

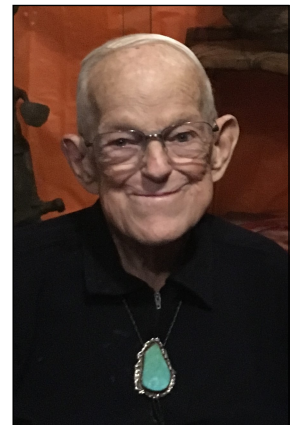


# CHRONICLES

THE MISSION OF THE GREENLEE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY SHALL BE: TO COLLECT, PRESERVE, INTERPRET AND DISSEMINATE RELEVANT AND HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT MATERIALS PERTAINING TO GREENLEE COUNTY AND ARIZONA AND TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN ETHICAL, EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS IN CARRYING OUT THESE ENDEAVORS FOR THE BENEFIT OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

## Preserving Our History

The Clifton-Morenci or “Copper Mountain” Mining District boasts a rich history that has been preserved in historic sites around Clifton, yellowing papers, early mining equipment, and historical photographs. In 2018, Freeport sought to further the historic preservation of the area by capturing the memories of elders in the community. Freeport hired WestLand Resources to assist with an oral history project focused on historical photographs of the Copper Mountain District. An oral history study is one method of gathering, interpreting, and preserving memories about places and events by interviewing the people who either experienced them firsthand or heard them from their elders. WestLand researcher **Stephanie Brown** met with local historian and man-about-town **Don Lunt** over the summer and fall months of 2018. During their weekly meetings, Stephanie and Don examined a fascinating selection of historical photographs that had been collected over the years by Don, the Greenlee County Historical Society, and Freeport. For each photograph, Stephanie used a web-based application to record Don’s voice and memories. The photographs spanned over 130 years of Clifton-Morenci history providing images of mines, smelters, businesses, communities, events, and everyday life. Perhaps even more unique than the photograph collection itself was Don’s ability to remember dates, names, and stories



Don Lunt, 1929-2019

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associated with over 1,600 photographs. The project is still underway while Stephanie transcribes the interviews with Don and readies the digital data. The long-term goal of the project is to preserve the photographs as well as Don's knowledge for use by historians and the local community. However, in light of Don's recent passing the most moving aspect of the project are his voice recordings. Don's kindness, lighthearted humor, and passion for community, place, and history shine through on each of the 1,600 voice recordings. Looking to the future, the project ensures that Don's legacy will carry on, igniting the same passion in future generations as they view the photographs and hear the stories of the pioneer miners in whose footsteps they follow.

Stephanie Brown  
Avi Buckles  
WestLand Resources, Inc.

## Simpson and Reardon Hotels

Throughout the history of the county, travelers have found many comfortable hotels to call home during their stay. Two of the more well-known hotels are the Simpson Hotel in Duncan and the Reardon Hotel in Clifton, which continue to welcome guests, **Thomas and May Simpson** owned the hotel Duncan, while **Mike and Anna Reardon** owned the Clifton hotel. What is not commonly known, is that Thomas and Anna were brother and sister! Thomas and Mike worked for the railroad and spent much time away from their families while May and Anna operated the hotels. As a matter of fact, a friend of Mike's from the railroad, designed his hotel. Thomas was part of the crew of 1300 when a trestle collapsed south of Clifton, and the train partially fell into a deep gulch. He was uninjured. Tragically, Mike died from injuries he suffered after falling off a train while it was stopped in Franklin. The Simpson's are buried in Duncan, and the Reardon's in Yuma. Thomas (left) and Mike are pictured below.



(Photo credits: Arizona Bulletin Supplement, January 12, 1900, Solomonville, AZ)

## Morenci Bakery

One of the completest bakers to be found in Territory of Arizona is located at Morenci and was owned by Messrs. **Richard Stevens** and **Karl M. Schade**, under the firm name of Stevens & Shade. In December of 1900, the firm of Stevens & Schade opened a bakery in Morenci. They sold their Clifton Bakery to give their personal attention to the Morenci Bakery. They were practical bakers, and the bread, cakes, pies, etc., were delivered from their establishment to show that they were experts in their business.



The Morenci Bakery was a successful business, supplying almost the entire population and as the owners do their own work, they were able to guarantee every article. Their ovens were beneath the store room and connected it by an elevator. In connection with the bakery, was also a handsome soda fountain and in season, all kinds of soft drinks were supplied by **Mr. Yoakum**, owner of the Clifton Bottling Works.

The products from the Morenci Bakery were delivered to customers by a pack animal. This was made necessary because of the absence of any roads or streets in Morenci, where a delivery wagon was unable to drive on.

## A Letter From Your President

On behalf of the Greenlee County Board of Directors, I extend sincere condolences to the Lunt family on the recent loss of their beloved husband, father and grandfather. It is our loss as well. Don was an icon of the Greenlee County Historical Society. His knowledge of our local history, his talent in capturing our community through his photography and his willingness to share this information with students, tourists, and those doing research on family history was an asset to our organization. We were fortunate to work alongside him and experience his expertise.

It is our goal to continue improving the museum experience. We plan to enhance exhibits, provide a broader accessibility to local artifacts/ photographs and continue with the mission that the founders of the museum had in mind. I know I speak on behalf of my fellow board members in saying that Don's photography skill and knowledge in identifying historical photos leaves a void in our community.

As we continue our mission to preserve and maintain our local history, we pledge to sustain the level and quality of work previously established by our good friend, Don Lunt.

*Your President, Tammie McWhinney*

## The Mystery of the “Varela Family Secret”

Our adventure that lead us to Clifton began 15 years earlier, when I (Danny) received a ‘Varela Family Secret’ letter (dated 2003) from my aunt **Jacqueline Adele Varela**. She was the oldest of the four Varela children – **Jacqueline Adele**, **Joe Jr.** (Joseph Lawrence), **Frank** (my father), and **Alice**. Their parents were **Jose ‘2’ Varela** and **Annie Guerrero Varela** and all were from Clifton. Jacqueline Adele states in her letter that her true father was not Jose ‘2’ Varela (son of **Jose Francisco Manuel “Pancho” Varela & Erlinda**) but an abandoned Anglo boy left with her grandparents (Pancho Varela & Erlinda Fierro) around 1896. Pancho and Erlinda raised the boy as their own, changed his Scotch-Irish name to Jose ‘1’, and he became a Cliftonite.

Adele’s letter also says that the Scotch-Irish parents of this 1-3 year old were befriended by and lived with the Pancho & Erlinda when they broke down in Clifton on their way to California. They asked if the they could leave the youngest of their three children with the Varela's, until they could get their finances together and complete their journey to California. After they were established in California they would return and take the youngest child back with them to California. The parents never came back. Pancho and Herlinda were happy to add Jose ‘1’ to their growing family which now included: **Francisco** (who lost his legs at 16 in a train accident), **Herlinda Fierro Loya**, **Jesus India Loya Gonzales**, and soon-to-be-born baby boy **Jose ‘2’** (my Grandfather).

Jacqueline Adele is VERY specific that as Jose ‘1’ became a man (and her father) he was 6’ 1” tall, very slender, had blue/green eyes, and brown hair — not your typical Cliftonite. So here we are, in 2019, trying to solve the mystery of the ‘Varela Family Secret.’

If there is anyone who has information on this situation, please email me at [varella@gvyc.com](mailto:varella@gvyc.com). My goal is to find out if there really was a tall, slender, blue/green eyed, early twenties person in Clifton around 1910 – 1920; and if he was Jacqueline Adele’s Father. I’ve left out the name of the Scotch-Irish family and where they were from on purpose. If a reader knows the name, it will help prove the story.

Thank You Clifton for some GREAT memories!!!  
These pictures are of my Grandparents – both from Clifton.



Jose ‘2’ Varela  
1894-1966



Annie Guerrero Varela  
1892-1973

Submitted by Danny Varela



## In Memoriam

A tribute to dedicated lifetime members of the Greenlee County Historical Society~

Julious Blair  
 Richard Baltz  
 Don Lunt

*Those that touch our lives... stay in our hearts forever*  
*Author unknown*

## Stand-Off at the Clifton Hotel

In 1895 through 1910, over 110,000 orphan children were shipped en masse to western towns where newspapers ads advised interested parents to look over available children at stations for placement.

With an influx of children born out of wedlock or deserted by their fathers, mothers were unable to care for the child or children, would leave them at New York's institutions. Children who were of European origins were left at hospitals, orphanages, churches and other places that could provide care. Overwhelmed by so many, institutions started sending children to homes out west in hopes of providing a better quality of life.

Catholic Charity establishments were also in the same predicament and expanded its own child-saving operation. In 1904, the Foundling Hospital handling 1,900 children a year and emigrating 450-475 reached out to parish priest throughout the county to find Catholic homes for these children. The nuns from the Foundling Hospitals developed the Orphan Trains to the West. On September 25, 1904, children who were predominately Irish, with Polish, Italian, German and other European origins departed New York and headed to towns where parish priest requested children for childless couples.



L to R: Anna Louise Simpson, Leah Abraham, Raymond Hill, Gladys Freeman and Katherine Wright. March, 1908.

Nineteen of these children, at the request of **Father Constant Mandin**, ended up in the Clifton – Morenci mining towns to be placed with Mexican Catholic parishioners. On the day of their arrival, a large crowd of towns' people were curious and wanted to catch a glimpse of the orphans. The names of these children were **Jerome and Katherine Fitzpatrick, Elizabeth and Hannah Kane, Violet Lanovick, Gabriella Welsh, Josephine Corcoran, Anna Louise Doherty, Peal Kendricks, Agnes Mullen, George Weber, Edward Cummiskey, William Norton, Sadie Green, Joseph Ryan, Raymond Spencer, Marie Mack, Ambrose**

Lamb, and Edward Gibson and were placed in the homes of Cornelio & Margarita Chacon, Silvestre & Virginia Galvan, Francisco & Trancita Alvidrez, Rafael & Josepha Holquin, Ramon & Baleria Balles, Lee & Refugia Windham, Juan Esquivel and Angela Flores.

Note: Anglo women in Clifton – Morenci were appalled that these fair skin children were placed with Mexican families. *TO BE CONTINUED.....*

# *Congratulations* to the 2019 Scholarship Recipients



Rachel Barnett

The Greenlee County Historical Society presented \$400 scholarships to each of the two well deserving Seniors from Greenlee County. The Duncan High School recipient was **Shyanne Avant** and the Morenci High School recipient was **Rachel Barnett**. Congratulation to both of them!

Funds for these scholarships are generated from the Museum gift shop.



Shyanne Avant

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## Museum & Gift Shop Hours

Thursday, Friday and Saturday  
12:00pm - 4:00pm

And by appointment:

Telephone: (928) 865-3115

Email: greenleecountyhs74@gmail.com

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Or any Board of Directors Member

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