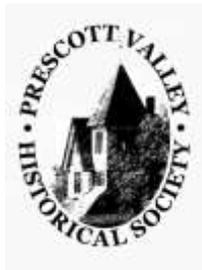




A Short History of Prescott Valley, Arizona



Prescott Valley's history goes back millions of years to the volcanic era. Glassford Hill, an extinct volcano, is a landmark of the town.



Active Volcano



Glassford Hill Today

By the 1880s Glassford Hill was a signal location where soldiers used mirrors called heliographs to move messages from one high point to another across the Southwest.



Soldiers using Heliographs



In prehistoric times woolly mammoths roamed the area. Remains of their bones and a portion of a tusk were found in the Agua Fria river bed in 1985.



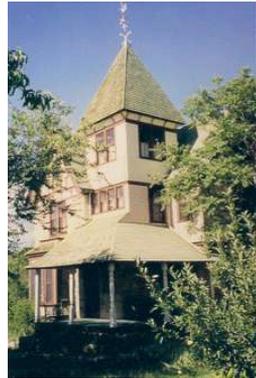
The American Indian group of hunters and gatherers, now called the Prescott Culture, inhabited the area until early in the 15th century. They left behind what today is known as the Fitzmaurice Ruins, named after the family who lived and owned property in the area. The ruins are located near Fain Park.

In the 1860s gold was found in Lynx Creek. It was both panned and hydraulically mined. Mills and smelters processed the ore in Mayer and Humboldt.



Town sites sprang up and died in the area. One was a stage stop known as Massicks. It included a general store, post office and other buildings. The population was about 100.

The only surviving building is "The Castle", a house built in 1890 by an Englishman, Thomas Gibson Barlow-Massicks, who came to Arizona in 1885. The Victorian mansion is currently a private residence on the southeast edge of Fain Park.



The Castle



Sharlot Hall

Early 20th century territorial historian Sharlot Hall lived on a homestead, called Orchard Ranch, between present-day Prescott Valley and Dewey. The Hall family came from Kansas in 1882 and settled here. Sharlot Hall established the Museum, called by her name, in Prescott.

Our area became known as Lonesome Valley, named by a Fort Whipple soldier who said "there is hardly a soul in that lonesome land between Fort Whipple and Fort Verde."¹



Prescott & Eastern Railroad

In 1897 a branch of the Prescott & Eastern Railroad was constructed to run through Lonesome Valley, passing Orchard Ranch then on to Mayer and Crown King. Today a portion of the rail bed is the Iron King Trail.

The first Fains, William and Cary, arrived in Arizona territory in 1874 and began ranching and farming in the Verde Valley. In the 20th century their descendants, Dan, Norman, Bill and family, had acquired the 50,000 acre Rafter Eleven Ranch located between the Mingus and Bradshaw Mountain ranges. Other properties have come to include the Barlow-Massicks property, the Fitzmaurice ruins and the Hall family's Orchard Ranch. Facilities such as Prescott's airport, the Town of Prescott Valley, Prescott Country Club, Quailwood Greens Golf Club, and other residential and recreational areas were developed from Fain ranch land. As biographer Dean Smith said, "Prescott Valley has been Bill's crowning achievement."²

Norman's son, Bill, had a vision of establishing a town west of Dewey. Phoenix real estate developer Ed Dudley had tried to sell lots on the ranch property but didn't succeed. However, a man named Ned Warren appeared on the scene with "big plans", "chutzpa and energy", plus a "shady past", and got the ball rolling. It was Warren who suggested "Prescott Valley" as the new community's name.³

When Warren placed an ad in the *Prescott Courier* to get the development going, the newspaper editor found that Warren was originally named Nat Waxman and had served time for fraud in the East. He bought, at \$400 or less an acre, three and a half sections of grazing land from Norman Fain and later, at \$500 an acre, two more sections.

In 1966 Warren and his sons-in-law, Robert Loos and Leonard Hoffman, founded a land development company, naming it Prescott Valley, Inc. Norman and Bill Fain, once they found out about Warren's reputation, kept a close eye on what was happening and helped keep the operation "legitimate."⁴ With Loos and Hoffman in charge, Warren faded from the Prescott Valley scene.⁵

Loos, Hoffman, and sales manager, Norman Romero, used telephone solicitations and newspaper ads to lure buyers. Lots, at a third of an acre, sold for \$1,500 each. Many buyers bought several lots. Prospective buyers were housed at the Prescott Valley Motel and fed at a nearby restaurant while they looked at property. Today, lots are priced at \$25,000 and up. The first residents were retired sisters, Vida Anderson and Evelyn Myers of Goodyear, Arizona. Their first residence was a mobile home placed on their property on August 12, 1967. By the summer of 1969, 80 families were living on Prescott Valley land.⁵



Early Prescott Valley

The first postmistress was Shirley Sellers, who along with her husband, Rollie, were one of the first property buyers and residents. She also served as librarian and editor of the community's first newspaper, *Fringe Benefit*. It reported the first baby born, a son to Lee and Lonnie Anderson in July 1969 and later, the first wedding uniting Tom Newman and Sandra Griffin.⁶

In 1969 a film company filmed its version of *Mountain Men* in Prescott Valley. A fort was built as a prop for the movie and was later moved to the playground for the young people to use.⁷

In 1972 the Prescott Valley Community Association was formed by Al Schippmann, Charles Craig, Carl Fensterman, Lucile Felch, and Barbara O'Brien. By the mid-1970s, residents were talking about incorporation, which occurred on May 8, 1978. The first election was in August 1978. In May 1979 the residents, numbering 1,521, elected their first mayor, Richard Addis, with Marilyn Horne as vice mayor and Charles Robinson, Raymond Sandberg, Art King, Paul Pollard, and Richard McGinnis as the first town council.⁸ The town's area was seven square miles. Fred Carpenter was the first Town Manager

The first church was the Open Door Baptist Church in 1970.

In 1971 the first bank in town was the Great Western, now the location of Today's Realty Company on east highway 69.

The Humboldt School District began with 243 students in 1970, opened an elementary school in 1972 and built a new high school in 1976. The 1989-1990 school year enrollment was 2,601.

From 1974 to 1989, a houseboat home was located at the corner of Florentine and Yavapai Roads. After the owner died, it was dismantled; a car wash occupies the space today. A side note to the car wash was having a bull getting a bath by its owner, but a date was not published concerning this story.⁹

Another legend is a resident who had her driver's license taken away because of too many DUIs. So, she began riding her horse to and from the local liquor store.¹⁰



Safeway

Safeway Plaza opened in 1978. Fry's and Albertson's have since joined the food distribution scene.

The council approved bringing natural gas into Prescott Valley in November 1979.

The first new zoning code was approved in 1980 with restrictions on storage space, minimum house per lot size, aesthetic requirements, and a seven-point scheme concerning contrasting appearance to town houses.¹¹

In 1980, the Roberts family started the town's newspaper, *The Prescott Valley Tribune*, a weekly currently published and owned by Western News & Info, Inc.

In 1981, Better Bilt Aluminum built a plant that eventually employed 350. A four-man police force was organized. Nearly five acres of state land was annexed, increasing the town's size by 50%.¹²

In 1982 the town's population was 3,410.

From 1984 to 1987, state highway 69 was widened to four lanes.

The dedication of the new Prescott Valley Business Park was held in November 1984 with Mayor Carm Staker presiding over the ribbon cutting.

The population in 1985 was 5,465.

After more than five years of negotiations, on December 13, 1985 the Town Council agreed to purchase Shamrock Water Company from the Fains, who had started it in 1965.

With a growth rate of 18% per year, in 1989 the town council approved an "attempt to implement the town plan for orderly and prioritized development of the town."

Also in 1989 16 miles of road chip sealing was approved by the town council.

The Fain family donated 20 acres where the Civic Center, Police Department and Library are located.



Police Department

ACE Hardware constructed a 412,000 square foot warehouse/ distribution center in 1990.



ACE Hardware

The town's 1990 population had reached 8,858.

Printpak, Inc., a plastic wrap company, opened its doors in 1991.

In 1992 K-Mart opened in a nearly 108,000 square foot building.

By 1993, the town was increasing its population with an average of one family per day.

The wastewater treatment plant was finished in 1993. It was then Arizona's largest treatment project.

By the end of 1994, traffic lights were installed on state highway 69 at Navajo Drive, Windsong Drive, and Lake Valley Road.

The population in 1995 was 15,983.

The town's public library circulation had grown to 110,564 in 1996/97. The circulation in 2011/12 was 451,738. The first library occupied a corner of Prescott Valley, Inc.'s office.

A 100-acre parcel of land valued at over \$1 million was donated to the town by the Fain family. The parcel now includes Fain Park, Fain Lake and dam, Fitzmaurice Ruins and The Castle. In 2002 the Chapel of the Valley was built adjacent to Fain Park. The parcel has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1978.

In 1996 property for a proposed subdivision north of 89A was annexed into the town, bringing the town's limits to 26 square miles, up from 7 square miles in 1978.



Civic Center

The Civic Center was built and dedicated in 1999 on the 20 acres aforementioned. It houses administrative offices, magistrate court, and other town offices. The library is located next to the Civic Center. The grassy areas are used for concerts, festivals, and other events.

The Prescott Valley Historical Society was organized in 1997 and is presently located in a two-room office on the Civic Center's first floor.

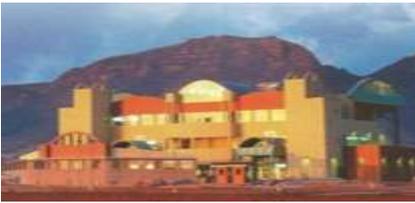
The 2000 census showed a population of 23,535.

In 2000, actor Patrick Swayze caused a stir when he made an emergency landing in his plane alongside highway 89A. A malfunction in the plane's pressurization caused Swayze to suffer hypoxia, a lack of oxygen.¹³

Harkins Theatres built a 14- theater complex in the town's Entertainment District that opened in 2001.



Harkins Theatre



Yavapai County Fairgrounds

By the beginning of 2001, the Yavapai County Fairgrounds and race track were being built east of town on highway 89A. They were closed in 2010 due to bankruptcy proceedings, so the 2011 and 2012 Yavapai Fairs were successfully held in Tim's Toyota Center.

The town celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2003.

The 250-bed Yavapai Regional Medical Center East Campus was constructed and opened in 2005.

A \$35 million 5,000 seat arena, Tim's Toyota Center, financed partially by the car dealer, was built in 2006 on Florentine Road, between Glassford Hill and Lake Valley Roads. It is the home of the Arizona Sundogs hockey team.



Tim's Toyota Center

Lockheed-Martin Aeronautics Corporation opened a facility employing some 200 persons in 2007.



Prescott Valley Library

In 2008 a 51,500 square foot library was built west of the Civic Center. The complex also includes offices and classrooms for Northern Arizona University and Yavapai College.

Our town's first pictorial history titled *Prescott Valley* was published in 2009. It was authored by Jean Cross and is still in print.

The town's population for 2010 totaled 40,400.

In 2012 Arizona celebrated its centennial as a state. A county-wide celebration was held in Tim's Toyota Center attended by 800 county residents and dignitaries.

Prescott Valley has so many businesses that it would be impossible to list them all in this short history.

-
- ¹(Smith, Dean. *The Fains of Lonesome Valley*. Prescott Valley: Lonesome Valley Press, 1998), 44; (Ijams, Bert. *A Brief History of Prescott Valley*. Privately Printed, 2003), 12.
- ²(Smith 1998), 4.
- ³(Smith 1998), 132.
- ⁴(Smith 1998), 135.
- ⁵(Smith 1998), 134.
- ⁶(Smith 1998), 135.
- ⁷(Cross, Jean. *Prescott Valley*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2009), 56.
- ⁸(Smith 1998), 136-137.
- ⁹(Tissot, Michelle. "Little Known Fact to laugh and Learn From." *Prescott Valley Tribune*, August 22, 2003).
- ¹⁰(Tissot 2003).
- ¹¹(Ijams 2003), 20.
- ¹²(Ijams 2003), 21.
- ¹³(Swayze, Patrick and Niemi, Lisa. *The Time of My Life*. New York: Atria Books, 2009), 211-214.

This booklet was prepared in 2012 by Lyle Johnston and edited by several other Prescott Valley Historical Society members.

Memberships in the Prescott Valley Historical Society are available and can be mailed to the Society at the address below. Please include your mailing address, e-mail address and phone number, so we can notify you of the Society's events. Dues are as follows:

Individuals: \$12 annually

Family: \$25 annually
(2 adults with children under 18)

Businesses: \$50 annually

Prescott Valley Historical Society
7501 E Civic Circle
Prescott Valley, AZ 86314

For Further Information:

928-759-5524

prescottvalleyhistoricalsociety@yahoo.com

www.pvazhistoricalsociety.org