

CHRONICLES

Discovering Our Fathers' Clifton

Beth Shortridge Osborn

April, 2024

In January of 1913, our grandparents, **Ernest** and **Lotta Shortridge**, moved from El Paso to Clifton for his new job with the mine administration. While living in Clifton, they produced three boys; **Ray** in 1914, and twins **Harold** and **Donald** in 1915.

They lived and prospered in Clifton until 1927 when they moved to Phoenix where the boys grew up and started their own families.

Harold was my father and a gifted storyteller. Over the years, he regaled us with stories of their adventures growing up in Clifton, including all the mischief they got into. Recently, my cousins **Claire** and **Nancy** (Donald's daughters) decided to visit Clifton hoping we could find some of the places we heard about growing up. Helping in our endeavor was **Leslie** at the Train Station Tourism Center, and **Tammy** and **Vicky** in the Greenlee Historical Museum. All three of these wonderful ladies were kind and generous in sharing Clifton's history, and helped us locate some of the sites Harold and Don talked about. Sadly, some buildings, like the school and church our dads attended are no longer. We were also unable to find the location of a Chinese owned butcher shop that had been there at the time. The boys had teased the butcher there until the exasperated man would chase them down the street brandishing a large cleaver, and threatening bodily harm! It is unknown if he was serious, but the boys were not taking any chances.

We were able to find the home they had lived in, which was so exciting! We were thrilled to see it is now marked as an historic building. Since many of their misadventures occurred there, it was fun to be able to see the actual place.



Harold, Ray & Donald about 1917

Their stories also included the train station (where one of our great-great uncles adopted two of the orphans from the orphan train), the underground jail, hotels like the Reardon and Clifton Hotels (we stayed at the lovely Clifton Hotel), the Elks lodge, and the infamous downtown Chase Creek Street, to name a few. Also, the railroad tracks in front of their home where the boys put bottle caps or anything else they thought needed crushing. Many of the sites Harold and Don talked about we were able to find, and the missing places were often found in pictures at the History Museum. We also took a ride to see the mine which was quite an experience. We had no idea what a huge operation that is. Impressive! Hats off to the miners that do those tough jobs.

I can see why Harold and Don held Clifton in their hearts throughout their lifetimes. Their stories told of the fondness they had for their

hometown, which they returned to numerous times throughout their lives. Harold even wrote a book about their childhood experiences in Clifton entitled: *Childhood Memories of a Fabulous Mining Camp*, Clifton, Arizona, 1915-1926. I believe the Historical Museum has a copy.

We so enjoyed our trip to wonderful Clifton, which was both educational and enlightening. It was fun for us to explore the town through our fathers' eyes. In Clifton we found wonderful people, a breathtaking setting, and fascinating history. We know this trip will not be our last!



Beth Shortridge Osborn
Claire Shortridge Sievers
Nancy Shortridge Sowers

2024 GCHS Scholarship Recipients

Morenci High School

Kay'Leigh was born in Safford Arizona is the daughter of **Brandon Blair** and **Yolanda Allen**. Kay'Leigh is a 4-year member of not only the MHS Varsity softball team, but also the Varsity volleyball team where she been an outstanding student athlete. In addition, she has been involved in Life Teen. This is a Catholic student organization. She has helped wrap gifts during the holidays, read during church, and picked up trash on the highways as part of this organization. She is also an office aide where she assists, the front office staff with administrative tasks. This has all been done while maintaining a 3.3 GPA. In addition, she has been taking college classes for the last two years, and will graduate with an Associate's Degree before she graduates from high school.



Kay'Leigh Blair



Brandon Price

Duncan High School

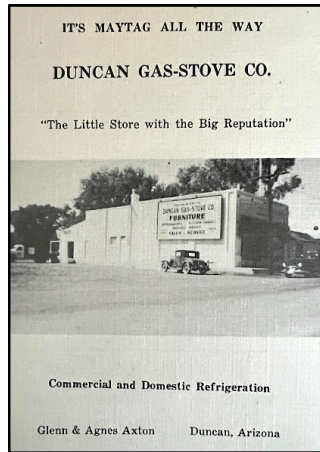
Brandon has exhibited notable character, leadership, and engagement during his time at DHS. Notably, he initiated his fencing business during high school that facilitated his receiving the prestigious Arizona FFA State Star in Agribusiness. Presently, Brandon serves as a firefighter for the Forest Service and is preparing to commence studies at New Mexico State University in the upcoming semester.

Brandon is the son of **Buddy** and **Amy Price**.

Harlem Globetrotters Come to Clifton

On February 14, 1948, Clifton was the scene for a special sporting event. The world-famous **Harlem Globetrotters** came to town during their tour of the Southwest and were on an 89-game win streak. The Clifton High School gymnasium was packed to capacity as everyone enjoyed their antics and amazing basketball skills. The crowd was not disappointed, but their opponent that night was not about to be in awe of them. A semi-professional team from Duncan, sponsored by the Duncan Gas and Stove Company, came ready to play. Led by stars **Gerald Jones** and **Gene**

O'Dell, the game ended up being a serious contest. Jones had 19 points, O'Dell netted 13 points, and **Cleo Johnson** led the Globetrotters with 18 points, as the team from Duncan ended their winning streak 49-47. O'Dell was drafted by the New York Knickerbockers later that year.



Ad from the 1952 Duncan High School yearbook *The Wildkat*.



Feb. 13, 1948 *Copper Era* (Clifton, AZ) newspaper.

2023 Events and Activities



2023 Gift Basket Raffle

Recovering from the challenges of the COVID shutdown has been a tough journey. However, through perseverance, determination, and the backing of our Board of Directors, we successfully introduced the following programs and activities:

Congratulations to Jody Pelusi, 2023 Raffle winner.



Town of Clifton Founders Day Celebration Honorees



Town of Clifton Founders Day Celebration



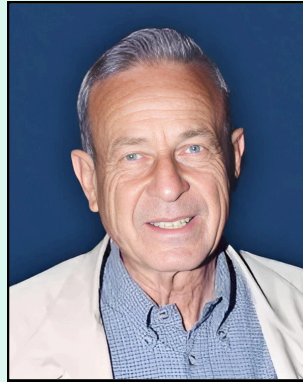
2023 Halloween Scavenger Hunt

In Memoriam

A tribute to dedicated Board Members of the Greenlee County Historical Society.



Joseph Fout



Joe Brinkley

It takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate them, and a day to love them, but it takes an entire lifetime to forget them.

~ Author unknown

Attention Artists and Craftspeople

We are seeking products crafted by local Arizona artists and craftspeople to add to our GCHS Gift Shop. Specifically, we are keen on books, household items, accessories (such as mugs, decor, coasters, toys, magnets, bookmarks, keychains, etc.), jewelry, and goods made from sustainable or recycled materials that advocate for eco-consciousness. Items with themes related to copper, the copper industry, science, and wildlife of Greenlee County are highly encouraged.

Tell us about your arts and crafts

Email gchsgiftshop@gmail.com with the following:

- Name and business name if applicable
- Contact Phone, Email, and Preference
- Home zip code
- General times of availability
- A short description of your product plus 1-3 sample pictures
- Normal production turnaround and considerations

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