

FIRST AVENUE



PHOENIX, ARIZONA: 1900-1950

What Life Was Like

Community Action Addressing Water Issues

In 1902, President Theodore Roosevelt signed the National Reclamation Act making it possible to build dams on western streams for reclamation purposes, an important event for the people of Phoenix and the Valley.

Valley residents were quick to supplement this federal action by organizing the Salt River Valley Waters Users' Association on February 4, 1903, to assure proper management of the precious water supply. This organization still functions as the major agency for controlled use of irrigation water in the Valley.





- Theodore Roosevelt Dam was started in 1906. It was the first multiple-purpose dam, supplying both water and electric power, to be constructed under the National Reclamation Act. On May 18, 1911, the former President himself dedicated the dam, which was the largest masonry dam in the world. This opened a new era in farming for the Valley and secured the part of our economy that depended on water for its life.

Downtown Phoenix 1910: Population 29,053





A farmer plowing agricultural land near Camelback Mountain in Phoenix (1918).

Community Action for Prohibition

1900: Phoenix has 28 saloons, 18 gambling houses.

1906: Anti-gambling forces win ordinance outlawing gaming.

1909: Anti-Saloon League becomes active in Valley.



Community Action for a Prosperous City

1907:
\$100,000
raised for a
YMCA
building.

1908: A civic
federation of
75 members is
organized to
improve the
city.

1908:
Carnegie
Library opens.



A Council-Manager Form of Government

At a special election on October 11, 1913, the people of Phoenix, by a vote of nearly two to one, ratified a new charter. The charter gave Phoenix the council-manager form of government. Thus, Phoenix became one of the first cities in the nation to adopt this progressive form of government.



Women in Phoenix

1901: Phoenix Women's Club founded.

1914: Women gain the right to vote two years after President Taft signed statehood proclamation.



Growth in Phoenix 1920s



- Phoenix began to grow into a young metropolis. At the end of its first eight years under statehood, Phoenix was no longer a town - it was an important city of 29,053.

Downtown Phoenix 1929: Population 48,118

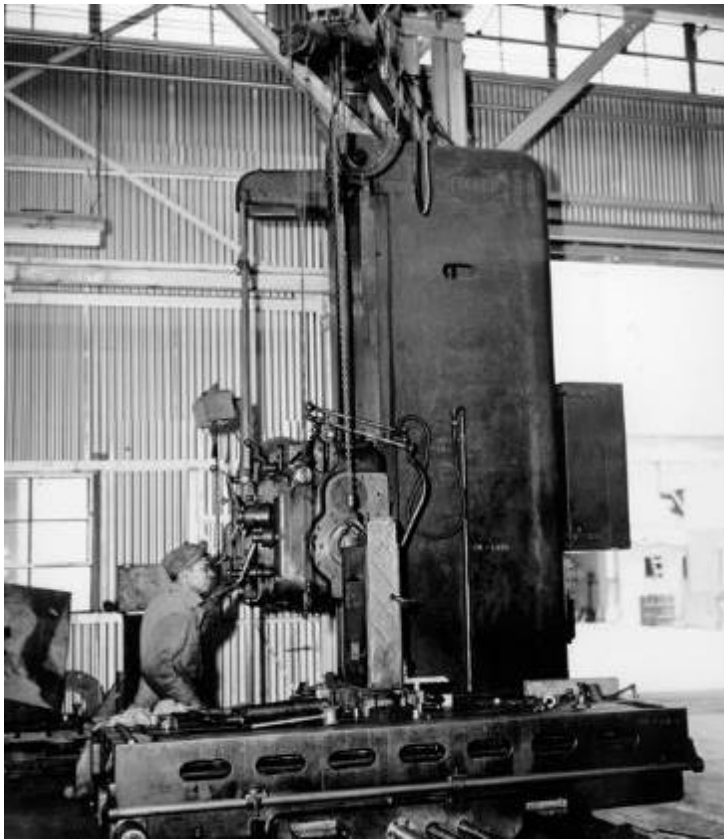


Growth in Phoenix 1930s

By 1930, the size of Phoenix nearly doubled again with a 48,118 census count. There were 120 miles of sidewalks and 161 miles of streets - 77 with pavement. The public library had 51,000 books, and the police force had 70 men.



WWII and the 1940s



- The city had gone as far as a farming center and then as a distribution center. When the war hit the United States, Phoenix rapidly turned into an industrial city.



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