

Viewpoint Lake: A Sun City Treasure!

When Viewpoint Lake opened in October 1968, it was not only an engineering marvel, but it dramatically changed the landscape of Sun City and gave residents an early glimpse of what was to come as the community prepared for its second decade.

The Del Webb Development Company in 1967 announced plans to expand the community north of Grand Avenue and begin work on what would become Sun City Phase 2. Initial plans called for two lakes, circular streets, a golf course, a recreation center, a hospital and commercial lots.

Workers began excavating the lake in 1968 – removing 16 million cubic feet of material to reach the lake’s desired depth of 10 feet. The lake would be approximately 1,850 feet in length and 950 feet wide and combined with its lagoons would provide over two miles of shoreline.

Most of the soil removed was taken across the street to use in the building of the new hospital, while some of it was used to build Lookout Mountain, the small park to your right overlooking the lake. Today, the hill is commonly referred to as Meeker’s Mountain, a tribute to John Meeker who served as president of DEVCO.

Two wells with a combined capacity of pumping 3,000 gallons per minute were used to fill the lake. It took 20 days to fill the lake to its final capacity of 105 million gallons of water.

A grand opening festival for Sun City Lake, as it was then called, was held the first weekend in October 1968, along with the introduction of 18 new model homes to be sold in Phase 2. In addition to several water-skiing exhibitions, entertainment that weekend included a mariachi band and sky divers opening their parachutes and gently landing on the lake’s serene surface!

Boat races were organized by the Arizona Navy and the lake stocked with fish to tempt anglers who could fish from their own boats or a large pier. Paddleboats, two sailboats and two row boats equipped with 5 horsepower engines were available to rent. The Del Webb company gifted the lake to Sun City in 1977, and it remains a Sun City treasure and a popular visitor attraction.

Of special note: A polyethylene liner was installed at the bottom of the lake prior to it being filled. The liner prevented water from draining through the porous material left behind after excavation. The original liner was guaranteed to last 25 years – but remained in service for 55 years, only to finally be replaced in 2023!