OF THE SUN CITIES, IN ORDER TO FORM A MORE PERFECT UNION, ESTABLISH JUSTICE, INSURE DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY, PROVIDE FOR THE COMMON DEFENSE, PROMOTE THE GENERAL WELFARE AND SECURE THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY TO OURSELVES AND OUR POSTERITY, HAVE ORDAINED AND ESTABLISHED A VIABLE COMMUNITY?"

IN CONCLUSION, I ASK, "CANNOT WE TAKE A LESSON FROM THE EFFORTS OF THESE FORGERS OF OUR CONSTITUTION AND WE HERE IN THE SUN CITIES RECONCILE UNITY WITH DIVERSITY?"

DEL WEBB WAS THE MASTER OF HIS FATE, CAN WE EMULATE HIM?

THANK YOU.

JANE FREEMAN

TELEPHONE 3-3600
RESIDENCE 2-1569

PLANS
ESTIMATES

JOBBING A SPECIALTY
CABINET WORK

DEL E. WEBB
CONTRACTOR AND BUILDER
STORE FIXTURES
230 NORTH NINTH STREET
PHOENIX, ARIZONA

13

February 8, 1929

J. B. Bayless-----Bayless Store No. 10

Cash advanced for labor $128.40

Pd Feb 9 1929
check #07
Del E. Webb

TELEPHONE 3-3600
RESIDENCE 2-1569

PLANS
ESTIMATES

JOBBING A SPECIALTY
CABINET WORK

DEL E. WEBB
CONTRACTOR AND BUILDER
STORE FIXTURES
230 NORTH NINTH STREET
PHOENIX, ARIZONA

March 8, 1929

J. B. Bayless-----Bayless Building #10

Wages for supervision, 22 hrs. $1.50 Per Hr.	$33.00
Cash advanced as per receipts	57.00
	$90.00

P L
June 8
Del E Webb
Check #63

Senatorial Recognition

Richard H. Bryan, United States Senator of the State of Nevada, Extends Special Congratulations to

Del E. Webb (1899-1974)

Special Achievement Award

Innovation

2000 Gaming Hall of Fame

This 19th Day of October 2000

Congratulations and Best Wishes on this Auspicious Event.

RICHARD H. BRYAN
United States Senator