

JOAN HORNE
May 27, 1998

I, Ann Townsend, interviewer for the Town of Paradise Valley Historical Committee am privileged to interview Mrs. Joan Horne, former Councilperson and Mayor for the Town of Paradise Valley.

Interviewer: Thank you for the opportunity to interview you, Mrs. Horne. May I have your permission to quote you in part or all of our conversation today for the historical records we are collecting?

Mrs. Horne: Definitely.

Interviewer: Thank you. Tell us a little bit about yourself. You don't have an Arizona accent, not that Arizona has an accent. I'm curious where you came from.

Mrs. Horne: I thought that from the accent you'd be able to determine that I am a transplanted New Yorker, from the New York City area and its environment. I lived mostly in the suburbs before I came to Arizona. I grew up in New York City and on Long Island. I went through school there.

Interviewer: Great, and you met your husband.

Mrs. Horne: I met my husband there. We are currently married 42 years.

Interviewer: Congratulations. I know you have some children. Tell us about them.

Mrs. Horne: We are blessed to have three married children and nine grandchildren and they all live in the area, in Arizona. We get to see all of them when there is an occasion. Otherwise, they visit on Sundays. We really have a wonderful family life.

Interviewer: That's really lucky. Not very many people can say their children and grandchildren live nearby in this world today. I'm very curious, with everything in New York, what brought you to Arizona?

Mrs. Horne: Actually, business. Interestingly enough, my husband and I were both in the field of education in New York. His sister and her family moved to Arizona. They became involved in some businesses out here. One of them we invested in. About three years after they came here, we got a call that they would like us to be here physically to be helping with this project and we did. We picked up and left. It was not an easy decision.

Interviewer: How old were your children at that time?

Mrs. Horne: Let's see, in 1978, one was 20, one was 18 and one was 16, a junior in high school.

Interviewer: That was probably the one that had the hardest time.

Mrs. Horne: That was a nightmare. But interestingly enough, she eventually got over it. She was educated here, married here and lives nearby.

Interviewer: Now is this the judge? She adjusted very well.

Mrs. Horne: This is the judge. It took a few years but she did.

Interviewer: When you moved to Arizona, did you happen to move right to the Valley?

Mrs. Horne: Not only to the Valley but right to Paradise Valley. We haven't lived anywhere else in Arizona except for the Town of Paradise Valley. It was an excellent decision. I wouldn't want to live anywhere else.

Interviewer: We too live here and it's a wonderful place. What caused you to run for Council? Were there any particular issues that you felt needed attention?

Mrs. Horne: Well, I think I need to back track to when I first came here. When I first came here, with the exception of the family we had here and a few people that we had been introduced to then, we really didn't know anybody. I had been a community activist back in New York. I was always interested in those sort of things. I thought that if I got interested in this community, it might be a good way to meet people. I joined the

Paradise Valley Homeowner's Association, which I believe is no longer in existence. I also became Town Historian when I noticed an article in the paper asking for someone to do that.

Interviewer: Now before you go on. The present Historical Committee, is it an extension of the original or this a whole new organization?

Mrs. Horne: No, this Committee is totally different. We still have a Town Historian. That's the title. Actually, what was involved was clipping articles from all the newspapers that were about the Town and putting them in great big books. In the last couple of years, they have gotten a clipping service, so the person who does this job is really arranging it in the book. They do not have to do the clipping and the reading. When I went on vacation in those days, I would come home and go through all the newspapers to make sure I hadn't missed an article about the Town. So it's a little bit easier job now. It gave me a chance to begin to know a little about the Town. The Homeowners Association was very interesting. They had their particular issues. I started to go to all of the meetings.

Interviewer: Now what year was this?

Mrs. Horne: We moved in July of '78. My guess this was somewhere around the spring of 1979. I went to all the meetings of Council and Planning and Zoning. In doing so, not only did I get a feeling about what the issues in the Town were, but I decided that it might

be nice to serve. In 1981, I was appointed to the Board of Adjustment. I served there for three years, went on to become Planning and Zoning Commissioner and Chairman for a couple of years. I was on that for six years. Then I decided to run for Council.

Interviewer: You had already given nine years of service to the Town.

Mrs. Horne: Right. Then I gave an additional six on the Council, as a Councilman, two as Vice Mayor, and two as Mayor. I thought they were some of the best years of my life. I think it was a wonderful experience.

Interviewer: Good. I know it's been the best years of our lives, too, because you were there keeping a good watch over our Town and what it needs.

Mrs. Horne: Thank you.

Interviewer: What kind of changes or accomplishments would you like to talk about during your time on the Council?

Mrs. Horne: There were several. One of the major ones was the construction of the police building. I would like to back track a little bit on that issue. I was appalled after being taken on a tour of the old police station. The conditions under which our very fine officers were working were deplorable. There was no space. There was no room for anything. That building was so needed. I heard criticism about the size of it in terms of

the size of the Town, but I would rather have this building be able to last and not have to build another one. Second of all, I think a lot of people are not aware that it is incumbent on the Town to provide services in areas that we never used to have to do. For example, HAZMAT. We have to have someone who is in charge of that. We have to have certain types of equipment.

Interviewer: What does HAZMAT stand for?

Mrs. Horne: Hazardous Materials. We have a responsibility in that area as well as the fire department. In addition to that, we have a lot of regulations regarding the holding of prisoners, even if it's an overnight situation. You must separate the sexes. You must separate juveniles from adults. You must have a certain number of minimum holding areas that meet these standards and we don't have a choice. It's not like you could say, "We hardly ever have anybody, so why bother." It's absolutely required. You must also meet ADA requirements, which is Americans with Disability Act regulations. There are so many things you need to meet both in building something and then carrying out what government says you must.

Interviewer: I think most of us, unless you're involved, have no idea.

Mrs. Horne: I talked to people about that and they don't realize it. The Police Department and the Street Department are the two services the Town provides to community. Everything else is privatized. I have no criticism of privatization because I

think most of the time it's more efficient. I don't think that we really can do it when you talk about the police or the public works department. That Public Works building was completed before I was Mayor but that was also during my tenure on the Council. In 1990, right after I was elected, there was a Facilities Committee that had been formed in late '89 who were already working on plans for the new buildings of the Town Complex. I joined that Committee and stayed on it for four years until I became Mayor. I was involved in the planning process right through with the architects even though the first plan didn't work out as well as we had hoped. I had been involved with it and I was proud when we opened the police building.

Interviewer: When they had the opening and I toured it, I was so impressed how state of the art it is. It's hard to imagine that they were able to even function in the old building and the primitive quarters.

Mrs. Horne: They didn't even have enough interview rooms and they had to double up functions in little cubicles.

Interviewer: It wasn't even safe for the policemen or anybody else working in the Town Hall. Is there anything else you want to talk about?

Mrs. Horne: We established two committees that became standing committees of the Town. One no longer is a standing committee of the Town. That was the Constitution Committee but it start under the auspices of the Council. The PRIDE Committee is

another one. The PRIDE Committee was in existence but it did not have a special standing as a committee of the Council. The reason that that came about is because of Tree City U.S.A. In order to qualify, it has to be under the auspices of the government body. In order to try to get that designation, we needed to do that for the PRIDE Committee. We have the signs up that say "Tree City." I think we have gotten it two years in a row. It was a good thing to do to ensure that honor.

Interviewer: It sounds like the PRIDE Committee is a very active and hard working organization. Are they continuing to try to make it year three?

Mrs. Horne: They are. I don't know. At this point, I have not attended any meetings of the Committee in a long time. I don't know what the status will be with the incoming Council. That may change. We also established a citizens committee to serve on the Personnel Appeals. That is, after going through the personal grievance process, the employees still have an opportunity to talk to a citizens group. That has a rotating terms of office. The exact amount of years, I have no idea. They vary. The other thing was the undergrounding had been established before I was Mayor, but during my tenure as Mayor, it really accelerated. I understand it's going forward very well. We have quite a few districts participating in getting those utility lines undergrounded.

Interviewer: That's been a project that's been going on for quite a long time.

Mrs. Horne: Right. We had to revive the agreement with APS, but we were successful in doing that.

Interviewer: Will we eventually have the whole Town's utility wires underground?

Mrs. Horne: I would like to see that. Another thing is that we have areas of Town that do tend to flood when we have those torrential rains. One of the areas is in Doubletree Ranch Road. The situation I don't believe is caused by the Town but rather from surrounding areas. Be that as it may, it is one thing for empty property to flood, it's another thing for water and debris to go into someone's home. We were successful in getting the County to agree to contribute funds. It's very slow in coming, but it is coming along and it's progressing. We get a certain amount every year. I do not know the current status, but it is a continuing lobbying effort that has to be made by every Council to make sure that that project is completed.

Interviewer: Is there a time line when people think it will be completed? Will it be a permanent arrangement so that when the rains come, it will protect the people?

Mrs. Horne: What will be put into Doubletree is some type of drainage. It will be permanent. Then they will have to rebuild Doubletree between 64th Street and Tatum because we did do something between 64th and Scottsdale Road. I had just read recently that there might be a revision to that now. There are some ideas to improve it even further. But it's mainly the area of 64th Street and west to Tatum. Hopefully that will be

taken care of. Another thing that I thought was a very successful program was our cooperation with Phoenix on combating graffiti. I assume that that is an ongoing program. I haven't heard very much about it but that seems to be an issue that is less severe than it was when I was on Council. We also have an agreement which has not been implemented but has been signed. It's an intergovernmental agreement with City of Scottsdale to widen Scottsdale Road between Gold Dust and Hummingbird to three lanes. There was some controversy on this. Those of us who voted for it said that perhaps if the traffic flowed better on Scottsdale Road, less of it would go on the side streets of Town. Second of all, Scottsdale was willing to build a sound wall for those neighbors who are most directly impacted by the traffic. They were willing to move big utility poles from Gold Dust to Eastwood to the other side of Scottsdale Road. They would have poles from Eastwood down, but they would be the new ones which are able to be set further apart. The neighbors were very happy with this. Now because Scottsdale went ahead with the Pima Expressway, my understanding is that the funding wasn't available to do this project. But it is a signed agreement. Hopefully it will have a positive impact on some of the traffic in Town.

Interviewer: Yes, it is certainly needed because some of the streets in Paradise Valley are really crowded during commuter time.

Mrs. Horne: Right. Just a couple of other things. We successfully hosted the Arizona League of Cities and Towns in September of '95. Fiscally, the Town was in excellent shape when we left office. I'm assuming that true two years later. I think that's a credit to

the group in managing the Town and overseeing policy. Those are some of the things that happened during my tenure as Mayor, not just my tenure on the Council.

Interviewer: Well, you were a very busy lady. That's a lot of accomplishments. Are there are other things while you were on the Council that you think are significant that you would like to share with us?

Mrs. Horne: I'd like to say that traffic is an ongoing problem, particularly neighborhood complaints. I think all the complaints are valid. I don't think there is any magic bullet but I am hopeful. Maybe I'm wrong because I realize that our surroundings are still growing at a great rate. But I think when you have the outer loop completed and when you have the Squaw Peak going all the way north as it should (I think it's supposed to connect with the outer loop), I see a certain amount of commuter traffic using those roads rather than cutting through the Town. If you're on Scottsdale Road and it's jammed up, you go on side streets, you may have a lower speed limit but you're not going that fast on Scottsdale Road. But if you have roads that don't have lights and are moving, then people would prefer to drive there because they are much faster.

Interviewer: You can legally go the 55 mph.

Mrs. Horne: Right. I used to go down to 19th Avenue to the League offices. Until the Squaw Peak was open (I go Squaw Peak to I-10 westbound and get over to 7th Avenue), it took me 40 minutes minimal. The first time I used the Squaw Peak, it took me 20

minutes. It was not during the rush hour, but nevertheless, it's a significant change. I do think that these roads will be used. I am hopeful that that will take some of the pressure off the Town. In the meantime, I think that all the efforts of traffic calming, medians and such, even speed bumps that I'm not thrilled about, serve a purpose and I think we should continue to make the effort to help neighborhoods. But not in such a way as to push the traffic from one neighborhood to another. That's always the danger.

Interviewer: Were you on the Council at the time when Paradise Valley had the first "photo cop?"

Mrs. Horne: No, I was still on Planning and Zoning. It came to pass in '87 and I didn't get on the Council until '90. But I was at the legislature as Legislative Liaison for the Council at least three times lobbying to make sure that we could retain it. I have the statement here that tells us whether we could have it or not.

Interviewer: I understand it went all the way up to the State Supreme Court to decide whether we could have it or not. Fortunately, we can and now other towns have it and it's popping up all over.

Mrs. Horne: I don't know about that but I know about the efforts in the legislature to one have a public vote, which I'll comment on in a moment or to outlaw it altogether. This public vote thing, I can only tell you that we enable our officers to have regular radar, they have night sticks, and bullet proof vests. Photo radar is just another piece of

equipment. It isn't up to the public to vote on police equipment. So I could never understand how anybody could go and have a public vote on it. It's ludicrous. I feel very strongly about it. I think the numbers support it. I wanted to make a point and back up the wonderful use of photo radar. Our accident rate went down about 50%. I don't know the number on the red light camera, those came in afterwards. Scottsdale had something in the paper that within the first few months, I don't know if it's the photo radar or the red light camera itself, they had something like 40% reduction in accidents also. There is no question that it changes behavior for the better. I think everything must be done to maintain that.

Interviewer: Just a note. I understand as I was reading articles in the newspaper clippings found in the history notebooks, that Paradise Valley was the first Town in Arizona to have photo radar.

Mrs. Horne: Actually, I think one of the first in the country.

Interviewer: I think so too, but I didn't want to say that because I'm not sure.

Mrs. Horne: I'm not positive. I do know that it's used in Europe, in England. I saw it in London. So it isn't that the technology hasn't been there, but I certainly think its worthwhile. Anybody who says big brother is watching them needs to remember a very simple fact. Driving is a privilege, it is not a right. So obey the law, you have no problem.

Interviewer: That's right. One more question that I'd like to ask which I think is really important. You have given so much to the Town and your wisdom and have lead us so beautifully. I'm sure you must have feelings of what you would like to share or pass on as wisdom to the new Council that is going to come in next month or to future Councils. Are there any messages you feel strongly about?

Mrs. Horne: There is one, I guess, a rather trite quote. I don't even know who said it originally. It was, "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance." So if we want to maintain the quality of life in our Town, the kind of zoning, the kind of open space that we have, we have to be eternally vigilant and we have to be sure that are zoning and planning goes in that direction. Council sets policy and in the final analysis passes the ordinances that are necessary. While I don't like to see a lot of governmental intrusion, there are times when they need to step in or revise something or strengthen it. But that's the most important thing. Then we will always have this paradise.

Interviewer: This paradise. Thank you very, very much for giving me your precious time to be interviewed. I hope you will stay around for a long time and advise us and use your well earned wisdom.

Mrs. Horne: Thank you very much.