

**NED CURTIS**  
**February 13, 1997**

Anne Andeen , interviewer , Ann Townsend assisting.

We are privileged today to interview Ned Curtis who was Paradise Valley's first Town Marshal.

Interviewer: Mr. Curtis, do we have permission to quote in part or all of our interview today.

Curtis: Of course.

Interviewer: Thank you. We are interested in how you became Town Marshal in the first place, Ned.

Curtis: I started on the incorporation drive. It did not include the area in which I lived. The initial plan for the incorporation did not include it, but abutted it. I have a lot of the friends in down in this area and I would like to be part of the Town of Paradise Valley, too.

Interviewer: Where was that?

Curtis: That was from Jackrabbit south of Coronado, east, all the way to the canal. I formed a Committee of Annexation. We hired Honquist Engineering to do a legal description and we paid a County Assessor to moonlight to get assessed valuations on

each parcel. We sent out a letter to everybody. All that stuff sat on my desk until Jon Bonnell called me. The Supervisor's officer met the Town, was approved by the Supervisor. I called my Committee at three in the afternoon. By nine o'clock that night, we had 70% of the evaluations signed. I took this stuff to the first Town Council meeting, which was in the basement of Goldwater's store in Park Central in Phoenix. I read the annexation position, retrieved legal times, and they approved it. The next morning I was at the County Recorder's Office, before they opened, and I had him stamp it as soon as nine o'clock hit. So they made me Town Marshal.

Interviewer: What was the population of the area that was included in the Town? A couple of thousand people or less than that?

Curtis: I don't know. I wouldn't want to venture a guess.

Interviewer: How long did you serve as Town Marshal?

Curtis: I don't really know. Pat Downey would have been Mayor. He wanted some publicity for the Town. He knew John Conlan (a major league baseball umpire) who was a winter resident of the Town. He caught Jocko at a baseball game and said, "How would you like to be Town Marshal?" Jocko said, "Oh yeah, great. That's wonderful." Pat called me and said I wasn't Town Marshal anymore. I was upset said that there was a little bit of politics in there that I wouldn't want to stick his neck in it. I have never been

notified that I was not Town Marshal. I don't even remember when Jocko came into the Town as Town Marshal.

Interviewer: How long did you reside in Paradise Valley after that?

Curtis: Until 1961.

Interviewer: The reason that you moved out of the Town?

Curtis: I had the lease on horse Stables and I wanted to live closer to there.

Interviewer: Were you interested in cars?

Curtis: I was interested in cars but I retired from racing in 1956. It was dangerous and the kids were growing.

Interviewer: Where did you live before you moved to Paradise Valley? What made you choose Arizona?

Curtis: Weston Massachusetts, just west of Boston. I had been here in 1947 and I liked it. Jane wanted to go anywhere but New England. We lived on 68th Street just south of Jackrabbit.

Interviewer: That was probably the Town limit at that time.

Curtis: That house was built right after the War. In fact, I saw a picture in Casa Blanca Inn before they auctioned off some of the things in Casa Blanca, they had a photograph showing this house in its original condition and then they added to it. The road was dirt when I went there, but it was a nice place.

Interviewer: Have you kept up with what has been happening in the Town?

Curtis: Not too much. A very good friend of mine is on the Town Council.

Interviewer: Do you think it has changed much from when you first lived there. The friendliness, the sense of community that we have tried to establish.

Curtis: I don't really know because I don't know that many people there. I know John Amory very well.

Interviewer: Are there any events that happened in Paradise Valley while you were involved with it that were of particularly historical significance besides the incorporation.

Curtis: No.

Interviewer: Any anecdotes that might have gotten lost. Personalities of people.

Curtis: I decided that as Town Marshal, I should go in and meet the Sheriff because the County Sheriff's office was still doing the patrolling. (Who was that?) It was probably Cal Boyce. I was sworn in by Cal. I didn't meet him, I met his Chief Deputy. Helen Marston, Town Clerk wanted to go in with me. She wanted a badge or something. A deputy badge. I thought this is my duty to find out what's going on, what I should do and what they will do. I went in without her and she was very upset.

Interviewer: What was the arrangement that you agreed upon with him at that point in time?

Curtis: They were contracting to take care of everything like they did before with the Town. The law stated that the Town must have a Secretary, Board of Adjustment, and Town Marshal.

Interviewer: To begin as an official incorporated Town?

Curtis: Yes.

Interviewer: That's interesting that it had to have a Board of Adjustment. Ann Townsend is on the Board of Adjustment now. I was on the Board of Adjustment earlier.

Curtis: Alexander Raisin who lived on the southwest corner of Invergordon and McDonald.

Interviewer: It's not a name that is familiar to us. Is he still living do you know.

Curtis: No, he's not.

Interviewer: Did you know Carl Peachy?

Curtis: Very well.

Interviewer: I spoke with him. He lives in Covina, California, in a care home. I spoke with him over the phone. He is going to be 93 this summer and is still very bright and with it. He wants me to come to California to interview him. Could you tell me a little bit about Carl?

Curtis: Peachy was a real friend. He was an absolutely wonderful man. In fact, he was on my Annexation Committee.

Interviewer: I understand he was the Town's first Magistrate.

Curtis: That I didn't know.

Interviewer: What capacity did he serve when you knew him and you were working with the Town?

Curtis: His wife was the Secretary Treasurer of the Citizen's Committee for Annexation to Paradise Valley. I remember when they had their 50th wedding anniversary and that was years ago. He's 93.

Interviewer: He seems to be very healthy. I talked to his daughter-in-law. He is very well. He just can't move physically.

Curtis: Next time you talk to him, please give him my regards. I really enjoyed him, he was just one of those good people. Still is.

Interviewer: I will, I will. In our interview with Les Naumann and yourself, we're finding all of you guys were good people and had a focus unlike what it exists today as far as people working and cooperating together for a common goal. They really didn't mind sacrificing their time and energy in order to reach the goals— one house per acre and no commercial. We thank you for it.

Curtis: That was what the whole thing was about. When I lived in Weston, Mass., they established one or one and one-half acre per house in 1928. Nobody ever broke it. Until I left there, I left in '59. That was one of the reasons Weston was a neat place to live. Before I lived there, I didn't know zoning from anything. But I learned from that that it is

very important. I used to go in and fight zoning cases when I was on the Paradise Valley Improvement Board. I'll tell you how that all started. We hadn't been out here more than three or four months. We were having dinner, this is at 5205 North 68th Place. A man who owned 20 acres north of us, which would be the southeast corner of Jackrabbit and 68th, wanted me to sign a petition for dropping the zoning to half acre. I said, "No, I'm sorry, I'm not interested." I called Don Russe, who was a state legislator, and asked, "What do I do? I want to fight this thing." He said, "Call Pat Downey, he is in charge of your area." I called Pat Downey and he said call Dorothy Patterson. You remember her?

Interviewer: Yes, as a matter of fact, we're trying to interview her.

Curtis: Is she still living still? Bless her.

Interviewer: Yes, she is 93 or 94.

Curtis: What a scraper she is. She told me how to do it. I got some of the other people around there and, with Pat Downey's help because he was on the PVIA Board, we went in and we won. That's why they put me on the Board of PVIA.

Interviewer: Who else was on that Board, do you remember? Pat Downey, Henry Sturgess, Dorothy Patterson.



Curtis: Yes. I remember we had a young attorney who represented us. (John Madden?)  
No, it would have been Rehnquist. In later cases, Bill would go into County with me and we never lost a case.

Interviewer: I know William Rehnquist was the Town Attorney for about four years. It was after the incorporation, in the early '60's. But he helped you.

Curtis: Yes, and Phil Messinger was one of the attorneys on the Incorporation Committee. He and John Madden were both on the Committee. Philip is now living in \_\_\_\_\_. (Phil Messinger, that's not mortuary?) No, that's his brother.

Interviewer: Do you remember a Raymond O. Mitchell? While he was on the County, he was head of P&Z and lived in the Paradise Valley area, and came back to the Paradise Valley Improvement Board and said, "If we want to keep one house per acre, we'd better incorporate." He is the one that got the ball rolling and was nicknamed "Mr. Paradise Valley." I wonder if you remember him.

Curtis: There was a Ray Mitchell. Yes, Ray and Ann Mitchell. They lived on the northeast corner of \_\_\_\_\_ Drive, and I'm not sure which one. Bob Maytag also lived on the west side of Invergordon, just north of Jackrabbit. I wasn't Town Marshal, that was before the Town was incorporated.

Interviewer: Were you called out on any calls during your term of office?

Curtis: No. I asked Pat Downey about that and he said, "I don't want you to do a damn thing. It is just a legal requirement. The Sheriff's office is taking care of everything." Just as well, because what am I going to do. I had no police training and renting the car. I used to drive around the south side of Mummy Mountain, and if I had seen something, what could I do. Go to a house and introduce myself and say let me use your phone.

Interviewer: Is Ray Mitchell still living?

Curtis: I don't think so. He was an attorney and stayed in the background on these things. When I gave credit to him, I meant he was our man in the background. He didn't make a lot of noise, he was in the background leading us in the right direction.

Interviewer: We are very grateful to him. We're trying to find out if anyone knows if he is still living because we would love to interview him. He was the one that really started it by guiding people. Of the people that we have interviewed so far, you are the first one who even remembers him. Les Naumann, who became the Town Marshal after you, didn't remember him.

Curtis: Jocko Conlan was after me. I'll be glad to copy any material that you would like to take with you. Here is the Citizens Committee for Incorporation and the original Paradise Valley, Arizona.

Interviewer: There are some incorporation papers that I have seen in the history book. None look like this.

Curtis: That is Pat Downey's home address.

Interviewer: If we can have a copy of it, we would appreciate it.

Curtis: Yes. There is one other funny thing if I may go back. When the Town accepted our annexation, a guy named Robert J. McNutt was the Town Manager of Scottsdale. This is the letter he wrote to Pat Downey on March 9. Scottsdale was being very friendly and very cooperative. They would do city services and stuff. Now remember my annexation crossed Scottsdale Road and went all the way to the canal. The last paragraph says, "We must insist that Scottsdale Road remain a part of our Town to permit our growth to the north and east. We are certain that mutual discussion of future expansions will result in equity for both communities." When he found out that we annexed the next day and he saw a map of it, the *Scottsdale Progress* headline was "Paradise Annexes, McNutt Furious" and he was after my scalp. His dad died in Detroit and he went back there. The Town fired him. He didn't think that Scottsdale could continue to annex north unless they could go up the road. That just doesn't make sense. As long as it is continuous, it could be one side of the canal or the other. They're right up at Carefree now.

Interviewer: That's right, the Terravitas. Are you still riding?

Curtis: Now I can't because I have a bladder infection. I go into surgery on Monday. My urologist said not to ride anymore.

Interviewer: I'll give you a call in a couple of months.

Curtis: Marsha Evans rides. I find new things all the time. I love it up here.

Interviewer: I was looking for Dorothy Patterson's name. I don't see it on this one.

Curtis: Dorothy was seated on the PVIA Board number 10.

Interviewer: There were two boards then. One for incorporation and the other was the PVIA Board.

Curtis: Yes, it started years before the Town incorporated. They were the zoning before we were incorporated.

Interviewer: I understand that Ray Mitchell worked 11 years and so this "A" Board before the May of 1961 incorporation. After that, there was about 10 years of litigation which was just Scottsdale. It may have been Phoenix, too. They were countering and it went all the way up to the State Supreme Court before Paradise Valley could finally get over this and say, "Yes, we are a legal Town," and the State Supreme Court

acknowledged that they are. That's when Scottsdale and Phoenix finally gave up and let us be.

Interviewer: You knew my Uncle Charlie Mieg? (Anne Andeen's uncle)

Curtis: He's your uncle? He's one of those people you never saw him without a pipe in his mouth. He was the Chairman. Jim Palace was his partner. Charlie was very talkative and Jim was very, very quiet.

Interviewer: Do you know if any of these people are still living. My uncle is passed on. I know Phil vonAmmon and Vic Swanson are still living.

Curtis: Philip was the MC at the 25th. He said, "We'll see you in 25 years."

Interviewer: Do you know if any of the people that are on there are still living?

Curtis: Tom Barrett, the Barrett-Jackson automobile auction. Thomas W. Barrett III. Henry Sturgess died. Katie Sturgess was at the 25th. Henry was a great person. He was president of the Erie Railroad and had the most beautiful eyelashes. Better than John L. Lewis. Charlie Nichol died. At the time of the 25th, people said Pat Downey was not living, but it turned up that he was still alive. Joe Clifford died. Patty Clifford was at the 25th. Mrs. Evans, I don't remember her first name, had a high pitch voice.

Interviewer: Was she the wife or daughter of Robert Evans?

Curtis: No. McGuire, I don't know. He was a real estate guy. I'm glad to know she's still living. Will you please give her my best regards. She is such a wonderful person.

Interviewer: Let's get back to these people on the Incorporation Board.

Curtis: Patty Clifford was the Secretary. She was living in a condo on McDonald Drive, during the 25th, that's where I met her. She, Avis Read and I were there. Ian came to the 25th.

Interviewer: He worked for Sperry and worked for my husband.

Curtis: Bailey, I didn't know. Don Reiss was the one who used to live in my house. W\_\_\_ died. (His wife, Bettina, is still living. She's way up in years) She had a hearing loss. Harry Wilder, I don't know. Phil Messinger is still living. I'm sure John Madden was done in (by his wife, Becky). Ann somebody who was a movie actress lived here on Camelback Road. She was involved in the A to Z Horse Show. (Ann Harris) She took the Madden child when Becky was in Florence.

Interviewer: Have you heard whatever happened to her?

Curtis: No, I have often wondered. (Ann Harris?) No, Becky Madden.

Interviewer: She had to spend 12 to 14 years, so she's out by now, by 1980. I wondered what happened to their only son, Michael. Ann Harris took over and finished raising him. He was ten when the murder happened, and four years later when his mother went to jail, he was 14.

Curtis: Yes, Ann Harris took over.

Interviewer: Ann Harris came back to the valley and opened that Harris Restaurant on Camelback. (That's right.)

Curtis: Ann Lee Harris. This is a description of PVIA. You may have that. (hands a paper to interviewers)

Interviewer: I know we don't have this because I've been through the first set of books three times. Thank you.

Curtis: Do you want this copied? (Yes, please.)

Interviewer: When the history began in 1961, there are newspaper articles and there are documents, but there is nothing prior to it. In other words, what led up to it. It just has newspaper articles talking about what they've done.

Curtis: I have the Citizens Committee for Annexation of Paradise Valley, if you want a copy of that, and also the annexation petition. I will just copy them. I was tempted to send this in to the *Scottsdale Progress*.

Interviewer: You wouldn't believe that their 1960 budget for the Town of Scottsdale could get along on \$53,874.00 in one year.

Curtis: Now there's another thing on the Committee for Incorporation. This is the March '61 budget figures for the first year of operation of the Town of Paradise Valley (\$43,600)

Interviewer: There are budgets for it. I think the first budget that shows is after incorporation.

(the tape just ended )