

## UNIVERSITY CLUB OF PHOENIX

**T**wo absolutely delightful lunches at the University Club of Phoenix inspired me to share the good news with other Marines' Memorial members. This small but elegant establishment in the very heart of central Phoenix is

the only reciprocal club listed in my new home state of Arizona and is just not to be missed. It is one of the very few private dining city clubs left here. I'm still exploring, so with letter of introduction in hand, GPS plugged in and in the company of a trusted friend, native to the area, I set off to visit. I was most pleasantly surprised by this charming 1940s style club located in the Alvarado Historical District. With frequent, short and inexpensive flights from SFO to Sky Harbor, one could enjoy breakfast at the Marines' Club, jet to Phoenix and soak up some sun, have lunch at the University Club, and still get back to SF in time for happy hour.

The UCP was founded in 1965 and moved to its current location across from the Heard Museum in 1970. The staff takes great pride in preserving the atmosphere of elegance and privacy despite rapid growth and constant change in the city. The menu is extensive, far beyond what one would expect from the size of this jewel. I've had the blackened salmon salad and the eggplant and portabella parmigiana, and both were superb. It's not an exaggeration to say that the service rivals that of the Marines' Memorial Club, and I've never said

that before. The club can seat 150 guests throughout its several dining rooms. It also has a lovely garden area which can enable a guest to forget being in the center of the fifth largest city in the U.S. I was definitely made to feel at home, even doted on, my very first visit. To top off the experience, prices were modest, and you just won't find such in central Phoenix. Oh yes, did I mention they still serve desserts created in their kitchen the old fashioned way? Our server brought the masterpieces out for our selection. This kind of service amid the hustle and bustle of urban centers is a rare find indeed.

My lunch companion, Bonnie Walker, remembered the club well and was delighted that the "parlor" had not changed. She regaled us with stories of times past and entertained us, playing the grand piano beautifully after the lunch service closed. It's definitely a place to linger, although the dining room is open only for breakfast and lunch. The UCP offers special buffets that feature holiday menus, a children's table with some favorites, and the pastry chef's special dessert station. The UCP is available to reciprocal members for special events such as weddings, anniversaries, romantic private dinners, rehearsal dinners, memorials, awards ceremonies, family reunions and professional meetings.

