

Volume 2 |
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Fall 2023

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Silver Bell Historical Society
The Spirit of Silver Bell

FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER

INSIDE:

President's Message
Scholarship News - 2023
Silver Bell Memorial Tributes
Proposed Silver Bell Museum Project
Pima County Adopt-a-Roadway Cleanup
Old Silver Bell Cemetery Monument Project
Grand Reunion II – November 2022
Silver Bell Family Spotlight – Elder
Silver Bell Family Spotlight - Tinsley

President's
Message by

Jim C. Hunter

What is Our Silver Bell Legacy?

Amazing that exactly a year has passed since publishing our Fall 2022 newsletter. So many things have been happening so let me fill you in.

The second SBHS Grand Reunion was held on November 5th and 6th of 2022. A variation of a famous saying goes, "*the pen is stronger than the sword, but a good joke is stronger than the pen.*" I say this because the best part of the reunion was reminiscing with our Silver Bell brethren about the things that happened when we were growing up, many were very funny and a little unbelievable. Who thought that riding on a car hood over a steep canyon wall would be fun. BB Gun battles in the desert were probably a worse idea. But we all lived through it and then raised our own children.

We were the entitled Baby Boom generation, while our parents survived the Great Depression, World War II and Korea. Then our generation fought in Vietnam. After us, the ensuing young people battled in Iraq and Afghanistan. The current entitled generation will face threats from the PRC and Russia. Has anyone seen a spy balloon lately? However, now they focus on playing video games and even arrange dates by communicating with potential boyfriends and girlfriends via social media rather than in person. Their entitled children will enter the Metaverse in a plateau of Virtual Reality. Artificial Intelligence would have been nice when we needed assistance in crafting love letters to girls or writing term papers for Mr. Frontain's Senior English class at Marana HS.

Looking back, we grew up in a good time. Discipline was still a thing along with a work ethic. But we also had free time to roam the desert, drive at a young age, attend movies and concerts, all while growing up in the Sonoran Desert. I wonder if the residents of Old Silver Bell believed their children were entitled. The community sponsored a circus, enjoyed a New Year's Eve Party in a lantern lighted room at the base of a mine shaft, with guests lowered by a flat iron elevator, had frequent mail runs, was located along a Wells Fargo Stage line for transportation, had modern goods shipped in via the rail spur at Redrock and had telegraph service for communication.

While we have a few old photos of the town, locomotive, school children and segments of a journal from Old Silver Bell, much of the daily lives and events of that period in southern Arizona have been lost to history. Nearly all of the small rural ranching, tourist and farming communities had one thing in common, a Museum. Like us, they were all proud of their heritage and desired to leave a legacy to the next generation.

Continued ...

*President's
Message by*

Jim C. Hunter

Sneaking Out:

I seriously doubt that any written legacy about our town would include some of the things we got away with during our formative years. The town curfew was promptly at 10pm each night and was marked with the loud siren that resounded throughout the neighborhood. Reasonable excuses for being out later included returning from late events at the rec hall or games in Marana. However, it was inevitable that we would push the envelope as every generation does. We enjoyed meeting our friends late at night for a little mischief like swimming in the community pool or swiping peaches or plums off a neighbor's tree, a true delicacy in our era.

The biggest challenge to sneaking out was the creaking hardwood floors. Our father slept soundly, but mom would wake up easily. One of the schemes we invented was pitching a tent to "Camp" in the backyard during hot July and August nights. This was good practice for Boy Scouts, and with a little breeze the nights were cooler outdoors.

After midnight, it was generally a little safer, since the local "heat," Carl Elder, had generally completed his rounds by then. Nothing we did was destructive, but it was a challenge climbing over the high fence surrounding the pool, that included several strands of barbed wire at the top. We would sometimes meet up with friends and cruise the neighborhood on our bikes. On occasion, the heavy wooden life guard chair would be pitched into the pool, although most of the people I hung out with wouldn't claim that stunt.

The hard part the following day was completing our routine chores, including yardwork and washing/waxing cars, navigating through the day while dead tired from our lack of sleep. We welcome stories that we can share in future newsletters as we cement our legacy.

Looking Ahead:

We are excited about the opportunities in 2023 and look forward to adding volunteers and board members as well as receiving ideas and participation to improve SBHS as well as cementing our legacy. We hope that you will enjoy the reunion photos and articles by others in this newsletter and would like to remind you that we have about sixty t-shirts, over 100 DVD's from the first reunion and other items for sale on our Website www.silverbellaz.com

Continued ...

*President's
Message by*

Jim C. Hunter

Conclusion:

I would like to personally welcome David Cleaver back to the SBHS board. David was the co-founder of SBHS and served as our first President, along with being the driving force in the 2019 Grand Reunion.

In order to cover the incremental out of pocket expenses of the Society, memberships will need to be renewed at \$30 per person annually. This covers our monthly website expenses, post office box, paper, Arizona corporation commission and tax filings, and other routine organizational costs. Board members routinely cover society costs and the funding of the annual scholarships from their personal donations, reflecting their dedication and belief in what we are doing.

We are in hopes of being able to mail the quarterly newsletter to each member sometime in the future, rather than the less costly but impersonal electronic option.

Best wishes to all our Silver Bell friends and their families for a prosperous and healthy 2023.

Jim Hunter, President

“You will find as you look back on your life, that the moments when you have really lived are the moments when you have done things in the spirit of love.”

Henry Drummond

Total Scholarships

8

Total \$8,000

Scholarship Recipient – 2020

ELLIE JACKSON
(Arizona State University)

Scholarship Recipients – 2021

PRESTON ANWAY
(Cochise College/ University of Arizona)

MAYA GARCIA
(Pima Community College, AZ)

JOSHUA C. HENDRICKSON
(Hastings College, NE)

Scholarship Recipients – 2022

MASON E. ANWAY
(Cochise College/ University of Arizona)

JOSHUA C. HENDRICKSON
(Hastings College, NE)

Scholarship Recipients – 2023

DANIEL A. HENDRICKSON
(Central Arizona College, AZ)

TAMMY A. HENDRICKSON
(William Woods, Fulton MO on line))

Scholarship Updates and Awards

One of the primary goals of the Silver Bell Historical Society is to raise money amongst our community to provide annual scholarships of \$1000 each. Since our inception of 2019, we have proudly given a total of eight \$1000 scholarships to the scholars listed in the sidebar. All recipients have been very grateful for this reward. We would like to encourage all members of our group, relatives from our town, and living family members that it is still our goal to raise funds to award at least one scholarship each year.

Donations to the SBHS Scholarship fund are tax deductible. Proceeds from our online sales also go toward our scholarship fund. We are now accepting donations for the 2024-25 school year. Please consider sharing this benefit with your grandchildren and your own children. The scholarship can be used for trade schools and /or an adult returning to school. Information and applications at www.silverbellaz.com.

Scholarship Updates

2022 Scholarship Recipient #1- Mason E. Anway



Mason used his scholarship to fund his first semester at Cochise College and all went well. He was pleased to have the scholarship. He took several classes and aced them. Mason is currently serving a mission for his church. Upon his return, he plans to finish his Associates degree at Cochise College and transfer to the University of Arizona for his business degree with a minor in psychology. *We believe in his journey and the entire Anway family.*

2022 Scholarship Recipient #2 – Joshua C. Hendrickson



We are really pleased that his first year at Hastings College was such a success. He is an ambitious young man who has received athletic/academic scholarships and made the Dean's list with a 4.0 GPA. Joshua, who received a scholarship in 2021 and in 2022, is in his second year at Hastings College. The fall 2022 semester went well and he continues to play football at the school. He did however have to have knee surgery including reconstructive surgery on his ACL, LCL and the meniscus. He does plan to return to play in the next season. His current scholastic goal is a Sports Medicine Degree. Where this will lead, he is not sure but believes there are many promising options. *We too believe in him and the entire Hendrickson family.*

Scholarship Recipients – 2023

**DANIEL A.
HENDRICKSON**
(Central Arizona
College, AZ)

**TAMMY A.
HENDRICKSON**
(William Woods, Fulton
MO on line)

Scholarship Awards – 2023

As we began the 2023/2024 scholarship application review we realized that we again have wonderful participation from not only by our youthful Silver Bell descendants but also from a treasured adult pursuing her belated scholarly ambition.

Through the continued generosity of the SBHS Board members; Mike and Martha Sanchez, Larry Young, Carol and Bob Hunter and Jim and Janette Hunter we were able to fund two \$1000 scholarships to our recipients Daniel A. Hendrickson and Tammy Hendrickson.

2023 Scholarship Recipient #1- Daniel A. Hendrickson



As Daniel explains “Since graduating from Marana High School, my goal is to obtain an associate’s degree in Agricultural degree from Central Arizona College. All through high school, I maintained a 3.6 grade point average and plan to apply the same work ethic, discipline and study skills as a college student. This background will include extensive exposure to micro and macro-economics to foster his future goal of business ownership.

I am specifically interested in the trucking industry as the nation is currently experiencing a shortage. After receiving this degree, I would like to actually enroll in a truck-driving program because I feel that in order to run a business, a person needs to start at the ground level to truly understand and relate to employees.”

He also shared “Although I am a good student and will receive a partial athletic scholarship for track, it is not enough to cover the yearly cost of attendance. I have and will continue to work to help with this expense. My brother, Joshua Hendrickson, has been a recipient of the Silver Bell scholarship not once, but twice and is very grateful for the generosity of the organization. Our grandfather, Lawrence Hendrickson, passed away in 1990 from cancer and our grandmother, Jeanette, in 2015. We did not know our grandfather, but my dad does a great job sharing memories about living in Silver Bell.

Some of my favorites are about my dad riding his motorcycle down to the corrals and Papa (Larry) being the town gardener. My Uncle Randy (Wiley) Townley who also lived in Silver Bell for most of his childhood, also shared some stories. Attending the Silver Bell Historical Society dedication and reunion in March of 2019, was definitely a highlight as well. many promising options.”

2023 Scholarship Recipient #2- Tammy L. Hendrickson



Tammy's introduction includes "I am the daughter of Lawrence "Larry" Hendrickson, I lived in Silver Bell from 1974 thru 1980 when I graduated from Marana high school and joined the USAF Air Force. I plan on attending the on-line program offered by William Woods in Fulton MO majoring in Psychology. My ultimate goal is to have a freedom house where women and their children have a long-term place to heal from domestic violence without the worry of surviving out in the world." Tammy's application comments were very compelling for the board. Her oldest daughter provided her the encouragement to reach out for the scholarship opportunity with the SBHS. We are excited to provide support for our first adult SBHSScholarship recipient from our delightful Silver Bell community.

2024 Scholarship Drive

During the 2019 Silver Bell Historical Society's Grand Reunion I, a manager with ASARCO made the comment, "this mine has paid for a lot of college educations over the years." Considering the town of Silver Bell began in 1954 and the mine continues to this day, we are zeroing in on nearly seventy years of existence. The skilled positions held by miners over the decades resulting in better than average pay has promoted higher education during this period. Meeting college expenses has always been a challenge, meaning the sons and daughters of miners obtained additional funding for educational needs through scholarships and working while attending school. Among my own peer group, we have a Rhodes Scholar (Bob Rice) teachers, bankers, attorneys, a physician and business owners. Many successful professionals originate from Silver Bell.

SBHS has taken up the mantle which our parents began. We have granted \$8,000 in scholarships from our small Historical Society group, an achievement we are very proud of. Going forward, the board recognizes the changing demographics in higher education. Declining birth rates, resulting in lower enrollments at traditional four-year colleges, and high costs including student to University employee ratio of 3:1 is making college attendance an even greater challenge. At the same time, the nation has witnessed a reduction in skilled trades. Try finding a skilled electrician, plumber, mason, welder or remodel contractor these days. The biggest complaint from these industries is the lack of qualified employees. Television personality Mike Rowe, the "Dirty Jobs" Mike Rowe, launched the Mike Rowe Works Foundation to foster trade and infrastructure training, and has provided over \$1 million in scholarships. The saying, Work Smart, Not Hard" has been changed to "Work Smart and Hard."

Going forward, SBHS will focus on trade schools, which is an underserved segment of higher education and has fewer scholarship opportunities. The Board will review this position annually. Scholarships may also be provided in increments below \$1,000 to increase the number of recipients, depending on the support received. The thing that remains unchanged is our commitment to the scholarship program and qualification requirement that recipients be direct descendants of Silver Bell miners "Work Smart and Hard" is a good mantra to instill in our youth. We ask for your assistance with this endeavor by donating to Silver Bell Historical Society, Scholarship Fund through SilverbellAZ.com or sending a check to the P.O. Box on the website.

Silver Bell Memorial Tributes

In Memorandum

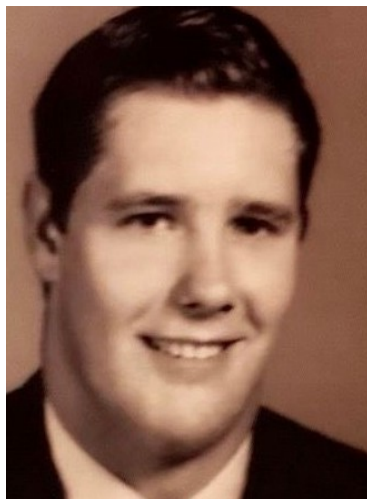
Edward A. Altamirano
Ramon "Rudy" Acevedo
Kathy Eckrote
Carl J. Elder, Jr.
Rueben Figueroa
Tony Figueroa
Dean Garrett
Lynn Garrett
Joe Martinez
Mike McConnaughey
Frank Sanchez
Juan Sanchez
Paul Prater
Leland Richardson
Chris Snow
Bryan Spendlove
Pat Sutton
David Wyatt
Francis Yarter
Peggy Young



Rueben Figueroa - Passed away on February 1, 2023. Rueben, his three brothers and parents moved to Silver Bell in 1956. Memories from his sister-in-law, Peggy Figueroa are that he graduated from Marana in 1966. The Figueroa house was always full of laughter and parties. In 1963, his brother was killed. And after Rueben graduated, he moved to El Paso, Texas. He worked in manufacturing for forty years. Rueben was able to attend the first reunion. He had a passion for Bingo!



March 19, 2021, **Edward A. Altamirano** passed away after a long battle with lung cancer. Edward was a veteran who served proudly in the US Navy and the Marines. He left behind his wife, Belia, of 63 years, several children, 18 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren. He raised his children in Silver Bell and Marana, employed by Asarco Mine. After retiring from the mine, he worked at Evergreen Air Center and also was a handyman at St. Christopher's Church. He had a strong work ethic. He was a Godly man and very devoted to his family. He loved the Diamondbacks. He was an Arizona State champion in baseball at Nogales High.



Carl J. Elder, Jr. passed on in March 2023. The Elder family is heartbroken but treasure the memories of their brother. Carl was born April 7, 1952 in Tucson and raised in Silver Bell, AZ. He had two brothers and three sisters. Many will remember, his Dad was the local figure of Authority in Silver Bell. Carl attended Marana High School, playing center in football and was successful in blocking defense. In Track and Field, he threw Discus and held the State Title in distance for two decades. His first job was at K Mart but in 1975 he was hired as a Custodian for Marana High School. He retired after 25-30 years. Carl never married and lived a simple life.

Silver Bell Memorial Tributes

Ramon “Rudy” Acevedo, a former Nogales Police Department Chief and Livestock Inspector, described as a Cowboy with a generous disposition passed away in May of 2018. Rudy was an outdoor guy, who loved life, his family and his Ranch. He was a supportive grandfather to his six grandchildren. Survived by his wife, Ana, of more than 40 years, two sons and a daughter. Acevedo grew up in Silver Bell, where his father was a miner but the family also had a ranch in Nogales (South River Rd.) He served in the Vietnam War.



Acevedo graduated from the Police Academy in 1968 and served 20 years with the Department of Public Safety. He was NPD chief from 1987-1991 and interim Chief from 1996-1997. He was Commander of the Santa Cruz County Metro Watch Force for Drug Trafficking. After retirement, he became a state Livestock Inspector. A cowboy at heart and an “excellent horseman.”

Peggy Young passed away in October 2022. Born Peggy Goodwin in 1947, we remember her kind demeanor and friendly spirit. Peggy was popular at Marana High School, being nominated as a Yearbook Queen Candidate and serving in the Chorus, Quill and Scroll, Marana High Times El Sahuaro and FBLA. After graduation, she went on to beauty school and later served as an aide at the school as well as working in a tax accounting office before becoming a full-time mom.

Peggy grew up in Silver Bell and after dating Larry Young for two years, they were married. Larry was born in 1949 and Peggy in 1947. He joked that he married a cougar before the term became known as a cultural phenomenon. When Peggy’s parents were on vacation in Arkansas, they decided it would be a good time to elope and get married. After a short time, Peggy stated they should call the Goodwin parents to let them know. Larry agreed. She dialed the number and as soon as they answered, Peggy handed the phone to Larry and said “here.” She had a great sense of humor. Peggy and Larry were married for 54 years.

They were very proud of their two children, daughter Shelia, born in 1969 and their son Robert, born in 1973. Shelia resides in Las Vegas and Robert lives near his father in Sahuarita. Peggy and Larry have five grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

***Proposed
Silver Bell
Museum
Project***

Project Leader:

Jim Hunter

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During the 2019 Grand Reunion, Pima County Supervisor, Susan Bronson put out the challenge to the Silver Bell board and former residents to establish a museum.

The rich history of the Silver Bell Mining District dates back centuries to native Americans, who used turquoise and copper to make jewelry and other implements. This was followed in the 1860's with silver, gold and lead mining. Charles O. Brown from Tucson and his partners opened the Mammoth Lode, the Young America Mine and a smelter. During the latter quarter of the 19th century, activities included the Atlas and Old Boot mines, followed by Oxide Copper Company, along with numerous prospectors filing private claims. Under the leadership and business expertise of Mr. Zeckendorf and Mr. Steinfeld, major consolidations of mining occurred.

Communities with a family presence included Pelton, Atlas Camp, and Old Silver Bell. Pima County established a public school and the thriving town grew to 1,200 residents by its peak. The town included a restaurant, post office, laundry service, Wells Fargo Stage Depot and eventually a rail line to Red Rock, which transported ore to the Sasco Smelter and returned supplies to Silver Bell. At its peak, Sasco maintained a population of more than 600 people. Silver Bell was "one of the most renowned mining camps in the Southwest," according to James E. Sherman's, Ghost Towns of the Southwest.

The process to establish a museum is no easy task, and includes determining a location, obtaining artifacts, funding the construction or renovations, providing support for ongoing operations, marketing and staffing. The Silver Bell board determined that it would be best to start by visiting several existing museums, especially those in mining districts, to determine the best options for Silver Bell.

A questionnaire was developed for the museum curators and personal visits conducted. The museums visited to date include Ajo, Globe (Gila County museum), Miami (Bullion Plaza) and the World's smallest museum in Superior. The information obtained in those tours and meetings with managers was instrumental in determining what would be the best fit for the unique history of Silver Bell.

The vision of a Silver Bell Museum can become a reality. It has to start somewhere. The board is currently reviewing secure storage shed options to collect and warehouse artifacts, in anticipation of a dedicated building with adequate property to display mining equipment, rail locomotive, depot and other items we hope to obtain.

Funds can be donated to Silver Bell Historical Society and earmarked, Museum Project, to assist in this effort.

Pima County Adopt-a-Roadway Program

Fall 2023 Cleanup

Saturday, September 16, 2023, 7:30AM

Project Leader:
Larry Young



Fall 2023 Road Cleanup on AVRA VALLEY ROAD

I am excited to let everyone know that we completed a special initiative road clean up on Saturday, September 16, 2023, 7:30 AM.

The Silver Bell crew included Jim, Bob and myself (Larry) who met at the turn to the Old Silver Bell golf course. We checked the condition of roadway and found it in good condition with a few areas in need of clean up. The committee members met around 7:30 AM when it is cool and we worked about three hours. This cleanup was special because we participated in a Statewide initiative, the State of Arizona Road Cleanup Day, and was proud to represent the Silver Bell community.

Following the cleanup, we ate lunch at El Campeon Tacos & More at Avra Valley and Anway Roads. We were amused to learn that the recently paved Avra Valley Road has become a mecca for bicyclists. There were individual and groups of bikers zooming by during the cleanup effort. If you can volunteer for a couple of hours, we would greatly appreciate the help. After four years meeting twice a year, we have really cleaned up that stretch of road.

Feel free to contact Larry Young on Facebook to sign up or Jim Hunter at Catfis53@gmail.com, 520.241.7750.

*Old Silver Bell
Cemetery
Monument
Project - Update*

Project Leader:

Jim Hunter

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Growing up, one of our favorite exploration stops was the Old Silver Bell Cemetery. While we were enamored by the various styles of the markers, old wooden crosses, rock enclosures and even a few with granite, the significance of this site didn't resonate at the time. Old Silver Bell was a vibrant community of 1,200 around 1900. At its peak there was a school with 75 pupils, restaurant, bars, laundry, post office, Wells Fargo Stage, hardware, grocery and a rail line. The rail line moved ore to the Red Rock area and returned with supplies to the community. Most of the markers are weathered and names unrecognizable. The Silver Bell Historical Society has determined that preservation of this site corresponds with our preservation goal for the greater Silver Bell Mining District.

A follow up meeting was held with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to discuss the proposal to preserve and commemorate the Old Silver Bell Cemetery. The agency was very open to assist with the project funding. Since the cemetery is located within the Ironwood Forest National Monument boundary and is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), anything we do will require BLM approval and access. BLM's mandate for these types of projects is education. Therefore, in addition to a monument listing the names of all 131 individuals buried at the cemetery, improvements would include approximately ten kiosk type signs with photos and descriptions of the historic activities in the surrounding mountains, including mining. The area would provide walking paths and a parking lot, most likely with aggregate material.

BLM has asked for a proposal detailing the project. Francisco Mendoza and Clint Dalton both maintain extensive experience with BLM and indicated the proposal for improvements would best come from outside of the agency. This way BLM can scrutinize the proposal and recommend changes to accommodate their mandate. Our proposal is near completion and includes a kiosk sign cost quote from Howard Industries. The parking lot and walkway area vendor quotes have presented a greater challenge due to the remote area. The board is anxious to submit the proposal and will provide updates on the website and in newsletters. We all look forward to being able to visit the site and take in the history of Old Silver Bell, along with commemorating the individuals buried at the cemetery.

Grand Reunion II *– Marana Student* *Volunteers*

Project Leaders:

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(520) 403-7555
Carol Hunter
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We were blessed with a truly remarkable turnout for our Grand Reunion II event, and we are busy updating the website Grand Reunion II with photos and remarks from the event. Please send your photos and commentary to Carol Hunter.

One of the best ideas the SBHS Board implemented was to hold a Grand Reunion II T-shirt Design Contest on September 10, 2022. A total of 11 entries were submitted by nine Marana High School History and Art students. This was a new initiative our Board of Directors implemented in order to connect the current generation of students at Marana High School with our wonderful childhood memories of growing up in Marana and Silver Bell.

Ms. Janelle Weatherbee Edmonds is a Marana High School teacher in Government, AP Government and Academic Decathlon. She is also the District Social Studies Curriculum Specialist. Janelle's grandparents lived in Silver Bell and she has many fond memories of her visits there. Janelle coordinated the T-shirt Design Contest for all enrolled Marana High School students. She was instrumental in providing direction to the students as they spent several weeks creating the T-shirt design submissions. We truly appreciate her diligent efforts. The contest submissions surpassed our expectations in every way from the creativity, messaging and seeing how our treasured experiences are seen through the students' perspective. See the two winning designs below.

We also invited the students to help us at the reunion. Janelle was instrumental in recruiting numerous Marana student volunteers who definitely made our event run a lot smoother. Two Marana students, Joseph Bishop and Gabriel Lykins, were intrigued with the November 2022 ballot and realized that the candidate for the State Mine Inspector was running unopposed. Joseph Bishop was one of the students who volunteered at the reunion, enjoyed the mine tour and was interested in the topic of Mining in Arizona.

Both students decided to follow the candidate, Paul Marsh, on social media and interacted with him to see if they could find out what the job entailed and why he was running unopposed. Paul Marsh responded to their inquiries and they invited him to speak to their AP Government class at Marana High School. Paul Marsh made the trip and spoke to about 40 students about his job. Paul Marsh was very engaging and explained that the State Mine Inspector is one of the few offices that requires a candidate to have experience in the field before running for office so it is more difficult to get candidates. He was the only candidate to obtain enough signatures to be on the Arizona ballot. He also explained that most of his job was ensuring that mine sites were safe for employees. Joseph and Gabriel now have the task of finding other local and national politicians to come speak to their class. This is one way of instilling an interest in Silver Bell's relevance by reaching out to our youth and capturing their enthusiasm.



Grand Reunion II Highlights

Planning for the second grand reunion presented many challenges during the post Covid period. However, barriers can also create many opportunities as well as surprises. The best surprise of all was when ASARCO agreed to open our old ballfield as the staging area for Grand Reunion II. Brad Stonehouse, Mine Manager, Whitney Lennon, and Amanda Darby led a team and authorized the grading and placement of aggregate material to create a pristine parking area. The old tennis court was used for the stage and merchandise areas. ASARCO brought in heavy equipment for photo ops and a huge tire, which was stood up and anchored. The tire included the painted monogram, "Silver Bell Historical Society."

Among the nearly one hundred guests were those traveling long distances, including Jim Coffee (Ohio), Jeff Griffin and Darla Griffin (Oklahoma and Texas), Mike Frew (South Carolina), Leon Thomas (Oklahoma), Jim Gilliam (Alaska), Dale and Bev Teeters (Colorado), David Young (California) and Joyce Davidoff (Texas), along with many others including a guest traveling all the way from Costa Rica. The national anthem opened the ceremony, which was sung by Katina Murphy, who has performed for numerous events, including singing to open a Phoenix Suns basketball game. The SBHS Board presented David Cleaver an award as the key founder of Silver Bell Historical Society, and for his service as President for three years.

After introductions, the mine tours commenced with two large tour buses, provided by Mountain View. The mine tour was expanded to nearly one hour and included a stop by the Silver Bell town monument for photo ops. The tour also included a stop by El Tiro Pit, which culminated in a blast, to the excitement of the entire group. Our own Janette Hunter triggered the blast, which was initiated on a laptop computer rather than the old plunger style trigger. The tour buses also drove through the town. We all enjoyed seeing some the remnants of porches, clotheslines and our homesite. The neighborhood tour was admittedly a little surreal. A luncheon followed, which was provided by Sonoran Mexican Cuisine. The afternoon was spent enjoying the surroundings of our home town and reconnecting and sharing stories with old friends. That evening, several of our Silver Bell friends enjoyed a steak dinner at Lil' Abners. RJ and Alfred Bourget joined Jim and Janette Hunter, Jeff and Darla Griffin, Joyce Davidoff and Leon Thomas for the casual event.

A family picnic was held at Christopher Columbus Park on Sunday, under a large ramada, adjacent to a lake. Joyce Thoma Bomgardner and Glen Bourguet were able to join us with grilling provided expertly by Duane Wetherbee. Sheila Prater Wetherbee was also in attendance. It was good to see Jim Barnes at the reunion as well as the picnic.

We missed so many of our family and good friends, who are experiencing health issues or taking care of infirmed family members and were unable to attend. You are all in our thoughts and prayers. The plan is to continue holding reunions every three years, indicating the next one would tentatively occur in 2025. We can't tell you the number of Silver Bell residents who have shared that during visits to Arizona to see family, they usually reserve a day to visit Silver Bell. The place still holds something special. We won't say if they were able to sneak into our old townsite. That's our little secret.

Reunions are special, but require a considerable amount of work. I would especially like to thank our Silver Bell Historical Society Board. The work included meetings with ASARCO staff, arranging tents, chairs, port-o-pots, food, tour buses, marketing, logistics, etc. Special thanks for this event go to Larry Young, Mike Sanchez, Bob Hunter, Carol Hunter, and Janette Hunter for always being there and their willingness to do anything to move SBHS forward. I would also like to personally thank the team at ASARCO and our primary contacts, including Brad Stonehouse, Whitney Lennon, and Amanda Darby. Enjoy the following Grand Reunion II pictures!











Silver Bell Family

Spotlight - Elder

The Elder Family

**A family who is
defined by security –
Carl Elder, A real
life Andy Griffith of
our Mayberry
“Silver Bell”**

SHERIFF, CARL ELDER

In retrospect, Silver Bell was unique in many ways. It had all the amenities of a small town including a grocer, barbershop, salon, gas station, Church, post office, pool, rec hall, and competitive little league, Judo club and swimming teams. At the same time, you could leave the confines of civilization in five minutes and travel 25 miles in any direction without seeing much except for our semi-arid desert environment. Visiting a doctor or dentist, especially in an emergency, provided challenges.

One thing we never lacked was a local police force, which was manifested in a single person, Carl Elder. At 6’5” in height, Carl’s size carried its own intimidation factor, especially for anyone who wanted to stir up mischief. At the same time, he was a gentle giant, and had a friendly wave or kind word for everyone, regardless of age. In a time when respect was earned, Carl garnered a reputation for being capable, caring, and friendly, but no-nonsense when a situation arose that needed attention. Like every community, there were incidents that required law enforcement expertise.

We all have our own memories of those. Success is often measured in time, with the Elder family spending nearly thirty years at Silver Bell, where Carl and Maxine raised most of their six children. They appropriately lived in house #1, which was visible from the center of town.

Carl originated from Mississippi and later served in the U.S. Army. He was tall and debonair, dressed well, and was somewhat of a ladies’ man, who had a bit of an adventuresome “wild side” before settling down. Carl eventually made it to Pima County, where he met Pauline “Maxine,” who was a native Tucsonan. The couple lived in Marana and Avra Valley, later purchasing property, which is still part of the Elder family compound. Carl worked several jobs including at the local farms and eventually became a deputy sheriff in Marana. The development of Silver Bell mine and need for local housing in the early 1950’s created a unique opportunity for ASARCO as well as for Mr. Elder. As it worked out, Carl was recruited as a part-timer for Silver Bell, even though the job was full time. This enabled Pima County to continue his employment as a sheriff’s deputy, with the requisite uniform, but share the cost with ASARCO, who jointly employed him as a Security Guard to protect the mine’s assets, which included the community. More importantly, Carl would live in the community. They made a couple of moves in our town, including house, #1, #51 and #57.

Carl and Maxine raised six wonderful children including Pearl, born 1947, Carla, born 1948, Paula, born 1949, Carl Jr., born 1952, Claude, born 1955, and Clarence, born 1961. We all grew up with the Elder children. Paula shared that her parents were strict, owing to the times, but also that fact that her father recognized the importance of the family’s reputation, based on his position in law enforcement and realizing that Silver Bell was somewhat of a fishbowl. The elders were always good and responsible citizens and were never in trouble.

Pearl lived in Mesa and later Camp Verde, eventually becoming a pharmacist. She raised two children. Carla served in the U.S. Army and was later a full-time caregiver for elderly residents, raising three children. Paula completed her Associates at Eastern Arizona College and later attended the University of Arizona. She became a banker for fifteen years, serving in the Valley National Bank’s operations center as well as a teller, then worked for American Airlines and Arizona General Insurance before retiring.

Silver Bell Family Spotlight - Elder

Carl worked for Kmart for most of his career in the garden department, Claud was employed at the San Manuel Mine, raising two children and Clarence at Piccadilly, also raising two children. We remember their popularity at Marana High School, where some family members were on the Student Council, and played sports including football and track.

Height was an inherited trait. Paula shared that her nephew (Carla's son) played semi-pro basketball in Denmark and Australia. She and Carla were able to travel together to Australia to watch him play, a memorable trip for the sisters. The family continues to meet for family gatherings, with most continuing to reside in the Tucson or Marana area.

It would be difficult to imagine Silver Bell without our beloved sheriff Carl Elder and the entire Elder family.

"We would like to thank Paula Elder and the entire Elder family for their input in this family profile. Each newsletter will carry a profile of one or more Silver Bell families. We welcome profile requests at any time. We especially enjoy information of historical significance or anecdotal or humorous stories. A family profile request may be called in or emailed to Jim Hunter (520) 241-7750, catfis53@gmail.com or Carol Hunter (520) 403-7555 hunterhil@comcast.net.

Silver Bell Family Spotlight - Tinsley

The newsletter committee isn't aware of any limitations regarding the number of pages or whether any protocols or rules exist in that regard. We generally like to profile one or two families in each newsletter. Our current newsletter was near completion when we learned of the untimely passing of Delaine Tinsley. We were going to present the Tinsley family in our next newsletter. However, the recollections in narrative form and photos provided to us were so compelling, that we didn't want to wait, so this is being included.

Delaine and Dennis Tinsley moved to Silver Bell, literally at the beginning of our town. She was witness to the development of our town as well as remembrances of visits to Old Silver Bell, including seeing the original bar from the saloon. We all speculated about where that item went. I was able to visit with Delaine at her home along with Carol Hunter. She maintained a lengthy scrapbook of the town we love and enjoyed sharing it with us.

We hope you will enjoy the recollections as much as we did, and will understand the length of this newsletter. It's simply hard to stop when there is so much to share.

Family life in Silver Bell



Now I will describe to you the place we got to spend thirty years after Dennis and I moved from Tulsa, Oklahoma when we were newlyweds in April, 1953.

My dad was working for Stearns Rogers in Silver Bell, Arizona. Stearns Roger were building a mill and crusher to mine copper from three open pits. My parents talked us into moving there where Dennis could get some work.

It was a little paradise and magical place that we think of as Mayberry (Andy Griffin's town). Silver Bell was a mining camp near an old silver mine. It was still there in a bad state of repair when we arrived. Old Silver Bell was once bustling camp with hundreds of miners mining mostly silver. Hence, the town was named after it.

When we arrived in Silver Bell with our little u-haul trailer from Tulsa, we were surprised that it was hardly a town. It was more

Delaine Tinsley

of a construction site that was 45 miles from Tucson on a narrow two-lane road and very little human life in between. It grew quickly. Soon Silver Bell had one hundred homes, trailers of all kinds, apartments for workers, a grocery store, one pay phone, and a gas station. It was years later that we got a post office. We didn't get phones until the late 60's.

My parents were lucky to have a 3 bedroom house. We had no place to live since homes were reserved for the workers with more seniority. We could not find a place to live there so we moved out on a little ranch closer to Tucson until it was time for me to deliver Denise. We then moved to Silver Bell with my parents. Shortly thereafter, the copper company, ASARCO, hired Dennis. He worked for them for 39 years.

We got a house facing the most beautiful views of the desert for as far as you could see. We watched beautiful sunsets every night while sitting on our porch. To the southwest we could see across the Tohono O'odham Reservation to Kitt Peak National Observatory in the Quinlan Mountains. To the west we saw the most specular nature's fireworks show during the monsoon season. We lived on the prettiest street there for almost 30 years.

Our neighbors, the Barnes family, became lifelong friends. Denise and Trisha had friends right next door their ages and they remain friends to this day. The Barnes family and us did a lot

Delaine Tinsley

together all through the years. Bonnie and the boys played every day together with our girls. Marilyn and I played bridge with the ladies, and Bob and Dennis played poker with their buddies, hunted, fished, golfed and bowled together. I had no qualms about the kids playing in the desert at a natural made arch they called Fort Boone, until they took me there one day and I realized how far it was out in the desert!!

Silver Bell was a safe place for kids, and there were a lot of them. They went swimming every day that always had a lifeguard. They were never bored as they had scouts, clubs, and an area called the corral, where people kept domestic animals like horses, chickens, pigs, goats. There was a mobile library that came every week from Tucson. Often movies were on a big screen at the ball park. Just bring a chair or blanket and sit on the grass with your snacks and enjoy. There was a recreation hall with activities and games for everyone to enjoy with adult supervision. We enjoyed many a party there. Santa arrived in a firetruck every Christmas and gave out socks full of treats. The mine always did a big barbeque on every Labor Day.

Wildlife was abundant all over the desert and Dennis thrived on it. He could hop into an old jalopy we owned and go out after work to hunt quail, dove and rabbits. We tagged along with him all the time. One time we got stuck in the truck in a wash and he could not get us out. We only got stuck deeper the more he

Delaine Tinsley

gunned the motor and it was getting dark. He built a fire and told Trisha and I to stay there and he would walk back to camp for help. We were miles from home but we were too scared to stay there alone so we insisted we walk with him back to camp. He had his shotgun to protect us. We finally saw a truck coming up the road and the man gave us a ride home. Dennis got the neighbor to take him back to the pickup and pull it out.

In addition to copper, the mine had found silver and turquoise which Dennis turned into beautiful jewelry and sold.

Our neighbor and good friend, Marjorie Estes, was working to get her degree in teaching. Since we were 45 miles from Tucson and 26 miles from the nearest schools in Marana she needed to practice teach in order to receive her degree. She got permission from the mining company ASARCO to open a kindergarten. This was highly desirable for parents since there were no kindergartens at that time in any public school. Initially, she opened her home for the kindergarten and had a big turnout. Then she was able to open a private kindergarten in an empty bunkhouse where she set up a complete school with blackboards, tables and chairs — just what a school should look like.

Denise and Trisha and all of the neighbor children could go the kindergarten at 4 years of age until old enough for first grade at Marana. She charged a very minimal amount for the children

Delaine Tinsley

who could afford to attend it. Marjorie produced elaborate programs for the kindergartners at the rec hall. There were spectacular scenery and costumes for every program. Graduation ceremonies were complete with white gowns, caps and certificates awarded by the Superintendent of the mine. Night Before Christmas, Cinderella, Dr. Doolittle, Western Square dances and other performances took magical transformation with cute 4 and 5 year olds. No child who attended could ever forget the Marjorie Estes experience!

We talked Dennis' brother Lee into moving his family to Silver Bell. They had three children and the girls had cousins to grow up with. We have wonderful memories of pit BBQ in the desert washes, playing games, and many late nights at each other houses with five kids sleeping.

There was a ballpark and a tennis court. Dennis joined the men's baseball team along with his brother Lee. They were competitive with teams in Tucson.

Movies were shown in the summer weekends on a big screen on the side of the building. Just bring a chair or a blanket and sit on the grass. Since it was 45 miles to the nearest drive-in theater, this was free entertainment for the whole town.

One of the big celebrations was the Labor Day picnic. Prizes were given for the children's swimming races as the crowds cheered

Delaine Tinsley

them. All kinds of games were played. A BBQ meal with all the extras was served by the union workers and company employees. The beef was cooked in mesquite fired pits in the ground slowly for a couple of days. No one ever missed this fun day.

The bus ride to school in Marana was 26 miles each way so Denise and Trisha rode that route for twelve years, from first grade to graduation. After Denise moved to Tucson for work and college, Marjorie Estes helped her husband get a job as a Marana junior high teacher.

The town of Silver Bell saw many children grow from babies to adults. I think the highest population was maybe 800. People slowly retired and moved to town. There were many weddings and funerals where everyone went. I took over the newspaper route after Sybil Moser moved away. As more and more people moved away, I couldn't help but keep watering the plants and trees at empty houses to keep some appearance of life.

The Tinsley's stayed in house #104 until they closed the town in 1983, thirty years after we drove into camp with our 1950 Studebaker and u-haul trailer. We were actually the longest living residents there!!

It was sad to see the 175 houses sold and trucked somewhere else. I watched them go one by one all around me. Ten families were left when we moved to our present home from the town we

Delaine Tinsley

loved so much.

Dennis continued to work out at Silver Bell as his job as electrician, driving from Tucson to Silver Bell, until he retired after 39 years at ASARCO mine.

I was so fortunate to have lived so happily in Silver Bell.

This is Dennis with one of the deer he was able to find at Silver Bell. The other pictures are what I found to post here

Delaine Tinsley



The swimming pool

Delaine Tinsley



One of the kindergarten programs at the recreation hall Denise is on the left.



Delaine Tinsley



We lived in this house for 30 years and raised those wonderful daughters here.

Delaine Tinsley



El Tiro pit