

# *Nevada*

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Historical Society Quarterly



WINTER 2002



## *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*

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## Historical Society Quarterly

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reviewed by Steve Conn

# *McCarran International and Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport Expansion, Tourism, and Urbanization in the Modern Southwest*

DANIEL BUBB

Since the early 1930s, commercial airlines have delivered passengers to many southwestern United States destinations. After World War II, a growing number of passengers congested terminals, crowded access roads, and forced airport officials to consider immediate expansion programs. This situation was often the case for airports in Las Vegas and Phoenix. In 2002, officials at both Las Vegas's McCarran International Airport and Phoenix's Sky Harbor International Airport faced further construction plans to serve the more than 36 million air travelers who annually passed through their gates.

Even more striking in recent years than the airports' expansion programs is the impact of increased passenger traffic upon the development of Las Vegas and Phoenix. In 2000, McCarran and Sky Harbor each contributed more than \$6 billion to their respective cities, \$4 billion of which came from air travelers and tourists, and the rest from taxes and utility and facility user fees.<sup>1</sup> Since both airports drew sufficient revenues from bonds, federal airport improvement funds, and rental and leasing fees, they could support themselves without relying on taxpayers to cover the cost of airport expansion. As a result, government leaders were able to use tax revenues for other metropolitan needs. In addition to stimulating their economies, the increased passenger volume also sparked population growth in both cities. The warm climate, resorts, business opportunities, and easy access to shops, outdoor facilities, and other entertainment venues annually drew millions of air travelers to the region, many of whom became permanent residents.

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## AIRPORT HISTORIES, 1920-2001

The histories of both McCarran and Sky Harbor date from the early 1920s when commercial air travel was in its infancy. In 1926, Calvin Coolidge signed the Air Commerce Act, officially inaugurating the age of commercial air travel and urging the American people to fly.<sup>2</sup> Thereafter, hundreds of passengers boarded DC-3s, Boeing 80s, and other aircraft, anxious to see America from the sky while en route to visit family members or conduct business in distant communities. One of these places was the small desert railroad town of Las Vegas in southern Nevada.

On Thanksgiving Day in 1920, Randall Henderson landed Las Vegas's first plane, a Curtiss JN-4, on a short stretch of desert just south of today's Sahara Avenue. His arrival attracted a large crowd of enthusiastic local residents. Several days later, fellow pilot Robert Hausler opened Anderson Field, which consisted of a graded dirt landing strip and a water tank.<sup>3</sup> For the next six years, only a handful of military and private pilots used the field. When Western Air Express, Las Vegas' first hometown airline, began serving the community in 1926, however, the airport's new owners, Leon and Earl Rockwell, drafted plans to improve it.<sup>4</sup>

In 1928, when the city of Las Vegas owned Rockwell field for a brief period, P.A. "Pop" Simon, a local businessman, built another airstrip just eight miles northeast of town as a base for Nevada Air Lines. This air carrier promised to offer daily flights between Reno and Las Vegas. The deal soon collapsed, leaving Simon with an airport and a few general aviation tenants.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, Harris Hanshue, the founder of Western Air Express, was searching for a suitable facility from which he could base his airline. He approached Simon in November 1929 and signed a twenty-year lease with him. By 1932, Rockwell Field had become a small center for general aviation, while the newly-named Western Air Express Field became the city's official airport. It was served by Western Air Express and, later, by Bonanza and by TWA.<sup>6</sup>

With the outbreak of World War II in Europe, the United States Army needed a place to train its pilots. Thanks to the efforts of Senator Pat McCarran, the City of Las Vegas agreed to lease Western Air Express Field to the Army Air Corps in 1940. Because Las Vegas generally had good weather and no geographic obstructions interfering with takeoff and landing paths, it was an attractive option. The generals ultimately signed an agreement that resulted in a joint military-civilian airport. As air traffic increased, joint military and civilian uses would pose problems.

A second airfield began to service Las Vegas in 1946, when George Crockett, an aviation enthusiast and flight instructor from Missouri, leased 640 acres of federal land from the Bureau of Land Management and opened Alamo Field. Intending to establish a flight school and air tour business, he sited his new airport three miles south of the Hotel Last Frontier off Highway 91. It quickly

became a contender with the Western Air Express facility for commercial air service. The need for two airports became apparent during the war when commercial, charter, and military flights clogged the runways at the old Western Air Express facility which was now being used as a gunnery school. Following the war, thousands of tourists flocked to Las Vegas as the Fabulous Flamingo (1946) and the Thunderbird (1948) hotels joined the El Rancho Vegas and the Hotel New Frontier on the developing Las Vegas Strip, and the Golden Nugget (1946) contributed to the neon appeal of Fremont Street. The pressure on the airport eased with the army's departure in 1946, but by 1947, military activity increased again with the beginning of the Cold War. Even as Harry Truman proclaimed the Truman Doctrine and lined up support for the Marshall Plan, Senator McCarran began lobbying for a new air force base in the old army facility. He convinced county and city leaders to move commercial flights south of town, leaving the Western Air Express facility for the air force. On May 2, 1947, voters approved a bond issue to build a new airport near Alamo Field. In December 1948, this new airport, McCarran Field opened even as the Pentagon finished what would, in 1951, become Nellis Air Force Base.

As gambling and tourism grew, thanks to the appearance of the Dunes, Sands, Tropicana, Sahara, Stardust, and other hotels on the Strip and downtown, air travel to Las Vegas soared. Indeed, throughout the decade, arrivals, departures, and passenger volume increased tenfold. By 1959, the airport had become so congested, officials drafted plans for moving the commercial air carriers to another location, while the charter and general aviation aircraft remained at McCarran Field.

Like its counterpart in Las Vegas, Sky Harbor in Phoenix also traces its roots to a meager landing strip. It began on 278 acres of cotton fields and attracted few pilots because of its gopher hole-ridden runway and remote location. Local residents thought little of it and were not shy about expressing their views.<sup>7</sup> But a single event transformed the situation. In November 1928, J. Parker Van Zandt, founder of Scenic Airways, purchased the airfield for \$125,000 and immediately drafted plans for a runway, hangar, and air terminal.<sup>8</sup> The runway, which consisted of a one-mile stretch of bermuda grass, eventually accommodated a variety of small to medium-sized commercial aircraft. The air terminal and administration building, which housed waiting rooms, offices, a radio and weather bureau, pilot quarters, and a restaurant, had been built in a grove of cottonwood trees with a paved path leading to the terminal's entrance.<sup>9</sup> By December 1929, Van Zandt made these plans a reality. He ran a full-page advertisement in the local newspaper announcing the new Sky Harbor Airport and publicizing the massive capital investment he was making in it. The latter included \$150,000 for licensed flying equipment, \$17,000 in airport lighting, and \$220,000 for the airfield, hangar, classrooms, and administrative offices.<sup>10</sup>

Unfortunately, Scenic Airways fell victim to the Great Depression. Van Zandt shut down operations, suspended all improvement programs, and, in 1932,

sold the company's airplane fleet to other commercial air carriers. He also offered to sell his property to the City of Phoenix at a deflated price, but, the city, because of its past investments in two other unsuccessful municipal airfields, declined his offer. Desperate to get rid of the property, in 1933 Van Zandt finally sold it, at an enormous loss, to Acme Investment Company. The company immediately issued 400 shares of stock to its investors, but then, due to financial difficulties including a depletion of its cash supply, it was decided to sell the field. The City of Phoenix again balked at purchasing the field, but, in February 1934, Maricopa County agreed to sign a five-year lease, which included a clause allowing Acme to continue management of the facility.

Thanks to the efforts of county officials and Arizona Senator Carl Hayden, Sky Harbor received over \$130,000 in New Deal project funding for improvements. Plans called for expansion to three runways and an enlarged air terminal, including more office and baggage claim space. These plans never materialized, however, and, in June 1935, Maricopa County suddenly backed out of its lease agreement, leaving Acme with an airport it could not afford. After threatening to demolish the terminal and to dig up the runway, Acme pressured the City of Phoenix into buying the airport, which was badly in need of repair. Anxious to expand its transportation connections with the rest of the region and the nation, the municipality bought the facility in July 1935, for \$100,000—\$35,300 in cash and \$64,700 in loans.<sup>12</sup>

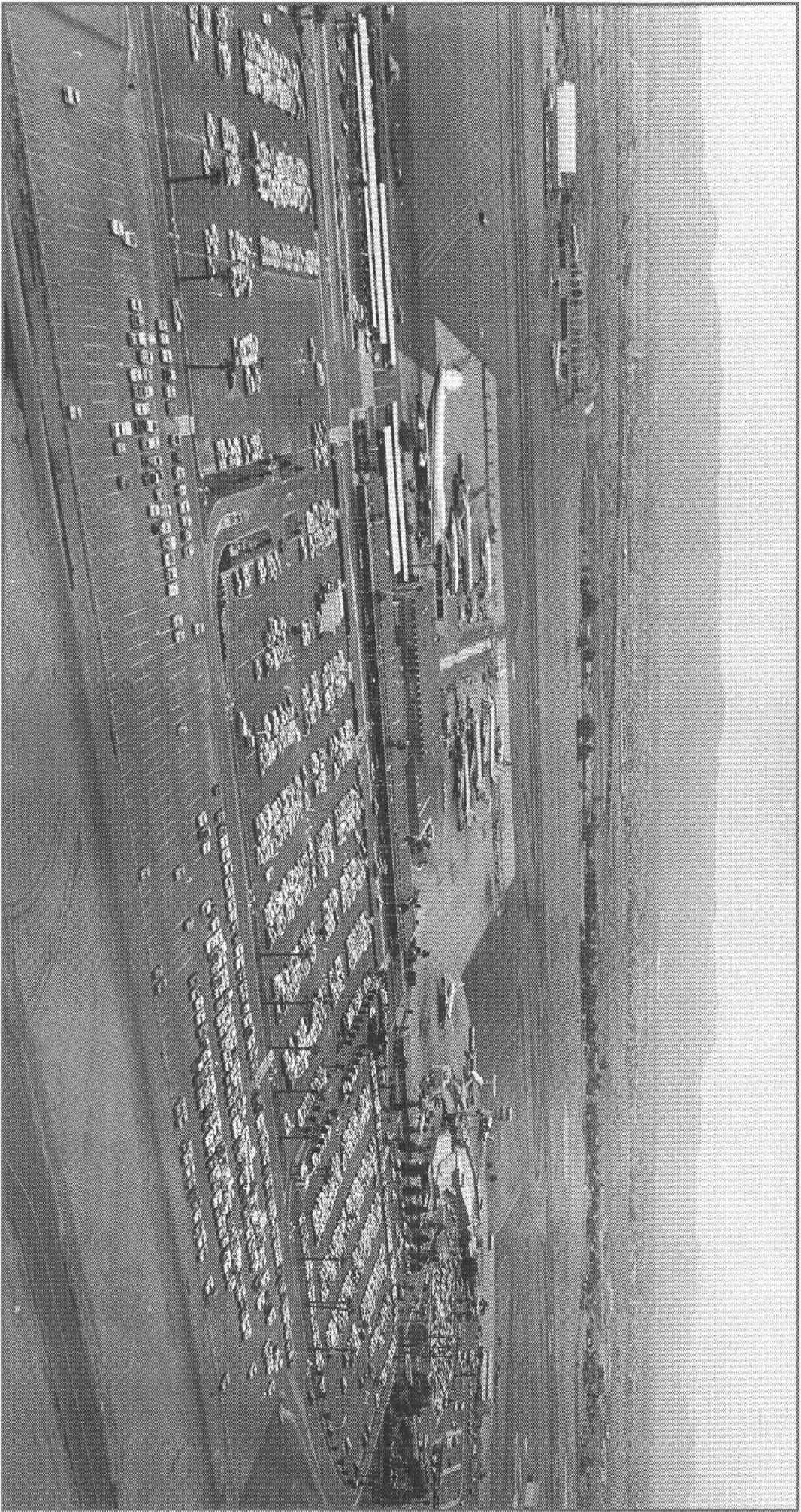
At that time, Sky Harbor was in a sorry state. Since Acme had been delinquent in paying its creditors, including the water company, the grass airstrip had dried out and become a mass of parched earthen dirt clods. The terminal also showed clear signs of neglect, symbolized by the weed patches surrounding it. Airport officials immediately drafted plans for a complete overhaul of the facility, including the airfield. With \$350,000 in New Deal appropriations, city officials restored the landing strip to its original condition, added two more oiled runways, and expanded the terminal. The latter now included new administration offices and a refurbished passenger waiting room.<sup>13</sup> In July 1937, the airport also installed a \$40,000 radio station equipped with guidance capabilities for aircraft flying instrument approaches in bad weather. By August 1938, the improvements were complete, and Pan American, TWA, and other commercial airlines moved in with scheduled flights to San Francisco and other regional destinations.<sup>14</sup>

With the country preparing for global warfare in 1939, Sky Harbor like Las Vegas's Western Air Express facility and many of the nation's other airports had been selected as a training base for army air corps pilots. The addition of military aircraft using Sky Harbor facilities and congesting the air traffic pattern left the airport officials in a dilemma. Their facility was too small for military and commercial aircraft operations. Thanks partly to the force of events and the influence of Senator Hayden, the War Department provided funding for the needed airport expansion, which included paving all three runways.





Phoenix's Sky Harbor Airport in 1991 . (City of Phoenix, Aviation Department, Sky Harbor Archives)



Phoenix's Sky Harbor Airport in the 1970s . (City of Phoenix, Aviation Department, Sky Harbor Archives)



Because of growing air traffic, Sky Harbor qualified for federal improvement grants. In 1941, officials received a \$207,000 federal grant for more airport improvements including grading, drainage, upgrades to the runway, and construction of a new one.<sup>15</sup> Immediately following the war, air traffic congestion reached a dangerous level due to growing tourist demand. The airport's facilities were so inadequate for servicing the increase in passenger volume, in fact, that American Airlines removed Phoenix from its system, and TWA flew only small airplanes into the city.

Airport officials knew they could not afford to lose any airline services, so they purchased more land, began constructing a new air terminal, and extended the runways for larger aircraft. By 1948, the newly renovated and improved Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport was ready for additional services, and the facility began attracting more flights. However, airport officials soon encountered, another problem: the growing number of flights created a need for yet more expansion. In response, in 1949 they drafted plans for a new terminal and two new parallel runways.<sup>16</sup>

With Cold War defense spending bringing the city major contractors and contributing further to Phoenix's urbanization, officials struggled to make the airport suitable for at least the next ten years. They underestimated, none the less, the pace of growth. In 1950, over 323,000 takeoffs and landings had been made by commercial planes at Sky Harbor.<sup>17</sup> Taxiway and runway congestion increased even more as airlines expanded their service to include transcontinental destinations and operated larger aircraft capable of seating up to sixty passengers. As a result, county officials were forced to accelerate their plans.

Those plans called for constructing a new \$108,000 air traffic control center with advanced radar and navigation equipment, and a new terminal featuring a restaurant, more offices, and baggage space. In September 1952, the new \$835,000 building opened.<sup>18</sup> Airport expansion had come just in time, since only a month later, the Arizona Air National Guard received an executive order to establish its headquarters at Sky Harbor, in order to assist fellow military personnel in the Korean War. Having a military presence at the airport gave residents and travelers a sense of security, and helped to fund more expansion projects. With five airlines, Bonanza, TWA, American, Frontier, and Western serving Sky Harbor in 1957, it became the eleventh busiest airport in the country. Passenger volume steadily increased each year thereafter, until, once again, airport officials were forced to draft more plans for future expansion—this time to accommodate the rapidly approaching jet age.<sup>19</sup>

The same pattern unfolded to the north in Las Vegas. In the late 1950s, increased air traffic and terminal congestion left McCarran Airport officials with few options. By 1960, the airport handled almost 960,000 passengers per year and ninety-nine flights per day, thanks to the dramatic proliferation of downtown casinos and Strip resorts. As in Phoenix, the introduction of jets forced airport officials to begin constructing a jetport.<sup>20</sup> To some extent, this



construction was even more vital in Las Vegas than in Phoenix because the faster speeds dramatically increased the neon city's customer base, since east coast tourists could now get to Las Vegas in five hours instead of ten.

Plans for the new expansion included construction of a dome-shaped facility consisting of two buildings, each of which housed airline ticket counters, offices, restaurants, cocktail lounges, baggage carousels, and sixteen gates for jet aircraft with plans allowing for the construction of eight more.<sup>21</sup> According to developer Leigh Fisher & Associates, the price for this facility approached \$4 million.<sup>22</sup>

To finance the costly venture, airport officials asked voters to pass a crucial \$5 million bond issue, which they did in March 1960. Following the election, construction on the expansion began immediately. The plan was to extend the old McCarran Airport eastward across neighboring desert flats to provide the additional space jets required. To accommodate general aviation and charter planes at the old McCarran complex, contractors lengthened runways, widened taxiways, and enlarged passenger facilities. At the same time, they built a new terminal on Paradise Road along with runways, taxiways, and a ramp for the major commercial airlines' flying jets.

The new McCarran Airport opened on March 15, 1963, and it was a smashing success. In its first year, it handled over 1.5 million passengers and averaged 128 flights a day. By 1967, passenger volume had doubled and more jet airplanes were appearing at the gates. But, Las Vegas's mushrooming tourist industry forced airport officials to propose yet another expansion. This plan called for doubling the size of the terminals, lengthening the runways, widening the taxiways, and adding thirty-six more gates. In 1974, contractors completed the \$30 million project.<sup>23</sup>

Still, this expansion was not enough. As Caesars Palace, MGM Grand, and other large resorts began appearing on or near the Las Vegas Strip, tourism continued to soar. With passenger volume expected to surpass ten million by 1980, county commissioners used their eminent domain powers to acquire 3,000 more acres—much of it from nearby homeowners—to allow runway extension, more taxiways, and a strengthened apron for heavy jets. The commissioners voted in 1979 to approve the multi-phased, "McCarran 2000" project to equip Las Vegas with an airport large enough to handle a projected twenty million passengers by century's end.<sup>24</sup>

The first phase of the proposed renovation project called for construction of a seven-story parking garage, an automated light-rail tram for passengers, a new crash-fire-rescue building, a new air-traffic control tower, and upgraded facilities. Additional phases included terminal expansion, more gates, a long-term parking garage, satellite buildings for international arrivals, and lengthened runways.<sup>25</sup> Officials underestimated the cost of this massive project, however, and when all phases had been completed, the cost exceeded \$1 billion. The first stage alone cost \$278 million, which made the raising of additional



McCarran Airport shortly before its opening at the current location in March, 1963. (Howard W. Cannon Aviation Museum)



McCarran International Airport in June, 1990. (Howard W. Cannon Aviation Museum)



funds more difficult. County officials eventually managed to sell enough bonds and to find enough airport funds to cover the cost. They did it just in time because, by the late 1990s, over fifteen million passengers annually passed through McCarran's gates. And, as the new century dawned, planners considered additional expansion to cope with the thirty million expected by 2005.<sup>26</sup>

Like their counterparts in Las Vegas, Phoenix's Sky Harbor officials found themselves to be inadequately equipped for the horde of travelers passing through their gates. After constructing a new terminal, officials had hoped that the new facility would be sufficient for at least a decade. They had even planned to build another new terminal in 1962 to replace the old one. Once again, however, the planners had underestimated their community's growth. Between 1950 and 1960, Phoenix's population grew by more than 300,000. The arrival of General Electric, Motorola, Sperry Rand, and other major corporations encouraged even more business travel to the Valley of the Sun. Indeed, by 1957, passenger volume exceeded 500,000 per year, and continued to grow at an alarming rate.<sup>27</sup>

In 1958, concerned airport officials began accepting bids for expansion. Their plans included developing enough space to accommodate a new 131,000 square-foot terminal with a roof-top observation deck, administration and airline offices, and even a wall mural collection. Blueprints also called for constructing airport access roads, a 1,000-car parking lot, and a new concrete ramp, at a cost of more than \$4.1 million. In November, just four months before Las Vegas residents approved their own jetport bond issue, Phoenix voters supported a \$4.4 million airport expansion obligation. In August 1960, construction began on the facility and, two years later, the newly refurbished Sky Harbor airport opened.<sup>28</sup>

Phoenix's experience paralleled that of Las Vegas. Despite the \$4.4 million expansion project, airport officials quickly realized that their facility was already inadequate. Advanced jets such as Lufthansa Airline's Boeing 727, which succeeded the Boeing 720B, regularly appeared at Sky Harbor and had to be parked at a remote site, since the air terminal's gates were too small for them. Moreover, by 1967, over six million air travelers passed through the airport, an event that portended further expansion.

In response to these circumstances, airport officials approved a master plan calling for a new \$25 million three-wing terminal, housing forty-six gates and baggage facilities, a sixty-acre aircraft parking apron, an extension of Sky Harbor Boulevard, an air cargo and maintenance facility, longer runways, and adequate acreage for future expansion.<sup>29</sup> In 1972, construction began on a \$650,000 international arrivals and customs building, runway extensions to 10,000 feet in length, and taxiway widening and reinforcement, along with other airport upgrades.

Like their Las Vegas counterparts, Sky Harbor officials no sooner celebrated the end of one construction project when they were forced to lay plans for another. They had no choice. As one of America's fastest growing metropolitan



areas (with almost 1.5 million people by 1980) Phoenix quickly outgrew Sky Harbor. As a result, in 1975, airport officials developed a "Capital Improvement Plan" designed to provide enough expansion for well into the next decade. Its provisions included a third terminal, remodeling of the existing East Terminal, more taxiways, a modern fire station, and relocation of homeowners on lands designated for future airport expansion.<sup>30</sup> On January 10, 1977, a groundbreaking ceremony took place for the inauguration of a \$65 million, 384,000 square-foot Terminal 3, completed in October 1979, designed to house sixteen gates. Plans also included a \$13 million, eight-story parking garage for 2,700 automobiles, and a \$1.8 million air-traffic control tower containing the most advanced radar and navigation equipment.<sup>31</sup>

By 1982, more than eleven airlines served Sky Harbor, including Southwest, which was the airport's major occupant. It was joined in the next year by its main competitor, America West. Both carriers ultimately designated Sky Harbor as their major hub, and McCarran as one of their support facilities. After America West, Northwest, and United established stations at Sky Harbor in 1984, airport officials drafted plans for the expansion of Terminal 3. Blueprints contained a 100,000 square-foot enlargement with space for nine more gates at a cost of \$10 million.<sup>32</sup> This occurred just in time because in 1985 passenger volume increased to over 700,000 air travelers per month.

With Southwest and America West increasing their service in the late 1980s, dramatically more expansion was needed. In 1988, construction of a fourth terminal began. This was the most elaborate and expensive expansion project in the airport's history. In 1990, the \$280 million Barry Goldwater Terminal 4 opened, housing forty-eight gates (with room for ten additional gates), shops, concessions, and parking for over 7,000 vehicles.<sup>33</sup> Despite the airport's demolition of Terminal 1 in October 1991, leaving Terminals 2, 3, and 4 (which exist in this numeric succession today), the airport still had enough space for passenger service and parking. That same year, officials opened a new \$26 million international concourse consisting of two gates (for use by air carriers such as British Airways offering direct, non-stop flights to London), shops, and duty-free service.<sup>34</sup>

By 1995, Sky Harbor's passenger volume exceeded 16.5 million, and the airport had expanded to over 2,200 acres, housing ninety gates, 15 percent of which were reserved for international airlines. With seventeen airlines and over 1,100 daily flights, airport officials in February 1997 began planning for construction of a third parallel runway, plus another concourse for Terminal 4. They hoped these improvements would be adequate for the eighteen million passengers who would pass through the airport gates in 1997, and the twenty-five million total passengers forecast to visit Sky Harbor in 2007. Officials, however, are taking no chances. More expansion plans are currently under consideration, including construction of a new concourse for Terminal 3, and three concourses (one of which will be an international arrivals center) for Terminal 4. Other

plans include, among other things, building a new airport hotel and maintenance facilities.<sup>35</sup>

As the twenty-first century dawned, Sky Harbor and McCarran were preparing for more growth. But, their plans were delayed after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, on the World Trade Center towers in New York City. As a result, passenger volume fell sharply throughout the country, and tourist and business travel significantly declined. Thus, airport expansion plans halted.

In reviewing the growth and expansion of the Las Vegas and Phoenix airports, it is clear that the facilities made tremendous contributions to the development of the two southwestern cities. By 2000, the sixteen million passengers annually passing through McCarran and the twenty-three million annually passing through Phoenix Sky Harbor, contributed \$4 billion to each community's local economy. This money not only enabled the completion of badly-needed public works projects, but it also provided a reliable source of income for both cities. Without that income, how would the economies of both cities be affected? And to what extent would the absence of that money impact resident and visitor populations?

If, in 2002, consumers browsed monthly issues of the American Automobile Association's *Via* magazine and travel guides, or looked through the Sunday "Entertainment" section of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, they saw advertisements announcing a three-day, two-night trip to "fabulous Las Vegas" for \$239. The price covered round-trip airfare, hotel accommodations, and a rental car. Another tempting offer featured a three-day, two-night stay at the luxurious Phoenix Resort and Spa in the Valley of the Sun for \$279. It included round-trip airfare, hotel, and green fees. Advertisements such as these were commonplace as early as 1990 and attracted millions of vacationers and conventioners each year. In fact, 62 percent of all Phoenix visitors are leisure travelers, while 38 percent visit the city for conventions or for business reasons.<sup>36</sup> Leisure visitors annually pump \$4.75 billion into Phoenix's metropolitan economy.<sup>37</sup> Prior to September 11, 2001, officials were projecting passenger volumes to continue rising well into the next decade. This may occur if the impact of "9/11" subsides.

The same patterns of growth were evident in Las Vegas, although tourism played a larger role. The growth of the Las Vegas Strip was a driving force behind tourism and metropolitan development. In the 1950s, the Dunes, Sands, Sahara, Tropicana, and Stardust, along with other properties, joined the El Rancho, Flamingo, Frontier, and Thunderbird to create an alluring playland for adults. Joining them in the 1960s were the first large resorts. Indeed, Caesars Palace, the International (the Las Vegas Hilton), and the first MGM Grand (Ballys) combined with the airport and Interstate 15 to make Las Vegas one of America's leading tourist destinations. The 1970s and 1980s witnessed the appearance of larger hotel resorts, built by Kirk Kerkorian, Barron Hilton, and

others, which transformed the Strip into a glamorous vacation land with thousands of deluxe rooms, exotic casinos, and luxurious venues for gourmet dining and entertainment. Jet aircraft made Las Vegas easily accessible to all and McCarran served as the city's vital port of entry. As a result, for years the hotels and the airlines enjoyed a symbiotic relationship, which still continues today.

In 1989, Las Vegas hotels reported an 89.8 percent occupancy rate, and over eight million air travelers passed through McCarran's gates. Four years later, the number of hotel guests increased by 3 percent, while passenger volume surpassed ten million. By 2000, hotel occupancy exceeded 90 percent, even with 30,000 more rooms, and over fifteen million air travelers came to Las Vegas.<sup>38</sup>

In the 1990s, the mega-resorts brought in billions of dollars annually in gaming revenue, a significant portion of which came from air travelers. Shops in Caesars Palace, The Aladdin, and The Venetian generated even more money, as visitors spent hundreds of dollars on souvenirs, clothing, and other items. In fact, of all the visitors who came to Las Vegas in 1999, 46 percent of 36.8 million total travelers flew into the city on commercial and charter flights. Ten percent of this total consisted of local residents and business professionals, whose fees also fattened airport and city coffers.<sup>39</sup> Because airport officials and city boosters considered this group to comprise a small percentage of air travelers, they advertised Las Vegas as an origin and destination city, meaning that few passengers made connecting flights. Thousands of passengers at McCarran do, however, catch connecting flights on America West, Southwest, and National Airlines, despite the fact that Las Vegas is a hub for these three airlines. While waiting for their connecting flights, many passengers play slot machines, dine at airport concessions, or shop. In fact, some even spend time exercising at the airport's 24-hour fitness gymnasium.

Because the airport generates so much income from commercial carriers, travelers, parking fees, and rental car counterspace leasing fees, McCarran is a self-sustaining facility that requires no financial assistance from taxpayers. With several income generating programs in place, including the Foreign Trade Zone, a program created in 1986, which allows international importers duty-free storage and assembly of foreign products, McCarran assists the resorts and the Las Vegas metropolitan community by easing the pressure to raise gaming and other taxes. By stimulating free trade, expanding the cargo industry, and creating more jobs, taxes are kept to a minimum.<sup>40</sup> As a result, limited taxation has not only been a major attraction for businesses, but it also attracts new Las Vegas residents.

Just as McCarran generates billions of dollars in income for Las Vegas, Sky Harbor does the same for Phoenix. In 1995, for example, city officials allocated \$13.5 billion for city projects, \$5 billion of which came from airport property taxes, utility fees, and tourism. At present, the airport generates over \$37 million per day as more than 46,000 air travelers pass daily through the gates.<sup>41</sup>

Prior to the 1950s, Sky Harbor's passenger volume was relatively small. Two



major airlines, TWA and American, and one regional airline, Arizona Airways, provided service to various destinations including the Grand Canyon. In 1940, Phoenix's population reached 60,000, a three-fold increase from 1920.<sup>42</sup> As workers and retirees enjoyed more leisure time in the decade after World War II, and a growing number of resort hotels and spas appeared in Scottsdale and elsewhere, passenger volume skyrocketed. In 1950, 235 passengers hourly boarded commercial flights. By 1966, that number jumped to over 2,500, and, by 1970, it was over 4,000. With more than 114 daily flights, Sky Harbor officials glimpsed the beginning of what would become an invasion of airline passengers.<sup>43</sup>

When Congress passed the Airline Deregulation Act in October 1978, more airlines crowded into the Phoenix market, and millions of additional air travelers flew into Phoenix to enjoy the comfortable climate, relax at luxurious resort spas, play golf and tennis, conduct business, and engage in other activities. In 1983, over 8.5 million people flew into Sky Harbor, and three years later, that number had nearly doubled. By 1995, over 73,000 passengers daily passed through the airport's terminals, and contributed more than \$2.5 billion to city coffers.<sup>44</sup> When Southwest and America West appeared in the early 1980s, city officials already sensed that the two new carriers would generate significant income. By offering fares as low as \$39 each way to consumers in Los Angeles, Orange County, Albuquerque, and other West Coast destinations, the two carriers began to dominate the Phoenix market, as they simultaneously dominated the market in Las Vegas. In fact, Sky Harbor became the central hub for America West. Although the two airlines were fierce competitors, each had different marketing strategies and targeted different passenger types.

Southwest, the "no frills" airline, served all customers. By offering two-for-one fares, and bonus miles rewards for the number of trips flown, it developed a large clientele. With over 189 daily departures and arrivals at Sky Harbor, Southwest operated under the motto "fun, low fares, and frequency," and amassed large profits in the Phoenix market.<sup>45</sup>

In contrast, America West focused on the business traveler. To attract such travelers, the airline scheduled the majority of its flights from Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Phoenix, and San Francisco, so business travelers could easily make connecting flights to eastern destinations. The airline also created a valuable niche for itself by scheduling many of its flights in the evening and late at night, when few other major carriers were operating. If the business-passenger market proved to be more profitable than the leisure-travel one, however, the airline scheduled more day flights to accommodate business travelers.<sup>46</sup>

In 1995, over 1,100 daily flights departed and arrived at Sky Harbor, requiring an airport staff of over 30,000 to serve the airport's traveling public. This volume not only generated much revenue for Phoenix, but also created many jobs. By 2000, Sky Harbor needed even more employees as daily flights exceeded 1,300, thanks largely to Southwest and America West.<sup>47</sup> By 2002, passenger demand continued to soar. New charter and more commercial airlines

arrived, including such international carriers as Aeromexico and Japan Airlines, and employee payrolls continued to grow.

Since 1970, Phoenix's growth rate paralleled that of Las Vegas. In the Valley of the Sun, a warm climate, comfortable and affordable accommodations, inexpensive housing, and access to golf, tennis, and other leisure facilities, attracted hundreds of thousands of new residents to the community. In 1970, the city's population was 584,303. Ten years later, it had reached 800,000. In 1990, it remained at just under one million. By century's end, the figure topped 1.3 million, and the metropolitan area exceeded three million.<sup>48</sup> Projections of future population figures indicate, continuing growth of airlines being one of the contributing factors.

Although Phoenix and Las Vegas share many similarities, including favorable climates, lavish resorts, outdoor sports, and airports that rank in the nation's top ten in air traffic frequency and passenger volumes, they also have striking differences. The most obvious one is gambling. Unlike smaller casino cities in Nevada, such as Reno and Laughlin, which annually attract hundreds of thousands of gamblers, Las Vegas draws millions. In 2000, mega-resorts on the Strip generated \$4.8 billion in gaming revenue.<sup>49</sup> That does not include revenues from non-Strip casinos, shows, retail shops, meal concessions, and other commercial enterprises. Of the tourists visiting the Strip that year, more than 46 percent were air travelers who flew to Las Vegas on commercial and charter flights. The rest arrived by train, bus, or automobile.<sup>50</sup>

Additionally, Las Vegas possesses elaborate entertainment venues that attract large audiences. Shows by entertainers such as Wayne Newton, Siegfried & Roy, and the Blue Man Group, draw crowds by the hundreds. Ticket prices begin at fifty dollars, and the occasional mega-star appearances by artists such as Madonna, the Rolling Stones, Elton John, and Barbra Streisand, can bring as much as three thousand dollars per ticket. Besides providing first class entertainment for their customers, chef-driven restaurants such as Wolfgang Puck's, along with internationally renowned designer stores including Versace, Gucci, and Tommy Hilfiger, draw thousands of daily shoppers and diners to Strip resorts. Except for locations in New York and, perhaps, Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, these shops, along with their unique wares, are unavailable in the rest of the country. For gaming, shopping, entertainment, and other activities, Las Vegas dwarfs the competition in Reno, Laughlin, Atlantic City, and in the nation's myriad other casino centers.

Greater Phoenix does not rely on gaming as its main source of income. Although the latter's portfolio is much more diverse than its Nevada counterpart, tourism is also a key component of Phoenix's economy. It is the airlines that primarily account for the enormous revenues generated by tourism. Without commercial air travel, Phoenix's tourist dollars would be a fraction of what they are presently. The same argument can be made for Las Vegas.

The two cities are remarkably similar in that their airports have almost the

same number of visitors, despite the fact that Sky Harbor has more daily arrivals and departures than McCarran. Planners in Phoenix expect passenger totals to surpass thirty million by 2010, despite the setbacks resulting from the 2001 terrorist attacks.

Over the past half-century, Sky Harbor and McCarran have become the dominant airports in the Southwest. Albuquerque International would like to challenge them, but it seems unlikely. Currently, Albuquerque is at the stage where Las Vegas and Phoenix were in the 1960s. In 2000, over six million total air travelers entered New Mexico's largest city. With a metropolitan population of 450,000, Albuquerque has become a tourist center, supplementing its science, health, and manufacturing industries. Because the tourist industry is rapidly growing in Albuquerque, airport officials are planning ahead for airport expansion. With more than 640 daily arrivals and departures, albeit in generally smaller aircraft such as the Canadair RJ 145, EmbryAir Brasilia 120, and Beechcraft 1900, airport planners have already drafted plans for future expansion in anticipation of more air traffic growth. Currently, the two concourses housing twenty-three gates are inadequate for the level of service provided by eleven commercial airlines. Like McCarran International, Albuquerque is primarily an origin and destination airport. Though Southwest Airlines handles a majority, 51 percent, of Albuquerque's passengers, the airport is only a spoke for the carrier, not a hub, like Phoenix and Las Vegas. If future projections are accurate, it is possible that Albuquerque International might become a hub for some airline.<sup>51</sup>

It is unlikely that Albuquerque will ever reach the passenger volume generated by the commercial and charter airlines serving McCarran and Sky Harbor.<sup>52</sup> Clearly, Las Vegas and Phoenix are much larger cities than Albuquerque and will continue to grow at a faster pace. Other cities are even less likely than Albuquerque to compete with Las Vegas and Phoenix. El Paso is in remote west Texas, between the major hubs at Phoenix, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio, and Tucson is too close to Phoenix. So, as long as their tourist and air travel industries remain healthy, Las Vegas and Phoenix should continue to thrive.

The symbiotic relationship between cities and their airports has been a crucial dimension of the postwar development process in the urban Southwest. While there is ample scholarship detailing the role of the railroads and highways in promoting urbanization and western migration, the role of airports and commercial carriers requires as much attention. As this study demonstrates, McCarran and Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airports have been critical to the growth of their metropolitan areas. More detailed studies of these cities, as well as Salt Lake, Denver, and other places, will shed even more light on the impact of tourism, conventions, and air travel upon modern regional development.



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>"Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport Bulletin and Directory 2001," and "McCarran 2000 Marketing Bulletin."

<sup>2</sup>Ellis L. Armstrong, Suellen M. Hoy, and Michael C. Robinson, eds., "Airways and Airports," *History of Public Works in the United States 1776-1976* (Chicago: American Public Works Association, 1976), 190.

<sup>3</sup>*Las Vegas Review-Journal* (19 December 1948), p. 1b. See also Elizabeth Harrington, "A History of Aviation in the Las Vegas Valley," *Nevadan* (22 August, 1976), pp. 4,5.

<sup>4</sup>Frank Wright, *Desert Airways: A Short History of Clark County Aviation, 1920-1948* (Henderson: Clark County Heritage Museum, 1993), 5.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>7</sup>Michael D. Jones, *Desert Wings: A History of Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport* (Tempe: Jetblast Publications, 1997), 10.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.* See also *Arizona Republican* (11 November 1928), pp. 1-2.

<sup>9</sup>Paul Carpenter, *Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport: The First 50 Years 1935-1985* (Phoenix: Phoenix Aviation Department, 1985), 3.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.* Also see *Arizona Republican* (3 September 1929), p. 1.

<sup>11</sup>Jones *Desert Wings*, 12.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.* See also *Arizona Republican* (13 June 1935), pp. 1,4.

<sup>13</sup>Bradford Luckingham, *Phoenix: The History of a Southwestern Metropolis* (Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 1989), 109. See also *Arizona Republican* (11 November 1935), pp. 1-4.

<sup>14</sup>Carpenter, *Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport*, 6. Also see *Arizona Republican* (2 November 1938), pp. 1,4.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup>Jones, *Desert Wings*, 19.

<sup>17</sup>Arv Schultz, "The Farm Grows Up," *Arizona Flyways* (March 1997), 7.

<sup>18</sup>Carpenter, *Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport*, 8.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup>*Las Vegas Review-Journal* (25 August 1960), p. 6.

<sup>21</sup>*Las Vegas Review-Journal* (25 February 1960), p. 5.

<sup>22</sup>*Las Vegas Review-Journal* (13 December 1957), p. 1.

<sup>23</sup>*Nevadan* (11 April 1976), p. 4.

<sup>24</sup>Landrum and Brown Executive Summary, April 1976, V-2, V-3.

<sup>25</sup>TRA Consultants Executive Summary, October 1979, 1.

<sup>26</sup>Clark County Department of Aviation, *Vision 2020*, 10.

<sup>27</sup>United States Bureau of the Census, *Bicentennial Census Population of Arizona, Counties, Cities, and Places: 1860-1990*, a study compiled by Smith Travel Research, Warnick and Co.,1990.

<sup>28</sup>Carpenter, *Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport*, 8.

<sup>29</sup>William H. Hunse, "A New Executive Aircraft Facility at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport" (M.A. thesis, Tempe: Arizona State University, 1971), 33.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, 183.

<sup>31</sup>Carpenter, *Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport*, 10.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup>Jones, *Desert Wings*, 55.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>35</sup>Phoenix Airport System, *Economic Impact*, 1995.

<sup>36</sup>Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, *Greater Phoenix Facts* (Phoenix, 2000), 4.

<sup>37</sup>Visitor Economic Impact, 16.

<sup>38</sup>Las Vegas Convention and Visitor Authority (*Las Vegas Marketing Bulletin*, 2001), 27: 12, 16.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup>County Commission Airport Summary, "McCarran 2000: Reflections of the Past," 47. See also *Las Vegas Perspective*, 1995 (First Interstate Bank, Nevada Development Authority, *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, 1995), 44.

<sup>41</sup>Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, *The Plane Facts* (Phoenix, 1995), 4.

<sup>42</sup>Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, *Where is Terminal 1?* (Phoenix, 2001):1-4, 1. For

population statistics see also Bureau of the Census, *Bicentennial Census Population of Arizona, Counties, Cities, and Places: 1860-1990*.

<sup>43</sup>Precis Masterplan Study: Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, 2.

<sup>44</sup>*Phoenix Money* (Tempe: Arizona State University, 1995), 3-4.

<sup>45</sup>Author interview with Susan Davis, 5 January 2001.

<sup>46</sup>Author interview with Jennifer Meyers, 5 January 2001.

<sup>47</sup>*Phoenix Money*, 3.

<sup>48</sup>United States Bureau of the Census. See also Tom Rex, "Population Density Rising in Phoenix Urban Area," *Arizona Business*, 47 (October 2000), 6-7.

<sup>49</sup>Las Vegas Convention and Visitor Authority (Las Vegas Marketing Bulletin, 2001), 28: 118, 13.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>51</sup>"Albuquerque International Airport 2001 Bulletin," 1-2.

<sup>52</sup>William E. Riebsame, Hannah Gosnell, and David Theobald, eds. *Atlas of the New West* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company Press, 1997), 68,70,72. For maps of western regional airports see 69, 71. While Albuquerque is microcosmic in comparison to McCarran and Phoenix Sky Harbor, it is part of a larger pattern where many western city populations have considerably grown as a result of expanded airline service and airport facilities. By acreage, Denver International Airport is currently the largest airport in the United States.

# *How Reno Went to the Dogs*

## *The Police Dog in Reno from Riot Control to Drug Detection*

SAMUEL G. CHAPMAN

The New Year's Eve Riot of 1961 led Reno Police Chief Elmer Briscoe to recommend the police department implement a canine unit to help control crime. Reno Mayor, Bud Baker backed Chief Briscoe's proposal as did the *Nevada State Journal*. In an editorial, the newspaper declared "the use of dogs in law enforcement here should be given the most serious consideration."<sup>1</sup>

During the early hours of January 1, 1962, extensive property damage to Reno's Casino Row had occurred and twenty persons, including police and firefighters, were treated for injuries suffered at the hands of out-of-control revelers. Some fifty police officers were involved in the pitched battle—facing about 1,000 rioters and bystanders at the brawl's peak. Police availability elsewhere in Reno was almost nil. At that time, the department comprised 134 personnel, of whom 106 were sworn members.<sup>2</sup> Captain Robert Peel observed, "We had a couple of men at each end of town, and the rest were at the riot."<sup>3</sup>

To meet the challenge of riot control, Chief Briscoe recommended eight German shepherd dogs and handlers be trained and on the job by late 1962, in time for the coming New Year's Eve. He also wanted more dog-handler teams ready for the following year.<sup>4</sup> The chief's plan for a canine unit had strong backing in the community, from the mayor and other city officials, as well as from the media.<sup>5</sup>

The chief's plan was a bold one, for it flew in the face of what was happening elsewhere—especially in the South, where the propriety of using dog-handler teams in controlling civil rights crowds drew sharp, prolonged questioning and was seen as sinister and racist. The practice assumed a high national

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profile in May 1963 when police dogs were used to attack demonstrators in Birmingham, Alabama.<sup>6</sup> Undaunted, the Reno Police Department moved ahead with its plan to implement a canine unit.

There was some regional precedent for using dogs in police work. The Salt Lake City Police Department began its canine unit in 1958, more than three years before Chief Briscoe's proposal that Reno do the same. *The Nevada State Journal* noted the Salt Lake City program in an editorial, commenting that Reno had an average of more than 100 burglaries a month, as many as Salt Lake City, which was four times as large. The paper added, "Or rather, Reno did have as many. Now it has several times more such crimes. And it isn't because the burglaries are increasing here, but because they have decreased drastically in Salt Lake City. The reason? Dogs."<sup>7</sup>

The editorial was not lost on officials in Reno, though their reaction was not immediate. Chief Briscoe said that if a canine unit were implemented, the dogs would be used to "sniff out burglars, control rioters, locate missing persons and do other duties at which dogs excel." He also believed that "One good dog is more effective than ten policemen in some situations."<sup>8</sup>

As the proposal to implement a canine unit in Reno gained support, representatives from a number of police departments witnessed a demonstration given in the city on Thursday, May 3, 1962, by a Stockton, California canine officer and his dog. Several local elected officials and administrators were among the thirty persons present.<sup>9</sup> The onlookers were impressed. Reno Mayor Bud Baker said, "As far as I'm concerned, we ought to start, at least on a small scale. Perhaps we could start with one dog and see how it works out." Reno Councilman George Carr endorsed the proposal, and City Manager Joe H. Latimore said, "It sure looks good to me."<sup>10</sup>

The chief's 1962 proposal to implement a canine unit was not the first time the Reno Police Department had considered adding dogs to its force. In May 1941, then Police Chief Andy M. Welliver had a Doberman pinscher, named Captain Bo-Do, in training for six weeks at the Palanka Kennels in Richmond, California. The 18-month-old dog had been given to Chief Welliver by a Reno citizen. The plan called for Captain Bo-Do to complete four months of training in Richmond and be returned to Reno for patrol work.<sup>11</sup>

Chief Welliver began thinking about starting a canine unit in the city following a police convention in Reno. In late August 1940, over 200 delegates from eleven western states and Canada and Mexico convened in Reno at the Pacific Coast International Association of Law Enforcement Officials meeting. In addition to bands, motorcycle groups, and drill teams, police dogs and handlers from the Berkeley, California Police Department performed seemingly impossible tricks under the direction of their trainer, Major Charles Roy.<sup>12</sup>

Shortly before his death in 1975, eighty-one-year-old former Chief Welliver reminisced with a reporter about Reno in the forties. The chief said that the force was among the first nationally to use police dogs.<sup>13</sup> However, no



Reno Police Chief Andy M. Welliver with Captain Bo-Do, his doberman pinseher dog in 1941. (*Nevada Historical Society*)



documentation has been found to support the chief's assertion that Captain Bo-Do, the Doberman trained in 1941, ever patrolled Reno streets. An interview in August, 2000 with Joe Simpson, a dog trainer at Palanka Kennels in the early 1940s, and the chief dog trainer at Palanka after World War II for several years, recalls that Captain Bo-Do never completed training. Simpson does not know what became of the dog. Mr. Simpson adds that Palanka Kennels never trained any dogs for police work, except for those which served the Berkeley, California, Police Department from 1930 to 1940. Interestingly, Chief Welliver had been a Berkeley police officer before coming to Reno and had seen the dogs at work. This experience may have caused him to believe that dogs could successfully augment human patrols.<sup>14</sup>

The outbreak of World War II may have prevented Captain Bo-Do from "hitting the street" as Reno's first trained canine because Chief Welliver left Reno in early 1942 to serve as an officer in the United States Navy. This sudden turn of events appears to have ended Reno's flirtation with using police dogs.<sup>15</sup>

Eight years after Chief Welliver's non-program, Reno patrol officers enjoyed having a dog make their nighttime rounds with them. This dog was named Duke. He had served with United States Army military police personnel stationed in Reno during World War II, augmenting local police patrols downtown. After the war, Duke was befriended by local officers and tagged along with them on patrol, principally for companionship. Later in life, Duke was a companion to Washoe County deputies at the jail.<sup>16</sup> Neither Reno nor the Washoe County Sheriff's Office had a formal, dedicated canine unit during Duke's time, but the affable Duke was revered by officers and the local public.

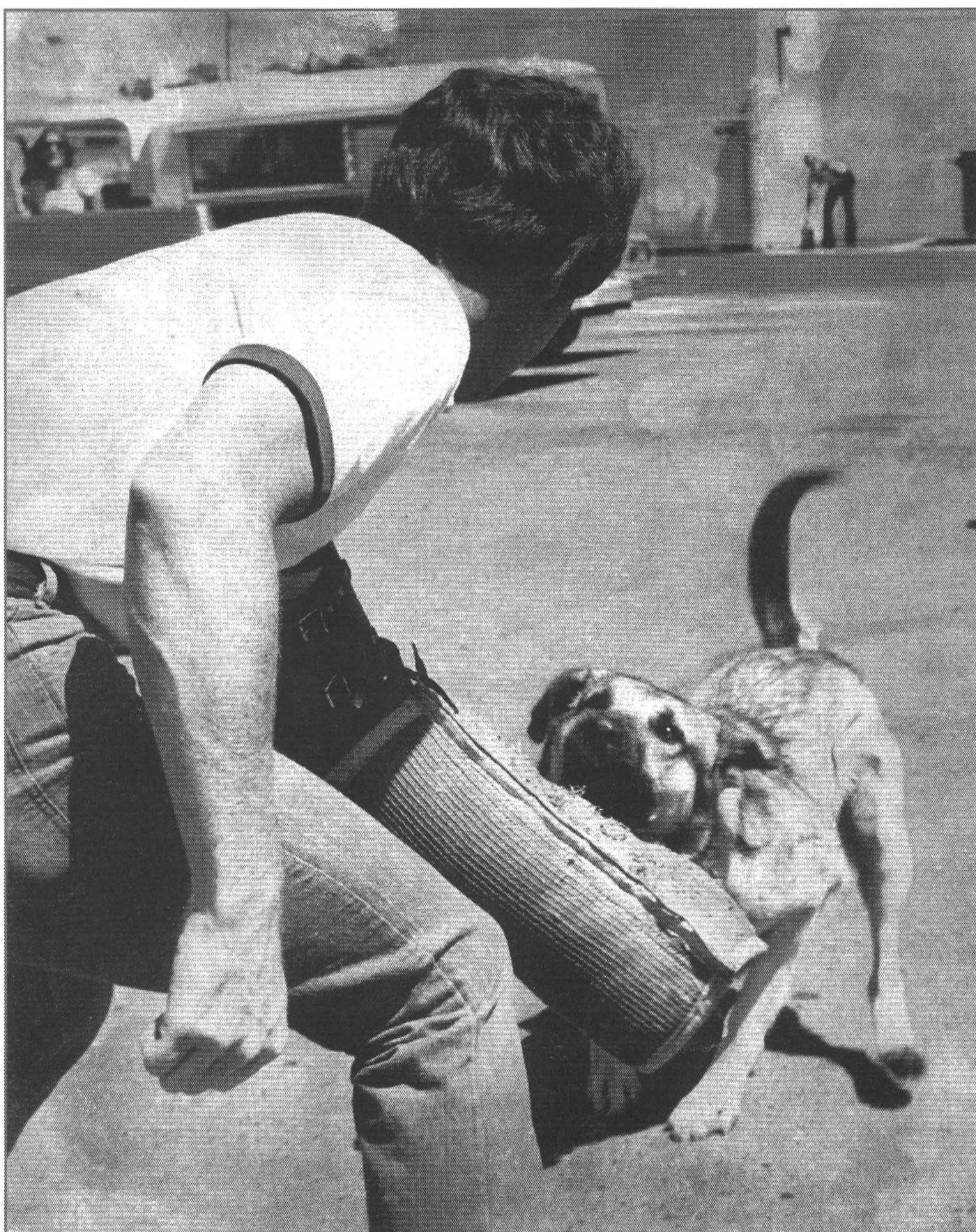
The Reno Police Department implemented its canine unit in June 1962. Initially composed of one dog and its handler, the department soon added four additional dog-handler teams. By the summer of 1964, the canine unit had grown to include nine dog-handler teams. Officer John O'Rourke, himself a handler, was in charge of the program, including training.<sup>17</sup> At first, Reno citizens donated all the dogs used in the program. The animals were tested for alertness, inquisitiveness, and initiative before being paired with a handler. Basic training was intensive and heavy on obedience. Dog-handler teams underwent frequent refresher training. In essence training never ended.<sup>18</sup> All training was done in Reno.

Of course, the training also included searching for suspects and incriminating items tossed aside by fleeing suspects. Training stressed attack work and handler protection. Obedience training was essential to assure that a dog would perform as ordered by the handler, since the handler, not the dog, was in charge of every aspect of the dog's duties.<sup>19</sup> It was proposed that each dog be assigned to and trained with one handler, and that the dog live at the handler's home. This proposal was consistent with the practice nationally, and it was embraced in Reno.<sup>20</sup> It enhanced bonding and assured that the health and grooming of each animal are kept at a high level.





The seven-member Reno police canine unit in 1975. In the front row are officers Dick Gammick; Jim Atyeo; and Steve Turner. The back row includes officers Fred Williams; Jake Wiskerchen; Tom Robinson; and Jimmy Hoff  
*(Photo courtesy of Deputy Chief Tom Robinson)*



Officer Jim Hoff trains his partner, Chico, in 1976. Officer Hoff was murdered on duty during an undercover drug bust in 1979 after he had concluded his service in the canine unit. (Photo courtesy of Marilyn Newton and the Reno Gazette-Journal)



It wasn't long before Reno called upon the fledgling canine unit to take a leading role in a major confrontation. On New Year's Eve, 1962, an unruly Reno crowd was again throwing bottles and fighting on Casino Row. The situation threatened to escalate into a riot, as it had a year earlier. After an officer was hospitalized, the department's dogs helped other officers keep rowdy revelers at bay on sidewalks downtown.<sup>21</sup> *The Nevada State Journal* editorialized that "the demonstration on Virginia Street Tuesday morning provided dramatic proof that these trained animals are an excellent adjunct to the Reno Police Department."<sup>22</sup>

The dog-handler teams did more than cool riot fervor. Chief Briscoe praised the teams for their help in decreasing the number of burglaries and break-ins. The chief added that the teams had been very helpful in tracking suspects who were hiding in buildings as well as in running down prowlers.<sup>23</sup>

By the summer of 1964, as noted above, the Reno police canine unit had grown to include nine dog-handler teams. Captain Robert Peel said that the teams "are scheduled so that at least two of them are on duty at all times and the others are kept available on short notice . . . The teams were used on both walking and squad car beats as needed." Captain Peel added that "we have found them an invaluable aid to us."<sup>24</sup>

Dogs and handlers were deployed to patrol those areas where there was a likelihood that incidents would occur.<sup>25</sup> This was the case at the Nevada State Fair in Reno on Friday evening, September 10, 1971. Two large groups of young people, about 200 in all, clashed in a parking lot. The police moved in early and fast, with the dogs, and, within half an hour, the fracas was over and the fair went on to a peaceful conclusion. The *Reno Evening Gazette* editorialized that, "The handling emphasized the effectiveness of fast, decisive action and the police K-9 Corps. Above all, it spoke well for the ability of local police, who handled the situation with great skill."<sup>26</sup>

From the outset, Reno's canine teams were used to supplement patrol force personnel and were available for assignment to specific types of police cases. Reno's police found, as have almost all other forces, that the most common duty assigned to canines was searching. The dogs can detect both ground and air scents, thanks to their keen olfactory senses, which are thousands of times more acute than those of humans. Dog's literally see with their noses and, hence, when assigned to a specific mission, may prove invaluable in finding suspects. Dogs are invaluable for finding people hiding or lost in large, open fields or ravines, in industrial areas, in structures of any size, or in vegetation along river banks.<sup>27</sup>

Trained dog-handler teams not only search areas faster and more productively than officers without dogs, they enhance officer safety. The teams also save officer time. For example, in July 1977 a burglar alarm at a large, sprawling warehouse-retail outlet found ten officers, working four hours each conducting an unsuccessful search of the premises when entry was apparent. A



month later, officers searched the same premises following an alarm with three canine teams. The search took twenty-five minutes and netted an arrest for burglary.<sup>28</sup> Another way dogs are used is to post them at strategic points around a perimeter. Depending upon the mission, the presence of the dogs keeps on-lookers out of a sensitive area or a dog may be ordered to chase a person seen fleeing the contained area.<sup>29</sup>

The training of Reno's police dog-handler teams over the years was sporadic. At times, concerted attention was paid to training the teams to a high order of competence. But, sometimes the training was reported to be haphazard and more by chance than design. That the unit's dogs and officers have performed as well as they have over the life of the program is evidence that the personnel have taken pride in doing as good a job as possible, consistent with the equipment and administrative support afforded them.<sup>30</sup> Except for occasional specialized seminars out of state, all police dog training was conducted in Reno or its vicinity.

There was no training manual in Reno setting out criteria or objectives for the canine unit until about 1978 when several canine handlers drafted one. It was based principally on training materials developed by departments in California which, along with Reno teams, competed in regional police-dog competitions. During such meetings, Reno officers came to know their counterparts and shared information with them. This exchange provided the basis for Reno's training guidelines.<sup>31</sup>

Officers in Reno had long recognized that a training center was needed if teams were to proficiently perform the immense range of activities expected of them. This caused several canine units in northern Nevada to seek a regional training facility. Handlers approached the Kal Kan Pet Care company, which had recently opened a pet-food manufacturing plant in Patrick, Nevada, about fifteen miles east of Reno. Officials at Kal Kan, a division of Mars, Inc., of McLean, Virginia, were responsive and assisted canine unit personnel from throughout northern Nevada in designing and constructing the Northern Nevada Police Canine Training Center, dedicated on October 18, 1999.<sup>32</sup> Vinyl Works of Salt Lake City also assisted the effort by donating the sturdy agility equipment required by the center.<sup>33</sup>

The training grounds are located on one acre of grassy flat land about 150 yards north of the main entry to the Kal Kan manufacturing plant. According to Ms. Carla Lang, "It's basically their [the police departments'] course. Teams or entire units come when they wish, day or night." She adds that the course is maintained by the departments who keep it impeccable. In addition to the obstacle course, canine units have access to abundant, undeveloped acreage contiguous to the main site that allows handlers to train their dogs to search for suspects or contraband articles discarded during flight.<sup>34</sup>

The first time that a Reno police canine team was certified by a national association was about 1994, when a trainer certified by the North American

Police Work Dog Association (NAPWDA) came to Reno, tested a dog-handler team, and found it to be in compliance with NAPWDA standards. This boosted unit morale.<sup>35</sup> Other teams stepped up their training, and, on August 28, 1998 the NAPWDA certified all six of Reno's teams, and the Association formally designated the Northern Nevada Police Canine Training Center as an approved training site.<sup>36</sup>

Almost all dog-handler teams in northern Nevada do some of their training at this course. The training of Reno's teams is supervised by nationally certified instructors who strive to bring them to a point where they can pass the certification standard mandated by the North American Police Work Dog Association. Reno's teams are regularly given refresher training and are recertified by NAPWDA approved trainers. This recertification process assures a high order of performance when the teams are deployed under real conditions.<sup>37</sup>

As a public service, the Kal Kan Pet Care company also provides its dog food products for all police and search-and-rescue dogs in northern Nevada at no cost to the agencies. This largesse is warmly received by the police, and representatives of each agency come to Kal Kan to procure the food as needed.<sup>38</sup>

Reno's dog-handler teams have helped to control crime and apprehend suspects ever since their deployment against the rowdy revelers of January 1, 1963. Unfortunately, almost no data have been found which could give a statistical view of how productive the teams have been. The Reno Police Department has not been effective at assembling and publishing data relevant to several of its special units, the canine unit among them.

There are many anecdotal accounts, nevertheless, of how the canine unit has contributed to keeping public order in Reno. In 1968, Chief Robert Bradshaw reported that, during a typical three-month period, the canine unit made twenty-eight felony arrests, spent more than 100 hours on foot patrol, made more than 7,000 business checks and 122 building searches, and responded to 112 alarms and 763 calls for service. Chief Bradshaw noted, "They provide protection to the officers and the teams make more felony arrests per individual than any other officer."<sup>39</sup> Assistant Police Chief Richard Kirkland stated, in 1986, that the main duties of the city's four canine teams involved searching buildings. According to Kirkland, "In a four to five-story building, it would take seven to eight officers to do what one officer and his dog can do."<sup>40</sup> One dog, Zeus, paired with his handler, Sergeant Mike Kendig, conducted more than 3,000 building searches and was credited with eleven felony arrests over the dog's five year career.<sup>41</sup>

The dogs were not always successful. In 1996, a bloodhound and a German shepherd failed to discover a robbery suspect in a disorderly, cluttered warehouse. It was thought that the canine duo faced too many conflicting odors to be successful. The structure housed an assortment of X-ray equipment and chemical emissions. The equipment and the emissions together with the fact that there had been many humans (including persons other than police offic-

ers) recently in the structure, proved too much for the dogs' olfactory senses to work successfully in this case.<sup>42</sup>

The department has not embraced a consistent means for procuring dogs used in the canine unit. At the program's outset, it relied on dogs donated by local citizens. Six candidate dogs had been donated, in fact, to the department a few months before the unit was formally initiated.<sup>43</sup> Procuring dogs was still informal in the late 1980s. Handler Jim Duncan recalls, "Back then, RPD didn't purchase trained dogs for the unit, never had before. We'd place a newspaper story looking for 'a few good dogs.'"<sup>44</sup> At various times over the life of the unit, nonetheless, dogs suited for training were purchased from kennels and commercial vendors. For example, in 1993, a German shepherd named Max was imported from Europe and paid for with drug forfeiture money.<sup>45</sup>

When Reno implemented its canine unit in 1962, canine officer Tom Robinson noted, "the police department adopted the attack dog [for crowd and riot control]. As the program grew in size and length of service, so did the duties of the dogs . . . the principle of the police 'command dog' developed."<sup>46</sup> This is a significant point in the maturation of Reno's police canine unit, for an attack dog is a dog which is, "very territorial and will bite anything that moves," according to dog trainer Lou Burgarello.<sup>47</sup>

It is not known with certainty just when Reno's police department embraced the command dog concept and abandoned the attack dog approach, but it appears to have been about 1985. This change was a watershed moment in the unit's history, for it assured that deployed dogs would not be savage or otherwise vicious should a suspect be detected, as was commonly the case with the attack dog approach to policing. A command dog-handler team trains about 100 hours a month on city time. The team perfects a host of skills, but concentrates on obedience.<sup>48</sup>

Only one set of data reporting the number of suspects who had been bitten by Reno's police dogs were found, and it covered only eight years. But, the modest number of persons bitten since Reno embraced the command dog concept is impressive. These data report that from January 1, 1994 through December 31, 2001, there were twenty-five occasions when a patrol dog bit a suspect fleeing the scene of a crime. There were six bites in 1994, four in 1996, and only two in 1997, 2000, and 2001.<sup>49</sup> Officer Richard Schneider and his partner Beeko had only one bite in eight years of street work from 1990 to 1998.

The move to the command dog approach is probably one of the reasons why there have been so few total bites during these eight years. Another is that, at about the same time, the department implemented a carefully worded General Order spelling out canine use of force. Its hallmark is, "Canine units will be deployed to obtain control with the least amount of force that is necessary."<sup>50</sup> This approach is in accord with the industry standard nationally.

Little data were found, unfortunately, which revealed how many times a dog was sent to find a suspect, and how many occasions a suspect was



apprehended, without being bitten, for these eight years or for any of the earlier thirty-two years. One dog was reported to have made forty-five felony apprehensions over his four years on the street, and he bit every suspect—which was consistent with the attack dog training concept under which the department operated.<sup>51</sup>

Reno dog-handler teams have a history of entering competitions intended to show who is “top dog” in the region. Moreover, the department has hosted some trials and participated in the Annual Police Olympics, featuring along with a host of other events, police-dog competitions.<sup>52</sup> In 1991, Reno hosted the trials sponsored by the Western States Police Canine Association at Moana Municipal Stadium. A crowd of about 400 persons watched the competition, which drew teams from forty-four departments in Nevada and California. Police officers report that these competitions were valuable because they revealed the level of competence of their own dogs when pitted against other trained dogs.<sup>53</sup> Reno teams have also traveled to competitions in Stockton, Sacramento, San Francisco, and Salt Lake City among other places.

Since the early 1990s, some of Reno’s police dogs have been cross-trained to detect certain narcotic substances as well as to perform their usual patrol duties. Jimmy, handled by long-time canine unit member, Tyler Clarke, was the first so trained. Jimmy’s nose can identify marijuana, heroin, methamphetamine, opium, and cocaine.<sup>54</sup>

Dope sniffing dogs are sometimes requested by the Washoe County Consolidated Narcotics Unit, which is composed of personnel from the Reno and Sparks police departments and the Washoe County sheriff’s department. There are occasions when Reno or Washoe County’s dope sniffing dogs help the unit make drug cases. One dog, Detective Buck, found more than \$155,000 in illicit drugs during the last half of 1993—\$75,000 of that in one bust in October.<sup>55</sup> Another dog, Arco, handled by Officer Tim Mayes, was responsible for the seizure of about 1.5 million dollars worth of narcotic substances during his seven-year career from 1990 to 1997.

The use of narcotics-detection dogs sometimes causes the issue of search and seizure to be aired. Reno has not been exempt from this controversy. Soon after the first drug dogs were used, representatives of the American Civil Liberties Union wondered if, “The danger in this police tactic is that too much discretion is given to local police officers.”<sup>56</sup> Washoe County’s chief deputy district attorney explained, “The dogs are brought to the outside of the car and sniff for drugs all around the car, with or without the driver’s permission. This type of search is no different than when an officer walks around a car and peers in the windows looking for guns or alcohol. We call it the ‘plain smell’ instead of the ‘plain view’ search.”<sup>57</sup>

In 1991, Washoe County’s chief deputy public defender, John Morrow, stated that, “It’s pretty well within the permissible bounds of the law. If they are using the dog only in cases of reasonable suspicion of drug activity, it’s probably



He's  
really  
got a  
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for  
this  
sorta  
thing!

Did you know Police canines have a sense of smell that is more than a million times better than a human's?  
If you bring drugs to Reno on the bus you are really taking the **GAMBLER'S SPECIAL**.

**Reno Police Department • Operation POP ROCKS**

This poster, placed in interstate bus terminals throughout northern California in the late 1990s, conveyed a strong message that drug dealing in Reno would lead to BIG trouble! (Poster courtesy of the Reno Police Department)



going to pass constitutional muster." Morrow added, "It's a rubber yardstick. It's subjective."<sup>58</sup> The police insisted there was no profiling involved in using the dogs, that dogs were called to the scene when a suspect appeared to be under the influence of drugs, or if officers smelled marijuana, or saw drug paraphernalia in the vicinity.<sup>59</sup>

In 1995, the Reno police canine unit included six handler-dog teams. The department's annual report that year described the mission of the unit:

Utilizing highly trained dogs to assist in many police problems, the Department's K-9 Teams are another specialized resource to aid in insuring our community remains safe and secure. Building searches, article searches, narcotics detection and tracking, and trailing suspects and lost persons are just a few of the skills these dogs exhibit on a daily basis.<sup>60</sup>

In June 2002, the Reno Police Department's canine unit turned forty years of age! At that time the Reno Police Department had an authorized strength of 334 sworn members and 185 civilian employees.<sup>61</sup> This is 228 more sworn members and 157 more civilian employees than were on the job in June 1962. In its fortieth anniversary year, the canine unit includes three German shepherd dog-handler teams trained in patrol work and cross-trained in searching for narcotic substances. There are also two dogs trained to detect explosive substances: one is a German shepherd, the other is a labrador mix. Finally, there is one bloodhound who, with his handler, specializes in searching for criminal suspects who have fled the police. The bloodhound-officer team is also deployed to seek missing persons, including children. The team is especially adept at searching wooded areas along the banks of the Truckee River and in searching desert and mountain terrain. Police Chief Jerry Hoover has approved funding for two additional patrol dogs and handlers to be dual purpose trained in narcotics detection and patrol. When the number of teams reaches eight, the canine unit will be similar in size to that of most earlier years.<sup>62</sup>

At present, one patrol dog team is deployed on Reno's streets from 7 p.m. to 4 a.m. Tuesday through Friday. The other two patrol teams are deployed during the same hours Saturday through Tuesday. Since all three patrol teams are in service on Tuesdays, substantial refresher training takes place then. The teams are available, nonetheless, for deployment to incidents should they be needed. The bloodhound is on duty with a handler Saturday through Tuesday from 7 p.m. to 4 a.m. It also trains with the patrol dogs on Tuesdays. One bomb dog works from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday through Monday. The other works from 4 p.m. to 1 a.m. Wednesday through Saturday. Of course, all six of the teams are subject to being called back to duty during off-hours should circumstances surface where the unique talents of the dogs are required. Interestingly, one of the bomb-dog handlers is also a qualified bomb disposal technician, so this team does not just "find 'em," it also "diffuses 'em!"

When on the street, officers are under the immediate supervision of the commander of the patrol-force shift then on duty, a Reno police lieutenant or



sergeant. Canine teams respond to any type of incident where their services may be helpful, like alarms, reports of certain types of crimes in progress, instances where crowds may be gathering and may become unruly, and calls where suspects have fled from police. Canine officers are not normally assigned to calls where they must make a preliminary incident report, except when the available pool of street officers is stretched so thin that they are a last resort. On occasions when canine officers respond as backup to searches and alarms, for example, a supplemental report will be prepared which explains what the team did, when it did it, and what resulted. This practice assures that investigative reports are as thorough and complete as possible.<sup>63</sup>

Even though the canine unit is forty years old, not all Reno officers, even supervisors, know the capabilities of canine-unit teams, and how the handler and dog may best serve to keep the city safe. And, on occasion, a few non-unit personnel have been antagonistic to the canine teams, sometimes accusing the unit of elitism and show-boating. Thankfully, such behavior is not the norm, and canine officers and the unit supervisor take pains to inform the uniformed force about how the teams can enhance the larger police department mission. The canine unit is not an elite force, and its members are quick to credit non-canine patrol officers with making major contributions to arresting suspects, when the dog has been sent to seek a criminal and is successful.

The bomb-sniffing dog teams do a lot of preincident scent work, searching areas for explosive devices where events are slated to be held. Such work rarely attracts attention and is the "hidden" role of these teams. When a suspect device or package is found, ordnance disposal personnel are summoned and the recovery work is coordinated according to departmental procedure. There has been a harmonious relationship between the principal actors in these events. The Reno police Special Weapons and Tactics team, composed of about 30 highly trained, select personnel, does not include a canine component. Nevertheless, should SWAT personnel encounter a situation where one or more canine teams or narcotics or bomb specialists could be helpful, they will be called.<sup>64</sup>

Cross-trained patrol dogs may conduct a search for narcotics when a request is made for such services, usually by detectives or patrol force personnel, in instances where a drug dog is not available. At the same time, narcotic-detector dogs have some regular assignments. One of these is for two teams to search dormitories for illegal substances at the Job Corps Training Center at Stead one afternoon every two weeks. In addition, the United States Customs Service at the Reno-Tahoe International Airport often uses Reno's detector dogs, since they have none of their own. Also, the Washoe County Consolidated Narcotics squad calls upon Reno's narcotics detectors as the need arises.

Each of the six teams has been assigned an "SUV" type vehicle, specially outfitted for transporting the dog. These are "take home" vehicles, which allow a team to respond quickly to a call-back, should that happen, as it often does. Officers are paid overtime for their call-backs. All dogs live at their handlers' homes and are important members of their "families."<sup>65</sup>

Contrast the presence of SUV transport today with that provided to the canine unit's handlers in 1977. Then, the unit was assigned the oldest of the department's four-door patrol vehicles. Back seats had been pulled and plywood platforms were installed for the dogs. Officer Dick Gammick, then a handler, recalled that it was always touch and go as to whether the vehicles would start, much less be able to make it through a tour of duty without a breakdown.<sup>66</sup> These vehicles were not take-home cars. They went into the pool available to the patrol force when the canine unit was not using them. In regard to this practice, a Los Angeles consultant observed that, "[non-canine] officers resist driving them because they have no back seat, they are odorous and full of dog hairs."<sup>67</sup>

The Los Angeles consultant underscored some of the more unpleasant aspects of working with or around trained dogs. Cody, a Reno police dog in 1988, was constantly drooling, so much so that, in winter, he would drool on the outside car door lock causing it to freeze shut, a situation which put both handler and dog at risk.<sup>68</sup> In a touching demonstration of concern for the well-being of Reno's police dogs, the youngsters at Brown Elementary School raised over \$5,500 to buy bulletproof vests for K-9s during the spring of 1998. The sum showed how the "power of the bake sale" contributed to making Reno's unsung heroes safer when going about their dangerous work.<sup>69</sup>

The criteria for becoming a handler candidate include having had at least four years of patrol experience and a willingness to work flexible hours, including nights, for an extended time. In addition, candidates must be willing to care for the health and safety of a trained dog and house it at home. Clearly, the candidate's family must be amenable to having the dog become part of the household. Also, a candidate must be physically fit and must pledge to maintain oneself in top condition.<sup>70</sup> Handler gender is not an issue. Reno's canine unit has included many well qualified female handlers and, at present, the unit supervisor is a woman.

The canine teams work four days a week, ten hours a shift. The teams are on the street for nine hours a day. The tenth hour of duty finds the handlers caring for the dog and the home kennel, as well as feeding, exercising, and engaging in the host of maintenance chores vital to keeping the animal in good health, rested, and ready for service. The tenth hour is in lieu of overtime compensation.

Being a canine handler and member of the small, specially trained unit is hard work. Most members serve three or four years before returning to other uniformed roles. Some officers have served in the unit for many years, the longest being Officer Richard Schneider, who was a handler and also the unit's head trainer for almost eleven years! Officer Schneider's partner, Beeko, was the longest serving dog, eight years. Officer Tyler Clarke served in the unit over seven years, and Officers Dan Parker, Ed Lewis, Mike Kendig, and Tim Mayes, among others, served for seven years.

The nature of training, which occurs on Tuesday, is diverse because the teams are used in many different ways. Emphasis is on searching warehouses and such commercial enterprises as car sales lots and structures, parking garages, school buildings and grounds, and industrial plants. Each handler spends some time daily emphasizing obedience, for that is the key to keeping a dog proficient in what it is trained to do.

Training police dogs can be tricky, and officers must be mindful of their partners' native drives. Officers have learned they can not train their dogs in bite work in front of another dog secured in the back of a vehicle. Handler Greg Curry's dog, Thor, twice went through a patrol car window when he felt left out of the action.<sup>71</sup>

As of a few years ago, Reno's six handler-dog teams are expected to meet or exceed the rigorous police dog standards set by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training. Reno's teams are certified to California standards annually because Nevada's commission on police training has yet to adopt standards for police service dogs. There are, nevertheless, some positive signs that the Nevada commission is preparing to develop its own standards. Bill Schroeder of the Nevada Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training staff says the proposal is "at the interest level" and believes the prospect is good for formalizing standards soon.<sup>72</sup> Reno's canine unit supervisor, Sergeant Shannon Wiecking, reports that should a team fail to meet certification, it is off the street and is afforded remedial training and testing until it achieves certification. Only then may it return to the street.<sup>73</sup>

The absence of annual data on the canine unit appears related to the unit's tradition calling for handlers to write a report when their dog was used to search for a suspect, or an illicit substance, or to engage in some other activity associated with a larger investigation. There was no requirement, however, that handlers submit copies of reports to a central clearinghouse for review for any purpose, including the tabulation of information which could be used as statistics for an annual report. Hence, most officers have copies of reports indicating when and how their canine partners were used, but there is no machinery or requirement that someone assemble these and consolidate the information into annual summaries. Sergeant Wiecking, the canine unit supervisor, reports that the police department has purchased computer software which, when operational, will be used to track the unit's activities and allow a monthly summary as well as an annual unit-activity report to be produced.

The canine unit's existence came under sharp attack in 1978, and this attack was directly related to the lack of data available on it. It came when LECAR, Inc., a Los Angeles-based consulting firm said, "Justification for the use of canines for police patrol was lacking. The number of instances when dogs had been successfully deployed, or where their use had been essential, were meager."<sup>74</sup> Still citing the lack of data, the consultants added, "Lack of incidents demonstrating their [K-9's] past value and general problems incident to their



transportation, deployment and maintenance, dictate their elimination as a patrol force in the city."<sup>75</sup>

The Los Angeles-based consultants' recommendation inspired then canine unit supervisor, Sergeant Marv Pennington, to take exception. He defended the unit's record in a memorandum claiming that the consultants had "not received sufficient statistical information or case histories to make this a valid conclusion." The memorandum reported the number of business alarms and prowler calls the unit responded to from March 30 to April 30, 1978, "except for a ten day gap from April 8 to April 18, 1978, for which we have no information." The sergeant's intent was laudable, but the data he presented suffered from what the consultant was talking about: it was an incomplete data set. Sergeant Pennington acknowledged this, in an oblique fashion, in his memorandum when he reported, "Because this information has not been kept previously, these Case Histories are incomplete."<sup>76</sup> This condition had beset the Reno police canine unit over its entire history.

At the same time, when information came in calling for unusual or special measures, the department was willing to act. In 1997, detectives learned that many of the persons who had been arrested for selling narcotics in Reno were not local people, but dealers who lived in the Bay Area or in Sacramento Valley towns. These persons would ride the bus to Reno, spend an hour or two peddling their illicit goods on the street or in casinos, and a few hours later would board a bus back to their home cities! The chief and his staff decided to create a color poster, 22-by-28-inches in size, which included the prominent image of a police dog and wording saying, "Did you know Police canines have a sense of smell that is more than a million times better than a human's? If you bring drugs to Reno on the bus you are really taking the *GAMBLER'S SPECIAL*." These posters were placed in interstate bus terminals in such places as Sacramento, Fresno, Modesto, Oakland, and so forth. It is thought that they had their intended result—to cause dealers to have second thoughts about coming to Reno, whether by interstate bus or by any other means.<sup>77</sup>

Deputy Chief Jim Johns, a former canine-unit member and its one time supervisor, noted until 1997 officers usually served as dog handlers for about three years. While there were some exceptions to this, the intent was to assure that personnel did not have to work nights too much, and to assure that others got to experience service in this unusual aspect of police work. Starting in 1997, the informal practice was to allow officers to stay in the unit for the working life of their canine partner, averaging about four to five years of duty. The dog would then be retired and given to the handler as a pet, without police responsibilities.<sup>78</sup>

Police Chief Jerry Hoover is, in 2002, an enthusiastic supporter of the Reno police canine unit. Having just authorized the addition of two handler-dog teams to the unit, the chief says, "I'd like to expand the unit to nine teams." He adds that the city council and city manager have been supportive of the canine unit and respect the contribution it makes to public safety.<sup>79</sup>



Canine unit member Officer Donna Robinson with her partner, Utz, a long hair German shepherd in 2001. *(Photo by Kelly Wheeler, Portrait Designs)*

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>"Use of Animals Considered In Reno Law Enforcement," *Nevada State Journal* (13 January 1962), p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>*Crime in the United States, Uniform Crime Reports-1962* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 1963), 115.

<sup>3</sup>Zane Miles, "Reno Rioters Face Court Today," *Nevada State Journal* (2 January 1962), p. 12.

<sup>4</sup>"Reno Chief Will Seek Dog Corps," *Nevada State Journal* (22 February 1962), p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>"Councilmen Impressed by K-9 Demonstration," *Nevada State Journal* (4 May 1962), p. 10.

<sup>6</sup>Samuel G. Chapman, "Police Dogs Versus Crowds," *Journal of Police Science and Administration*, 8:3 (September, 1980), 316 - 321. For an extensive discussion of the Birmingham incident, see Samuel G. Chapman, *Police Dogs in North America* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 1990), 81 - 87.

<sup>7</sup>"Four-Footed Friends Added To Salt Lake Police Force," *Nevada State Journal* (29 November 1958), p. 4.

<sup>8</sup>"Auxiliary Law Enforcement Aids Urged by Police Chief," *Nevada State Journal* (22 February 1962), p. 4.

<sup>9</sup>"Councilmen Impressed by K-9 Demonstration," *Nevada State Journal* (4 May 1962), p. 10.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>"Dog Trained for Police Work Is Presented to Reno Force," *Reno Evening Gazette*, (21 May 1941), p. 16. See also: "Dog Trained For Police Work in Reno," *Reno Evening Gazette* (23 July 1941), p. 2.

<sup>12</sup>"Police Officers Convene Here For Annual Session," *Reno Evening Gazette* (27 August 1940), p.1, and "Police Officers Warned Of Threat to America," *Reno Evening Gazette* (28 August 1940), p. 1. The Berkeley Police Department was one of only eleven police forces in the U.S. that used trained dogs as adjuncts to uniformed police in the fall of 1940. Chapman, *Police Dogs in North America*, p. 15.

<sup>13</sup>"Ex-police Chief Reminisces," *Nevada State Journal* (29 September 1974), p. 1.

<sup>14</sup>Joe Simpson interview with author, 11 August 2000.

<sup>15</sup>"Memories of Reno Police Work," *Nevada State Journal* (29 September 1974), p. 3.

<sup>16</sup>"Duke, Reno's Only Bona Fide Police Dog, Is Now Taking Up With Sheriff's Office," *Nevada State Journal* (30 December 1949), p. 3.

<sup>17</sup>"City Police Dog Force Nears First Birthday; More Requested," *Reno Evening Gazette* (18 March 1963), p. 11.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup>Tom Robinson, "Chico and Fellow K-9s: Command Dogs on the Line," *Nevada Peace Officer*, 2: 2 (Summer 1978), 16.

<sup>20</sup>"Auxiliary Law Enforcement Aids Urged by Police Chief," *Nevada State Journal* (22 February 1962), p. 4.

<sup>21</sup>"Unruly Celebrators Mar Reno's New Year," *Nevada State Journal* (1 January 1963), p. 1.

<sup>22</sup>"Chief's Battle for Dogs Vindicated New Year's Eve," *Nevada State Journal* (2 January 1963), p. 4.

<sup>23</sup>"City Police Dog Force Nears First Birthday, More Requested," *Reno Evening Gazette* (18 March 1963), p. 11.

<sup>24</sup>Robert Cavakis and Peggy Patchen, "Our First One Hundred Years," *A Century of Police Protection 1864 to 1964* (Reno, Nevada: Police Variety Show, August 30, 1964), pp. 17-18.

<sup>25</sup>Author interview with Jim Johns, 19 April 2002.

<sup>26</sup>"Nipped in Bud," *Reno Evening Gazette* (14 September 1971), p. 6.

<sup>27</sup>Robinson, "Chico and Fellow K-9s," 3.

<sup>28</sup>Marv Pennington in a memorandum to McKillip, "Statistics on Current Reno PD K-9 Program," memorandum from Sergeant (8 May 1978), pp. 3-4.

<sup>29</sup>Robinson, "Chico and Fellow K-9s," 4.

<sup>30</sup>Author interview with Brian Howard, 14 January 2001; author interview with Elaine Lange, 15 January 2001.

<sup>31</sup>Author interview with Richard Gammick, 16 January 2002; author interview with Tom Robinson, 22 January 2002.

<sup>32</sup>Author interview with Diana Soares and Carla Lang of Kal Kan, 23 August 2001.



- <sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>34</sup>Author interview with Carla Lang, 21 August 2001.
- <sup>35</sup>Author interview with Brian Howard, 14 January 2001.
- <sup>36</sup>Author interview with Diana Soares, 23 August 2001.
- <sup>37</sup>Author interview with Brian Howard, 14 January 2001.
- <sup>38</sup>Author interview with Carla Lang, 23 August 2001.
- <sup>39</sup>Elaine Lange, "K-9 Corps puts teeth into Reno crime-fighting," *Reno Gazette-Journal* (24 November 1986), p. 1.
- <sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>41</sup>Elaine Lange, "Police Dog Zeus Slows Pace, But Still Has a Lot of Heart," *Reno Gazette-Journal* (13 November 1989), p. 3.
- <sup>42</sup>Phil Barber, "Dogs Face Nose Woes," *Reno Gazette-Journal* (13 October 1993), p. 1.
- <sup>43</sup>"Councilmen Impressed by K-9 Demonstration," *Nevada State Journal* (4 May 1962), p. 10.
- <sup>44</sup>Jim Duncan email to Sergeant Shannon Wiecking, 6 February 2002.
- <sup>45</sup>Elaine Lange, "Deputies Bark Up Right Tree with New Partner," *Reno Gazette-Journal* (10 June 1995), p. 1. Drug forfeiture money comes to the police thanks to the U.S. Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984. It allows police to seize property for forfeiture when the government shows that the property, including money, which is seized was acquired through illegal drug revenues or was used to facilitate the dealing of drugs. Many departments, including Reno's police, commit drug forfeiture money to fight the illicit manufacture, possession or sale of drugs.
- <sup>46</sup>Robinson, "Chico and Fellow K-9s," 3.
- <sup>47</sup>Elaine Lange, "Reno Team Takes Bite Out of Crime," *Reno Gazette-Journal* (3 June 1991), p. 8.
- <sup>48</sup>Elaine Lange, "K-9 Corps Puts Teeth into Reno Crime-fighting," *Reno Gazette-Journal* (24 November 1986), p. 2.
- <sup>49</sup>Reno Police Department Animal Control Officer telephone call to Sergeant Shannon Wiecking, Reno Police canine unit, 29 January 2002.
- <sup>50</sup>Reno Police Department General Order number 1/225.000, "Canine Use of Force," initiated May 8, 1992 and reissued on September 20, 2001.
- <sup>51</sup>Author interview with Tom Robinson, 25 March 2002.
- <sup>52</sup>Reno Police Canine Corps, *1977 Silver State Police K-9 Trials*, 27 pp.; *Annual Police Olympics, State of Nevada, Police Service Dogs* (18 June 1978), 6 pp. See also: Elaine Lange, "Police dogs, Handlers to Gather for Saturday Sniff-and Snarl-off in Reno," *Reno Gazette-Journal* (9 October 1992), p. 6; "Reno Police Dogs Win Honors," *Reno Evening Gazette* (10 May 1977), p. 9; and "K-9's Win Honors," *The City of Reno Roundup* (June 1977).
- <sup>53</sup>Elaine Lange, "Police Competition Shows Who's Top Dog," *Reno Gazette-Journal* (20 October 1991), p. 3.
- <sup>54</sup>Elaine Lange, "Teamwork: Officer Nipped Aiding Partner," *Reno Gazette-Journal* (30 May 1996), p. 1.
- <sup>55</sup>Elaine Lange, "Washoe County Narc With a Bark Sniffs Out Suspects," *Reno Gazette-Journal* (14 January 1994), p. 1. See also: Tim Mayes email to Sergeant Shannon Wiecking, 17 February 2002.
- <sup>56</sup>Elaine Lange, "Questions Surround Dogs' Right to Smell," *Reno Gazette-Journal* (3 June 1991), p. 8.
- <sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>60</sup>"Police K-9 Teams," *130 Years of Dedicated Service*, Reno Police Department 1995 Annual Report, 10.
- <sup>61</sup>Author telephone interview with Tom Robinson, 25 February 2002.
- <sup>62</sup>Author interview with Sergeant Shannon Wiecking, 18 February 2002.
- <sup>63</sup>Author interview with Lieutenant Kim L. Gibson, 8 January 2002.
- <sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>66</sup>Author interview with Richard Gammick, 16 January 2002.
- <sup>67</sup>*A Report on Police Practices and Procedures in the Reno Police Department* (Los Angeles: Law Enforcement Consulting and Research, Inc., April 1978), 98.

<sup>68</sup>Jim Duncan email to Sergeant Shannon Wiecking, 6 February 2002.

<sup>69</sup>Jennifer Crowe, "Kindergartners Raise Money to Buy Bulletproof Vests for K-9s," *Reno Gazette-Journal* (28 May 1998), p. 1.

<sup>70</sup>Author interview with Sergeant Shannon Wiecking, 2 February 2002.

<sup>71</sup>Greg Curry email to Sergeant Shannon Wiecking, 27 February 2002.

<sup>72</sup>Author telephone interview with Bill Schroeder, 29 March 2002.

<sup>73</sup>Author interview with Sergeant Shannon Wiecking, 18 February 2002.

<sup>74</sup>*A Report on Police Practices and Procedures in the Reno Police Department*, 25.

<sup>75</sup>*Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>76</sup>Pennington to McKillip memorandum, "Statistics on Current Reno PD K-9 Program" (8 May 1978).

<sup>77</sup>Author interview with Jerry Hoover, 19 April 2002.

<sup>78</sup>Author interview with Jim Johns, 19 April 2002.

<sup>79</sup>Author interview with Jerry Hoover, 19 April 2002.

## Letter to the Editor

17 July 2002

Bill Rowley  
Nevada Historical Society Quarterly  
1650 No. Virginia St.  
Reno NV 89503

Dear Bill:

Thanks for printing the article on the Chinese massacres; I have received a number of favorable comments about it. However, there are a distressing number of errors. I include an errata sheet, which I hope can be published in the next issue.

The primary reason for these errors (although some are inexplicable) is that someone has changed what I wrote without checking with me. I welcome editing, because it can greatly improve both accuracy and readability. But my understanding of scholarly writing is that the writer always has the last say about what goes out under his or her name, and I was not consulted on any of these matters. If I am wrong, that is my responsibility, not an editor's. I especially object to changes which introduce errors.

To my knowledge, this began with my articles on the campaign finance law of the 1890s, and it is very distressing to me. I hope that you can guarantee that this never happens again.

Sincerely,



Elmer R. Rusco

### Errata sheet for "The Chinese Massacres of 1866"

P. 4, 1st par. under "Chinese Mining in the American West":  
"Rone" should be "Rohe."

P. 9, 2nd par. under "Details and Locations of the Massacres": first word of line should begin with a quotation mark ("accompanied);

P. 12, 3rd line down: should be Joseph Wasson;

P. 14, 6th line up: Replace "Routes through one of these places include the Owyhee Canyon complex" with "None of these places includes the Owyhee Canyon complex":

P. 18, 2nd par up: Replace "Two weeks later the Avalanche pressed on; Its editorial asserted that" with: "Two weeks later an editorial in this newspaper asserted that":

P. 22, 3rd full par. down: "Humbolt" should be "Humboldt":

P. 25, end of 1st full par.: "writing" should be "as writing":

P. 29, footnote 25: "Wassom" (twice) should be "Wasson."



## Book Reviews

*Sarah Winnemucca*. By Sally Zanjani (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001)

Nevada heroine Sarah Winnemucca's story reaches far beyond state borders—both geographically and imaginatively. The self-styled "Paiute princess" was well-known in the 1860s and 1870s for her work as an army interpreter and scout in conflicts near her home around the Humboldt Sink. She became even more famous in the 1880s, when she lectured in buckskin and tiara, enlightening East Coast liberals about corruption and mismanagement on Indian reservations back home. As a result of such wide-ranging work, Winnemucca appeared frequently, though not always favorably, in newspapers from Virginia City to Boston. History has been kinder to her. She has been the subject of countless biographies, from deeply researched scholarly tomes to lighter children's books. She has also been garnering increasing attention from professional historians and literary scholars as one of the most complicated nineteenth-century American Indian intellectuals. And, most recently, a group of Nevada citizens has been lobbying for a statue of Winnemucca to represent the state in the Hall of Statuary in Washington, D.C.

Now Sally Zanjani, a much-beloved Nevada historian, adds a new biography of her own to the line-up. This book is of special interest to Nevada readers, because it covers much ground already covered elsewhere. Much of it is a re-telling of *Life Among the Piutes*, the ground-breaking autobiography that Winnemucca published herself in 1883. In rounding out Winnemucca's own narration—which was at least heavily shaped for its audience, if not heavily edited by the Boston reformer Mary Mann—Zanjani takes a lead from other published biographies. In 1983, for instance, Gae Whitney Canfield produced a marvelous and rich account that filled in much Winnemucca had left out, such as her youthful performances as Pocahontas in San Francisco with her family, and the names (and even existences) of her husbands, of whom there appear to have been at least three.

Readers already familiar with Winnemucca's story, or scholars looking for new ways to think about this complicated historical figure, are not Zanjani's primary audience. Rather, she describes her task thus, "Because Sarah's is an autobiography written almost entirely from memory years after the fact and largely intended for the political purpose of winning justice for the Paiutes, questions concerning its accuracy have been posed. After carefully cross-checking incidents in Sarah's book against other sources whenever possible, I found

that her memory for people and events was extraordinarily correct, as has been widely recognized. However, Sarah sometimes erred on chronology, dates, and numbers, mistakes perhaps understandable for someone not trained early in the white man's chronological mode of thinking and calendar. These errors I corrected through other sources" (p. 4).

As a retelling, this new biography is as fast-paced and absorbing as the life it describes. Winnemucca's grandfather and father were known as "chiefs," even though, as Zanjani points out, the Paiutes, like a number of other indigenous peoples, did not traditionally organize themselves under hierarchical and centralized models of leadership. The title of chief thus came partly from colonial practice that sought a single person with whom to negotiate for such things as peace and land; partly, perhaps, from the men themselves and their communities (though over the years many Paiute people have disputed the Winnemuccas' claim to the position); and partly from Winnemucca's own strategic representation of herself as "the chieftain's weary daughter."

Her father, known as Old Winnemucca, spent much of his life resisting white encroachment by fleeing reservations into the mountains where he and other Paiutes could live in peace and continue practicing traditional ways. Her grandfather, on the other hand, won fame as an Indian who welcomed white settlers. Called Captain Truckee, he fought, in a painful irony of Native history, with General Frémont in the war to seize Mexico. Winnemucca's mother and other Paiute women, meanwhile, continually challenged Truckee's decision to move their families to live and work among white people, where their daughters were under constant threat of sexual assault.

Winnemucca's story is a dramatic one in which she fends off rape herself, with a knife; flies on horseback against time (and against the disbelief of white officials and her own people) to stave off hostilities between whites and Indians; sneaks into an enemy camp to rescue her family; and travels to Washington to speak with the President and Secretary of the Interior about the forced removal of her people to the Yakama reservation, 350 miles north of their traditional homelands.

Despite such advocacy, which extended to her eventual return to Lovelock in order to establish an Indian school, Winnemucca has remained a controversial figure. In her own book, she quotes other Paiute people who accused her of having done more harm than good. But, Zanjani argues, "It is difficult to conceive what methods the Winnemuccas might have used to more effectively influence events." For they did try everything: "visits to powerful persons . . . attempt[s] at legal action . . . diplomatic maneuvering . . . theatrical performance . . . the threat of force . . . interviews, newspaper statements, and . . . many impassioned lectures" (p. 301).

Author of numerous books on the Nevada's twentieth-century mining boom, Gold Rush as well as on Indian-white relations in the state, Zanjani has a formidable facility with historic state newspapers that allows her to add rich

detail to Winnemucca's narrative. For example, she has interesting insights into William Ormsby, usually a minor figure in Winnemucca's story. It was while living with and working for Ormsby's family, in an evident instance of interracial harmony, that Winnemucca appears to have learned to read and speak English. And yet, Ormsby later died leading an attack on Paiute people at Pyramid Lake. Zanjani's patient research suggests that Ormsby ultimately may have hoped to cast himself as a war hero worthy of high office in Nevada, which many ambitious settlers like him saw "as a slave state that would serve as a southern wedge in the West to reconfigure the uneasy balance between North and South in the pre-Civil War period" (p. 45). Details of influential Nevada persons abound, and they often help readers understand why it might not have been so easy, then or now, to tell who was "for" the Indians and who was "against" them. As a social historian, Zanjani blends familiar figures, like Governor James W. Nye, with overlooked but equally important ones. She includes provocative glimpses of Nevada's Chinese workers, for instance, who often found themselves drawn into conflict with Paiute people.

Best of all, perhaps, Zanjani has interviewed a couple of Paiute elders, including one who remembers her mother's accounts of Winnemucca as a "wonderful teacher" who demystified learning and made it fun for Paiute children. This kind of oral history is only the beginning of the research that still very much needs to be done on Sarah Winnemucca. The Paiute school that Winnemucca established is both one of the most important and least understood parts of her life. As Zanjani rightly observes, Winnemucca has been wrongly labeled an assimilationist. In the late nineteenth century, the U.S. government did seek to "assimilate" American Indian peoples into some imagined homogeneous ideal, and Indian schools were one of the primary vehicles through which Indian children were supposed to be "civilized," and their communities broken up. But, Winnemucca's school differed in that it was run *by* an Indian, for Indians. She conducted classes bilingually, and made "no effort to separate the children from their families and erase their identity as Indians" (p. 267).

It is not easy to match the woman who ran such a radical enterprise with the woman who could write, in the words of her autobiography, "Oh, my dear good Christian people . . . you are wrong when you say it will take two or three generations to civilize my people. No! I say it will not take that long if you will only take interest in teaching us." But this is precisely the challenge Winnemucca has always posed. In including the voices of contemporary Paiute women who say that her life story helps them "hold to our pride" (p. 305), Zanjani points the way for an important new direction in writing about Winnemucca. Even more critically, her biography is the most vocal yet about Winnemucca's insistence on Paiute self-determination.

Siobhan Senier  
*University of New Hampshire*



*Edward Sheriff Curtis: Visions of a Vanishing Race.* By Florence Curtis Graybill and Victor Boesen (University of New Mexico Press, 2000)

This book is a celebratory examination of Edward S. Curtis and his work on the North American Indian project. Utilizing Curtis's writings, his daughter, Florence Curtis Graybill, and Victor Boesen trace his quest to document traditional Indian culture, while paying particular attention to the more illuminating, pivotal, and sensational events in Curtis's life. Along the way, the authors also introduce the reader to the project's other participants, such as its financial and academic backers, as well as to Curtis's assistants, informants, and editor. By taking a linear yet broad approach, they help to uncover the cooperative process involved in creating both the images and narrative text that the public often only attributes to Curtis.

Beginning with Curtis's early professional and personal life, the book progresses to the inception of the North American Indian project. Detailed descriptions of Curtis's encounters with leading naturalists, such as George Grinnell, and his inspiring visit to a Sun Dance, help to identify his intellectual influences. After arriving at the notion of creating a permanent record of the fleeting "traditional" Indian life, the narration then carries the reader through Curtis's meetings with political and financial supporters as Theodore Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot, John Muir, E. H. Harriman, and most notably J. P. Morgan. Once the project begins, the authors then cover the logistical details associated with Curtis's travels, the hiring of assistants, and correspondence with his editor, who was often thousands of miles away. With large helpings of Curtis's adventures interspersed throughout, the narration remains lively and exciting to the end.

In spite of their lionizing intentions, by liberally quoting from Curtis's letters and journals, the authors also provide insights into his thinking beyond the official rhetoric. Curtis's words help to expose the man underneath the facade by revealing his dependence on others, his prejudices, and his artistic ambitions. Moreover, by incorporating photographs with their original narrative text into the story, the reader also gains an opportunity to compare what Curtis and his assistants encountered as they photographed Indian life with the images as they marketed them to the public.

Understandably, Curtis's children remember their father as a timeless hero and would like readers to view him similarly. Their uncritical emphasis on his special capacity for respect and empathy for western Indians, however, is somewhat misleading, as it attributes to Curtis a twentieth-century cultural relativism that he did not possess. Statements such as "An Indian is like an animal or a little child . . ." (p. 13) and ". . . what can be expected of the primitive man . . ." (p.15) instead show him to have ascribed to nineteenth-century ideas of middle class paternalism and social Darwinism.

The most disturbing example of Curtis's cultural views is his relentless

pursuit of sacred artifacts and information and his gleeful celebration of successfully badgering Indians into granting him access to the most private parts of their lives. His often aggressive and arrogant behavior makes it much clearer why early anthropologists became *personae non gratis* on Indian reservations. Allowances for his actions cannot be made due to ignorance, since his own words attest to his knowledge that Indians, as all people, guarded certain aspects of their religious life as private property. Nevertheless, time and again he placed his own needs above those of his subjects and dismissed their unwillingness to share sacred artifacts as inconvenient superstition.

Furthermore, by attributing nothing but altruistic motives to Curtis's wish to document Indian cultures, the authors also ignore his artistic and commercial ambitions, and their effect on his work. Only in passing does the reader learn of Curtis's tendency to sacrifice accuracy to his desire to create "traditional" and aesthetically pleasing pictures of Indian subjects and culture. Moreover, the book devotes too little attention to the inherent contradiction between Curtis's claim to be creating a straightforward record, and his manipulation of images both before and after he took photographs.

In conclusion, this book offers a detailed recounting of Edward S. Curtis's life as well as an introduction to the process that resulted in his North American Indian series. It also provides a glimpse into the actual circumstances that produced many of Curtis's well-known photographs. However, being more of a popular biography than a scholarly analysis, it is limited in its academic contribution, since it adds little to the debates on Curtis or his work.

Sondra Cosgrove  
*University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

*The Plains Indians Photographs of Edward S. Curtis.* By Edward S. Curtis, et al  
(Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001)

*The Plains Indian Photographs of Edward S. Curtis* is a collection of photographs featuring four interesting, albeit uneven, essays written for a symposium on Curtis's Plains photographs. While the essays' focus is technically limited to these images, they argue, as did many nineteenth-century Americans who viewed Plains Indians as typical, that the Plains pictures are representative of Curtis's work as a whole. As a result, their aim is to arrive at larger conclusions on the ambitions and characteristics of both Curtis and his North American Indian project.

Martha H. Kennedy, curator of the Great Plains Art Collection, provides introductory remarks briefly summarizing each essay and outlining Curtis's professional life and work. Kennedy writes that the essays generally seek to

answer two questions. First, what are the ideological influences shaping Curtis's work? And, second, how did contemporary artistic trends influence Curtis's methodology and, thus, his photographs? Her comments also indicate that, for the purposes of this book, the authors subscribe to a cultural-intellectual interpretation of western history. As such, their focus is introspective of American mainstream society and pays only peripheral attention to Indian history or culture. Consequently, readers lacking familiarity with these topics may need to supplement their reading with books of a more ethnohistorical nature.

The strongest and historically most well rounded of the four essays is Mick Gidley's, "Ways of Seeing the Curtis Project on The Plains." Gidley, a professor of American literature, contextualizes Curtis's photos by examining the process which resulted in *The North American Indian* series. He argues that, despite Curtis's assertion that his work was a straightforward record of Indian life, "There were . . . political, economic, ideological, and aesthetic constraints and contexts to the project's representation of Native Americans" (p. 48). He further contends that only by examining the many different aspects of this process can a more comprehensive interpretation of Curtis's work emerge.

Beginning with the project's supporters, Gidley writes that Curtis received moral and monetary backing from America's political and financial establishment. Progressive politicians such as President Theodore Roosevelt endorsed the project, while industrial capitalists such as J.P. Morgan bankrolled the effort. Curtis's intellectual support came from professional adherents to the nineteenth-century's view of cultural evolution. Embracing a "stages of civilization" outlook, they believed cultures could be categorized according to their place on an evolutionary scale, beginning with hunting-and-gathering primitivism and progressing upward to democratic-capitalism. Embedded within their view was the notion of the inevitability of either cultural progress or extinction. Gidley argues that it was Curtis's preexisting acceptance of these ideas that attracted such supporters, but, once involved, their influence then strengthened Curtis's desire to express his ideology through his work.

Journals, letters, and articles associated with the project also reveal Curtis's willingness to manipulate reality to make it conform to his intellectual assumptions. In his writings, he made it clear that he would not photograph Indians displaying attributes of successful adaptation or images of the Indians' contemporary conditions. His assistants' descriptions of reservation life attest to the misery, starvation, and instances of acculturation that Curtis left undocumented. Thus, Gidley implies, that by only producing photographs satisfying his own perceptions, Curtis created a work more reflective of nineteenth-century American society than western Indian culture.

More narrowly focused is Martha Sandweiss's essay, "Picturing Indians: Curtis in Context." Sandweiss, a professor of American Studies, places Curtis within the context of nineteenth-century artistic trends and, in doing so, demonstrates that he was not unique in his outlook or methods. By examining such artists as George Catlin and Albert Bierstadt, she situates Curtis's photographic



approach within two related traditions. The first of these traditions being that of documenting a "vanishing race," and the second being that of commercializing Indian images. When combined, she argues, they exerted a determining influence over the artist's choice of content as well as over his approach to publically displaying his pictures.

Sandweiss writes that Curtis's adherence to the belief that "traditional" Indian cultures would inevitably disappear led him to seek out and select only those aspects of Indian life devoid of contemporary influence. Since this was an almost impossible goal, he, as others before him, resorted to manufacturing scenes and subjects to fit his perceptions. Once done, though, he knew he would have to hide his deceptions to successfully market the images to his like-minded audience. This, then, led Curtis to remove all traces of the actual photographic process from his pictures and narrative texts. Sandweiss's evidence shows that by doing this Curtis created a highly marketable product, yet deleted the Indian voice from his work.

Nevertheless, she argues that such problems did not impair the overall ethnographic value of Curtis's photos. However, lacking adequate evidence to substantiate such an assertion, her argument is unconvincing. Moreover, she also ventures an explanation as to why Indian peoples would have allowed Curtis to exploit them. Citing examples of such men such as Geronimo and Sitting Bull, she proposes that the Indians viewed the encounter as an instance of fair market exchange. In other words they were freely selling their culture for monetary reward. Apart from problems associated with comparing Indians somewhat familiar with the workings of capitalism with Indians isolated on reservations, this interpretation ignores the explanation given by Curtis and his workers: his Indian subjects were often on the brink of starvation. Desperation, then, seems a more logical explanation for the Indians' willing participation.

Lastly, Duane Niatum's essay, "The Aesthetic Impulses of Edward S. Curtis's Images of the Great Plains Indians," examines pictorialism and its influence on Curtis. Niatum, a poet, writes that pictorialists sought to capture beauty and emotion. They narrowly defined, however, beauty as objects and scenes possessing symmetry, harmony, and balance, while catering to their intended audience's desires when searching for the emotive. As a result of these limitations, pictorialists rarely discovered artistic subjects meeting their criteria existing in a natural state, leading them to often manipulate their pictures' content. In this process of creating an image, pictorialists also believed that its arraignment and composition should reflect the character of the artist, as opposed to that of the subject. Once defined, Niatum then examines Curtis's writings and images to demonstrate his conscious acceptance of pictorialist's views and practices.

Despite demonstrating that Curtis's methodology compromised the accuracy of his photos, Niatum, like Sandweiss, argues that such circumstances did

not diminish the ethnographic value of Curtis's images. He reasons that the extremely high number of pictures Curtis produced (more than 40,000) mitigated against all of them being corrupted by his approach. As examples, he points to photographs in which Curtis simply asked Indians to dress or behave in a "traditional" way without introducing his own ideas or props. Nevertheless, without addressing the problem of the artificial construct of "traditional culture," Niatum fails to make a sound case for the untainted ethnographic value of even these images.

Sondra Cosgrove  
*University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

*Voices of American Indian Assimilation and Resistance: Helen Hunt Jackson, Sarah Winnemucca, and Victoria Howard.* By Siobhan Senier (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001)

This book, a work of literary criticism, focuses on texts produced by three women during the Era of Assimilation (1879-1934): Helen Hunt Jackson, an Anglo-American writer and reformer; Sarah Winnemucca, Paiute activist and writer of autobiography; and Victoria Howard, Clackamas informant and storyteller. What they shared, according to Siobhan Senier, was an inclination to resist Indian policies of allotment and assimilation, and a determination to speak out forcefully, as women, in defiance of those who preferred they remain silent. The core of their shared resistance was a belief in "communitism," wherein "communally held lands and stories [serve] as resources for resistance" (p. 15). They offered these as alternatives to possessive individualism and acquisition, the bedrock values of assimilation theory.

Senier's chapter on Helen Hunt Jackson, for instance, offers an alternative reading to those who argue Jackson's novel, *Ramona*, was responsible for the passage of the Dawes Act of 1887. Senier makes the case that the novel, as well as Jackson's report on the status of California Mission Indians in 1851, was actually ambivalent about, and even critical of, allotment and assimilation. The evidence to support this contention, however, remains thin. Apparently Jackson feared that the California Mission Indians were not "ready" for allotment and believed their current communal system, which had served them well, should be left intact until they were competent to hold and retain allotments. This represents, at best, a temporary commitment to communalism, designed to protect their lands. There is no evidence that Jackson intended it, however, as a long-term alternative to allotment and assimilation. She did not particularly resist the idea of allotment, just the prospects it provided for white land grabs. Moreover, in *Ramona*, Senier finds "the slightest resistance to or

skepticism about the assumptions underlining the policy of allotment and assimilation" (p. 50) and then transforms this into a "radical voice" (p. 51). The process of transformation from "slightest resistance" to "radical" remains a mystery. Much more convincing, though, is Senier's contention that women reformers such as Jackson used Indian issues as a vehicle to exercise political power in a system that consistently denied them access.

Senier's treatment of Sarah Winnemucca's case, which might be of particular interest to readers of this journal, is more nuanced and compelling. As an Indian woman, Winnemucca demonstrated a commitment to her own community. Even though she has been criticized over the years—by Indians and whites—for supposedly "catering to whites and endorsing assimilation" (p. 75), Senier maintains, and effectively demonstrates, that Winnemucca's tableaux performances, lectures, and autobiography offered, at times, pointed critiques of the values which underwrote allotment and assimilation. She articulated a powerful commitment to "communitism" while her primary purpose was to demonstrate that Paiutes shared a common humanity with whites while allowing for cultural difference. She also sharply criticized corrupt government agents and consequently became the recipient of slanderous attacks, mostly lobbed by white men. Winnemucca's life showed neither uncomplicated nor uncontested assimilation but rather "canny adaptation" (p. 101). She was not consistent, but rather "contingent and conflicting" (p. 114). Winnemucca, in sum, was a very complicated person.

The book is most convincing in its claim that these women's importance rests, in part, on the fact that they spoke out forcefully and emphatically, and, thus, resisted those who preferred women not to engage in public debate and speech. Its arguments regarding issues of policy and assimilation are more tenuous. The author herself admits that while the women's texts can be read as resistant, another scholar could easily argue their complicity with assimilation. The question then becomes, which is the more appropriate, prominent, or consistent way to read their texts—resistance or complicity? Or is this even the right question?

My own sense is that these women represent resistance sometimes, complicity at others, and various positions in between, depending on the moment and the circumstance. Senier comes the closest to acknowledging this fundamental ambivalence in the discussion on Winnemucca. Part of the problem elsewhere, however, seems to be a tendency to posit pro-assimilation as the opposite of self-determination. This kind of either/or binary opposition obscures the complexities of experience and denies the very real possibility that the two can be joined in one person. What better example can one offer than twentieth century Indian lawyers who use their assimilated skills to promote treaty rights in American courts? The author undoubtedly understands this and, yet, by emphasizing resistance, she sometimes does not adequately acknowledge the fundamental ambivalence, contingency, and inconsistencies which rest at the heart



of these texts and many others of this era—including those written by whites.

Further, the author overstates the extent to which assimilation ruled the intellectual climate during the era. True, assimilation provided the dominant model and shaped most policy initiatives. But many voices—Indian and non-Indian, men and women—simultaneously questioned the wisdom of it and loudly acknowledged the legitimacy and value of Indian cultures, including its inclination toward communally held lands. How else can we explain the emergence of the Indian New Deal policy by the 1930s? Did this radical policy shift emerge from nowhere? Or, did it have at its foundation, several decades worth of policy critics who called into question the fundamental assumptions of assimilation?

This is a thoughtful and challenging book, though the tendency to rely on the language of literary criticism, not shared by outsiders to the field, sometimes obscures, rather than advances, the book's arguments. It certainly deserves a look by scholars of Indian history, women's studies, and literature.

Sherry L. Smith

*Southern Methodist University*

*Celluloid Indians: Native Americans and Film.* By Jacqueline Kilpatrick (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1999)

*Celluloid Indians* is a useful survey describing how American films have treated Indians from film's beginnings in the 1890s up to the 1998 Indian-produced *Smoke Signals*. The book starts by tracing the origins of Indian stereotypes in fiction and Wild West Shows and then discusses the first few decades of films featuring Indian characters, who were rarely played by Indian actors. The second half of the book focuses on the 1980s and the 1990s, and consists mainly of plot summaries, with occasional commentary on how certain stereotypes appeared in the film or were "deconstructed" by a filmmaker through ironic or comedic incidents and wordplay.

Kilpatrick's introduction promises to examine three domains of Indian stereotypes—mental, sexual, and spiritual—and to ask whether greater Indian involvement and control has made a difference in the kinds of Native-American images that films generate. She follows up on this promise with frequent observations on the "mental"—that is, on how Hollywood has persistently presented Indians as "stupid or dumb" (p. xvii). Particularly interesting are Kilpatrick's examples of how film's spoken language could so effectively, yet subtly, denigrate Indian intelligence by confining their speech to gibberish, as in "Me Heap Big Indian" or, to take a more famous example from another movie genre, "Me Tarzan. You Jane." Even in movie scripts where Indians

were allowed to speak with grammatical facility, most of the speaking was done by a white actor who played the lead, while Indians with a few, sycophantic lines made up the backdrop. Another mechanism producing images of Indian mental inferiority, which Kilpatrick persuasively explicates, was the recurring plot development in which a white man, Kevin Costner in *Dances with Wolves*, for instance, ends up being a better Indian than the Indians themselves. Unfortunately, the final chapter of the book, which deals with recent films made by Indians, does not explicitly address the same issues Kilpatrick explored for the earlier years of Hollywood moviemaking. The book ends, therefore, without any definitive answer to the question the author raised in her introduction. Implicitly, however, we are able to see that Native filmmakers have differed from their non-Indian predecessors because their films center around smart Indian characters who are inventive, witty, and quick to parody the entrenched stereotypes.

*Celluloid Indians* has two main strengths: its coverage of the entire century of American film; and the depth of detail Kilpatrick provides on the past two decades, especially the in-depth examination of lesser-known films by Native artists that have never seen mainstream distribution. Kilpatrick is less successful at building her own coherent narrative, especially in the latter half of the book which overdoes the plot synopses and falls short on analysis. Readers familiar with the literature on Indians and film stereotypes might hope for more novel insights in *Celluloid Indians*. This book will serve novices especially well, however, in its thorough, descriptive overview of how Indian stereotypes have changed over the course of the twentieth century, and how a rising corps of Native filmmakers are challenging the shallow, unidimensional images most moviegoers have accepted as true characterizations of American Indians.

Nancy Shoemaker  
*University of Connecticut.*

*Kit Carson & the Indians.* By Tom Dunlay (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000)

In this substantial book, Tom Dunlay, a freelance writer, takes on the task of resurrecting Kit Carson's reputation by viewing him as a man not a symbol. His main thesis that Carson, once regarded as a frontier hero, has come under significant attack over the past couple of decades by historians. This has occurred in connection with an increased emphasis on the Indian viewpoint of historical events and the consequent portrayal of leading white western personalities in an unfavorable light. Because of his prominence as a mountain man, guide, Indian agent, and soldier, Carson has received much unfavorable

press. In the hands of writers like Clifford E. Trafzer (*The Kit Carson Campaign: The Last Great Navajo War*, 1982), Carson is depicted as a "genocidal racist." Even those who don't go that far see him as an unfavorable symbol of western expansion. Dunlay disagrees with these characterizations and stereotypical interpretations.

Focusing on each phase of Carson's contact with the Indians, Dunlay starts off by cautioning the reader to remember "that he lived in the early and middle nineteenth century, not in the late twentieth" (p. 17). His account of Carson's life as a mountain man argues that his relations with the native population varied to such a degree that he cannot be considered a racist. Rather, he was, like the Indians, ethnocentric. He may not have regarded the natives as equals, but neither did he necessarily hate them. In fact, he drew distinctions between different groups, depending on their actions. Violence was part of life in the mountains, and white men were involved in many unfortunate and brutal incidents. Nevertheless, the Indians themselves were guilty of the same type of activity. Overall, Carson and his companions "were not practicing genocide, nor did they seek to conquer the Indians, to dispossess them, or to change their culture" (p. 81). In general, Dunlay views Carson's mountain man experiences as rather logical, his activities ranging from compassionate to violent, depending on the situation.

Carson served as a federal Indian agent among the Jicarilla Apache and Muache Ute for seven years (1854-61). Here we see, once again, the personal side of his relationship with the Native-American population. As Carson worked for what he regarded as the Indians' best interest, he became a strong advocate of the reservation system. Accepting the argument of the time that reservations offered an "alternative to extinction," Dunlay depicts Carson as a pragmatic official who desired to separate the Indians from white settlement. Although this resulted in Indian dispossession and opened the way for non-Indian profiteers, it seemed the only way of bringing peace to the frontier—a beneficial move for both sides. While modern-day critics argue that Indian policy should have been more tolerant of Indian interests, Dunlay views this position as impractical given the nineteenth-century's ethnocentric environment. If the reservation system had not been implemented, the alternative would have been worse. This possibility was something that Carson understood.

Carson's most controversial actions involved his role in the Navajo campaign of 1863-64 and the subsequent Long Walk to the reservation at the Bosque Redondo. Commanding an army that invaded the tribal homeland, Carson defeated the Navajo in what has become a seminal event in their history. Working under the "Extermination Order" of General James H. Carleton, Carson has not fared well with recent historians, since he has been charged with overt brutality or with blindly following orders (reminiscent of events in Viet Nam). Yet, Dunlay argues that Carson only reluctantly went to war, that he treated the Navajo as humanely as possible, and that the action could in no way be



considered "genocide" (p. 307). Nor was General Carleton the "maniac" that some historians have imagined.

Overall, this is the most extensively researched biography of Kit Carson. Whether it is convincing will depend on the reader's viewpoint. Nevertheless, it brings a more balanced view of nineteenth-century Indian policy to contemporary scholarship and is hard to dismiss. Dunlay brings the man to life by showing that he cannot be defined by a single word. His relationship with the Indians was complex. He was neither a saint nor a devil, just a man who lived among the tribes of the West for most of his life and left a legacy.

Aside from its controversial interpretation, the book does suffer from a couple of notable problems. It is much longer than necessary and somewhat redundant. The same points are repeated many times, as are some of the quotes. Also, while there are extensive notes, there is no bibliography, making it difficult to look up references. Still, this is a "must read" for anyone interested in Indian relations, Navajo history, or Kit Carson.

Robert A. Trennert  
Arizona State University

*The Urban Indian Experience in America.* By Donald L. Fixico (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000)

Nearly two-thirds of the Indian population today lives in urban areas, yet Indian studies is rooted in studies of reservations and of the past. Historian Donald Fixico began his work in twentieth-century American Indian history with his book, *Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy, 1945–1960* (1986). That important work is now out of print, much to the chagrin of eager graduate students and faculty looking to incorporate Indians into their courses. Fixico's latest and much anticipated work, *The Urban Indian Experience in America*, develops the most interesting themes from *Termination and Relocation*.

In terms of method, Fixico relies on an array of sources. As a historian, he turns to traditional archives. He also conducted extensive fieldwork, however, in urban Indian communities throughout the country. He leaves no stone unturned. Virtually every experience any urban Indian could imagine as having affected her life is rendered into a category of analysis in this study. Chapter themes include relocation, stereotypes, traditionalism, economics, alcoholism, health, pan-Indianism, education, the Indian middle class, and identity. Fixico demonstrates his fearlessness in choosing the topic of urban Indians, and, even more so, in the way he chooses to treat it. He engages virtually every subject, both taboo and public. What emerges is a portrayal of the twentieth-century Indian community that is both complex and simple, tragic and

inspirational. By Fixico's own account, he employs a distinctly Indian way of telling the story of urban Indians through the "application of the oral tradition" (p. xi). His analysis of these subjects subverts any easy reductions. Fixico acknowledges repeatedly the damage done to Indian communities, but he refuses to let the story end there. He gives his readers countless facts, stories, figures, and data all pointing to Indian responses to the various crises engendered by urbanization. He begins each chapter with a vignette from a composite figure, specifically, an urban Lakota man. Each chapter is also filled with lengthy quotes from urban Indians, male and female, from many communities. He chooses to protect his informants by not quoting them verbatim and by not using their full names.

Fixico documents the transition for urban Indians from their identities as tribal members to urban Indians. He charts this transition as one that is never wholly complete for the majority of the urban Indian population, "but actually there is only limited involvement" (p. 57). But a transition, as he sees it, takes place nonetheless. As he puts it, "urbanization has rapidly undermined the legacy of native traditionalism" (p. 6). The transition from tribal to urban life is incredibly bumpy. To support this idea, Fixico offers the example of an Indian man trapped in his hotel room for twenty-four hours because he had no idea how to use the phone and did not want to ask for assistance (p. 14). Large numbers of Indians—approximately 100,000 between 1945 and 1957—faced tremendous costs in making this transition. Fixico categorizes the transition from tribal to urban as one that is dualistic: "Indian youths growing up in an urban environment often become teachers, lawyers, doctors, and other professionals. It is an unfortunate fact, however, that success in the white world is costing them their native culture" (p. 25).

This transition from a tribal identity to an urban Indian identity is in no way seamless or lacking in tragedy. Fixico finds several sources for these difficulties. The first he documents is stereotypes. From Fixico's perspective, Indians living in urban areas face discrimination, ridicule, and hostility from the non-Indian population because of stereotypes served up by film, news, and television. Further, these stereotypes have been incorporated into urban Indian self-identity in destructive ways, "Unfortunately some American Indian youths identify with the historic image, which has no tangible distinct characteristics of tribalism and native culture. In identifying as Indians, native youth encounter an identity crisis because they have to establish the identity of an Indian themselves. Frequently they resort to militant means, since the climax of the Red Power Movement of the 1960s enabled Indian expression against the past injustices to American Indians" (p. 36). Fixico would also argue that Indians have internalized the stereotype of the stoic Indian and the drunken Indian and that some have come to embody these images (p. 44).

Fixico avoids simplicity and reductionism by documenting the retention of traditionalism. For him, how Indians adapt to urban environments takes place

along traditional lines. Indian involvement in individual friendships, neighborhood formations, powwows, the creation of urban Indian centers and urban Indian health care facilities, even drinking, occurs along traditional paths. As Fixico puts it, "this creation of a pan-Indianism sub-culture is based on traditional tribal social structures and natives with alterations and adaptations made to fit the urban setting [sic]" (p. 57). Fixico sees reason, therefore, for hope: "Forgetting the old ways of tribal traditions is impossible for American Indians . . . Indian people will never forget who they are" (p. 60).

Despite this hope, Fixico never lets us forget the dismal circumstances of urban Indian life and, especially, urban Indian identity. In the end, he sees Indians in a dualistic struggle, "Although American Indians live in cities, their lives do not fit into the reality of the urban mainstream. Hence, life and reality are not always the same when attempting to meld two different cultures together" (p. 176). This schism between life and reality results in a "psychological imbalance" within urban Indians and then even "a form of schizophrenia." Urban Indians may appear "outwardly solid, but there is confusion inside" (p. 179). Again, though, Fixico turns this tragedy around and argues that urban Indians have "established a new definition for the rest of the country" of what it means to be an Indian.

*The Urban Indian Experience in America* serves as a major contribution to both history and American Indian studies. Each chapter holds at least fifty new dissertation and book topics. Twentieth-century American Indian history holds incredible promise for future students and scholars. Fixico has provided us all with an important work which explains the dilemmas and successes of urban Indians and points the way toward important fields of inquiry.

John Heaton  
*University of Alaska, Fairbanks*

*World War II and the American Indian.* By Kenneth William Townsend (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000)

During World War II, twenty-five thousand Indians served on the battlefields of Europe and Asia. Another forty thousand, both men and women, contributed to the war effort through employment in factories and hospitals around the nation. In *World War II and the American Indian*, historian Kenneth William Townsend discusses the effects of this event on the attitudes of American Indians.

According to Townsend, World War II was a crucial event in American-Indian history. It gave rise to two seemingly contradictory developments: the prospect of assimilation into mainstream society, and a revival of ethnic pride.



On the one hand, the war dramatically expanded opportunities for Indian assimilation. Young Indian men and women left their reservations in hope of learning the skills that would smooth the way for their integration into white society. On the other hand, their service in the war also strengthened their sense of identity, history, and self-worth. Many Indian men felt a strong sense of tradition as they entered military service. Some tribes revived ancient ceremonial traditions, such as the Sun Dance, to provide spiritual support for their men and women overseas. The Jemez Pueblo, the Iroquois, the Poncas, and the Chippewas of Michigan declared war on the Axis powers as an expression of their sovereignty. In some instances, the war caused the Bureau of Indian Affairs to reverse its earlier policies. Whereas previously Indians were forbidden to speak their native languages, now the Navy made effective use of their language skills by employing them as code talkers. Prior to World War II, the government had discouraged the "warrior tradition," now, however, it exploited this stereotype for propaganda purposes.

Townsend argues that the war marked a crossroads for American Indians. Indians were under the impression that they would be given the opportunity to determine their own future after the war. They believed they could choose between assimilating into mainstream society or returning to their own communities, where they could put their newly acquired administrative and technical skills to work. Many returning Indian veterans expected their war-time sacrifices to be rewarded with greater self-determination for their tribes. Upon returning, however, they soon learned that their choices were, in fact, limited. Job opportunities on the reservations, for example, had been greatly reduced during the war when the federal government began to dismantle the Industrial Recovery Act. The government also began experimenting with policies such as Relocation and Termination that struck at the heart of Indian self-determination. Instead of providing Indians with a number of choices, the government once again reverted to a policy of forced assimilation. White society remained, however, closed to many Indians. Racism, prejudice, and other factors (such as the precarious condition of the American economy after World War II) prevented many Indians from entering mainstream society. Faced with these limitations, Indians responded with a new sense of self-awareness. Instead of following the path of forced assimilation, the path they chose to follow after 1945 "was that leading directly toward a renewed pride in Indian culture and history—the forerunner of the Red Power movement that arose in the 1960s" (p. 228).

This study covers much that has already been explored by Alison R. Bernstein in her book, *American Indians and World War II: Towards a New Era in Indian Affairs* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991). Still, Townsend's work has a lot to offer for the student of Indian Policy in the United States. His discussion of the Nazi-backed American Indian Federation is fascinating, as is his treatment of Indian "draft resisters" during the war. The author points out that

most draft resisters did not actually oppose the war against the Axis powers, but the draft itself, which, they believed, violated their tribal sovereignty and their treaty rights. Overall, Indian support for the American war effort was overwhelming. Indians who were dismissed for service believed, in fact, that they had been discriminated against by draft registrars. Townsend provides many interesting discussions like this one in this book. They not only make it an important work, but also make it a "pleasant read."

Mark van de Logt  
Oklahoma State University

*The Wild Frontier: Atrocities During the American-Indian War from Jamestown Colony to Wounded Knee.* By William M. Osborn (New York: Random House, 2000)

William M. Osborn's book, *The Wild Frontier*, represents a type of history that eschews analysis in favor of letting examples speak for themselves. While on the surface this approach seems admirable, in practice, such histories often end up reproducing stereotypes and misinformation, since they assume that historical context only muddies the waters instead of clearing them. Osborn's purpose is to trace the atrocities that occurred during the American-Indian War, which he defines as extending from "Jamestown Colony to [the first] Wounded Knee." He plans to examine the atrocities committed by Indians against settlers, whom he initially defines as "colonists, soldiers, militia, government people, farmers, hunters, trappers, merchants, miners, and other Americans who came in contact with the Indians between 1607 and 1890, as well as the English colonists before the American Revolution" (p. xiii). His underlying theme appears to be that Indians committed more atrocities than "Americans."

Several problems prevent him, however, from successfully completing his task. Unintentionally or not, he traffics in stereotypes about both the Indians and the Americans. He tends to mush the Indians together into a single homogenous and amorphous group. Chapter 2, entitled "Some Indian Cultural Characteristics," exemplifies this problem. On the other hand, he does the same with "Americans," a broad term that at various points in the text appears to exclude the Spanish and the French as well as the African-Americans. In chapter 3, "Some Settler Cultural Characteristics," he repeats the old stereotypical dichotomy that held Euro-American meant civilized and Indian meant uncivilized if not downright barbaric. Repeating such stereotypes weakens his assertion that he is presenting a balanced view of the atrocities.

The second major problem marring this project is the author's use of sources.

He tends to string together block quotes with little or no explanation of their source. Through a careful reading of the footnotes, however, the reader learns that Osborn read few if any of the primary accounts himself. Instead, he cites secondary sources, ranging from histories of Native America to general American history textbooks. In some cases, he relies on older works which have been replaced by much better analyses. While Osborn is well-read, his synthesis of the information leaves much to be desired.

Osborn's discussion of the Trail of Tears (pp.173-178) presents an excellent example of these problems. He discusses the Trail without mentioning the gold crisis in Cherokee territory, and Georgia's encroachment upon it. He implies that the Cherokees agreed to move and then reneged on the agreement. He ignores the Supreme Court cases. And, despite starting the section by portraying the Cherokee as civilized, once they are relocated to Indian Territory, he reinvents them as savages attacking innocent white settlers (many of whom were squatting on Cherokee land). He relies heavily on only two histories of the Trail of Tears, and does not even examine the available and published document collections.

Finally, the poor organization of the work creates another stumbling block. In some chapters, he uses very few dates, allowing incidents of atrocities on both sides to run together as if they were constant. Some chapters, while claiming to be chronological, like chapter 4, actually are not. Additionally, his lack of clear definitions for certain terms, such as "West" and "frontier," makes for confusing crossovers, where one chapter discusses one "frontier," and the next one discusses a different one, without so much as a geographical definition.

In sum, *The Wild Frontier* only adds to Native American literature in two ways. First, it may introduce readers to issues in Native American history and lead them to read more balanced and better researched works. Second, it certainly provides an excellent tool for teaching critical thinking to students. Giving undergraduates or even graduate students a chapter and asking them to examine its strengths and weaknesses could certainly teach them about how not to write a history.

C. L. Higham  
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*American Indian Literature, Environmental Justice, and Ecocriticism: The Middle Place.*  
By Joni Adamson (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001)

In the introduction to *American Indian Literature, Environmental Justice, and Ecocriticism: The Middle Place*, Joni Adamson describes her critical methodology as "Narrative scholarship [that] is based on the notion that life experiences shape and define the critic as a person and cannot be discarded when the critic enters into a piece of writing" (p. xviii). This approach, where Adamson tells personal stories, engages the reader and makes her case plain. Indeed, I am quite sympathetic to many of the environmental arguments put forth by this study. However, such an approach, where the chapters are framed in terms of a personal journey by the author, also reveals the book's weaknesses.

The author establishes her authority to write on this topic by telling of her experiences teaching American Indian students in a university program and in a high school in the Tohono O'odham Nation. Her descriptions are vivid and fit into the overall premise of the book that indigenous peoples understand the need for balance between the natural world and human beings in "the middle place." Adamson effectively critiques both Edward Abbey and Terry Tempest Williams by suggesting they have each constructed false polarizations between pristine wilderness and "civilization" without recognizing positive human interactions in the natural world. She notes particularly that Abbey's attitude toward the Navajo Nation is troubling.

As far as providing a context for the work within environmental criticism, the scholarship seems sound as many ecocritics are cited and incorporated into the argument. Adamson's reading of American Indian authors is, however, problematic. Like many scholars, she chooses texts which will verify her argument. Occasionally, though, the Native writing gets lost in the ecocritical agenda. For example, the chapter on *Tracks* by Louise Erdrich is about twenty-six pages long, and of those pages only eleven discuss the novel itself. Furthermore, in this chapter as in others, there is little critical context for the primary literature, particularly from Native scholars or in presenting tribal information.

Adamson is correct in arguing about particular relationships between Native peoples and landscapes, and she avoids some of the romantic trappings associated with placing noble savages in the wilderness. Her reading of Simon Ortiz's literature is strong. One of his narratives is the source of her work's subtitle, "The Middle Place." It treats the traditional garden as a respectful alteration of the natural environment. She effectively discusses Ortiz's home of the Acoma Pueblo in his writing, with a historical perspective, and the violation of the land by multinational corporations. She smartly observes:

For the Shoshonean and other American Indian peoples, the fight for sacred places and traditional homelands is not simply about preserving valued environmental qualities in specific locations of gaining deep experiential knowledge of nature. For them, unique geologic features within their homelands are often alive with the mythic,

historical, and sacred meaning of their cultures; these places are expressive of a particular way of life (p. 71).

What is missing from the general political awareness of the analysis is an awareness of tribal sovereignty, the fact that Indian Nations are independent and have specific rights and protections (whether or not those rights and protections are morally observed).

Joy Harjo's poetry is introduced by showing how language and land are interconnected. The author challenges newspaper reviews of *Almanac of the Dead* by Leslie Marmon Silko, by presenting a case for consideration of hemispheric environmental and political issues. Silko's novel is massive and difficult, but Adamson extracts an ecocritical theme from it that helps make it more comprehensible. Because these discussions are subsumed in an ecocritical agenda, though, I have to wonder about the degree to which the author has colonized Native literatures for her own purposes, noble though they may be.

In several places she seems unaware of the ways "American Indian" literatures are foregrounded, beginning with her title itself. The order, *American Indian Literature, Environmental Justice, and Ecocriticism*, suggests that this study is an explication of Native literatures within the framework of the other topics, when, in fact, it is an ecocritical and environmental study, utilizing these literatures for that purpose. The author has authority to write about these topics because of her teaching experiences and her familiarity with the locale, as related in her personal narratives. I have no doubt of her sincerity or commitment to teach Native students. As she relates, her teaching assistant, Adrienne King, is of "Diné, Ottawa, and Delaware descent" (p.4). All this information suggests that the author has an intimacy with the thesis regarding "the insights and challenges that Native American literature offers to the emerging culture of environmental concern and the emerging field of ecological literary criticism" (p.14).

Although Adamson situates herself as a non-Indian critic dealing with American Indian literatures, she does not really address the complicated nature of that position. In the passage quoted above, she makes a clear distinction between the "other" of her narrative and her own rhetorical voice. Even more clearly, in her first person accounts that frame her critical discussions, she uses anonymous Native students as a source for her "narrative scholarship." If the larger question is, "Who can write about American Indian literatures?"; the answer would be the same as any other area of academic discipline: whoever does the work. That includes study and familiarity with scholarship in the field, and in the field of American Indian literatures this means paying particular attention to indigenous critics who clearly understand the interdependences between literature and land. The foundation of ecocriticism is firmly laid in this study, but the context of American Indian scholarship is not.

Perhaps tribal peoples, themselves, would present these literary critical readings of "Environmental Justice and Ecocriticism" in a similar manner to

Adamson's, but probably not. More likely, they would present their case as in the recent documentary film, *In the Light of Reverence* (PBS, Point of View Series, 14 August 2001). Native filmmaker Melinda Maynor (Lumbee) not only addresses the issue of environmental justice with the Hopi nation in Arizona, the Lakota at Devil's Tower, and the Wintu of California, but she also documents the fact that indigenous land issues are inseparable from tribal sovereignty.

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*Reimagining Indians: Native Americans through Anglo Eyes, 1880-1940.* By Sherry L. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)

*Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination.* By Shari M. Huhndorf (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001)

It has been a scholarly truism for some time now that Euro-Americans have found in Native Americans what they wanted and needed to find, and used Native America as a blank canvas upon which to work out their own cultural dilemmas. Indeed, it may not go too far to say that the images of, and ideas about, Native Americans generated since the sixteenth century constitute figments of the Euro-American imagination. Both books under review here descend from the scholarly work of Robert Berkhofer, Roy Harvey Pearce and others to look at how Indians have been imagined and reimagined by whites.

Sherry Smith examines a collection of writers in the roughly fifty-year period between the passage of the Dawes Act (1887) and the initiation of the "Indian New Deal" under the Bureau of Indian Affairs head, John Collier, during the 1930s. Their work "gradually, but undeniably nudged Anglo-Americans into reconsidering not only their view of Indians, but also of the Indians' place in this country" (p.4). The bulk of her book constitutes a set of small biographies of these writers, some of whom may be familiar, others of whom may not be so well known.

The first part of the book, "Eastern Adventurers," looks at Charles Ersking Scott Wood, George Bird Grinnell, Walter McClintock, and (briefly and a bit perfunctorily) Mary Roberts Rinehart. These authors shared a sensibility that was still rooted in the nineteenth century, and, while they were saddened by or critical of Indian policy, they could not envision any alternatives.

In Part Two, "Western Enthusiasts," Smith sketches the careers of Frank Bird Linderman (the man whose name is the answer to the trivia question: "Who lost the Congressional race so that Jeanette Rankin could become the first woman



elected to the House of Representatives?"), Charles Fletcher Lummis, and George Wharton James. These figures used their work on Indians as a way of repositioning the West in the Eastern imagination.

The final section, "Mothers of Invention," focuses on the work of Mary Austin, Anna Ickes (wife of New Dealer Harold Ickes), and Mabel Dodge Luhan. Luhan, in particular, represents for Smith "the culminating figure" in the process of generating a more compassionate and expansive view of Native Americans.

These are largely sympathetic portraits, even if a few of Smith's cast strike this reader as a bit creepy, like George Wharton James who forced his camera on Acoma Indians whether they wanted it or not. Smith believes that all of these people "deliberately insisted on the fundamental humanity of Indian people," during a period when "the supposedly scientific basis of racial difference and racial hierarchies held sway." In the end, she concludes, that point "must be underscored" (p. 217).

Still, there is more going on with these figures than creating a hospitable place for Indians in the Euro-American imagination, as Smith well knows. All these characters shared "anxieties about modernity" which lie just below the surface of works "supposedly devoted to articulating the wonders of Indian cultures" (p. 215). And, yet, Smith doesn't tackle this or other issues much in this study. As set pieces, these biographies don't venture too far afield analytically from the careers of the subjects. This fact proves to be frustrating because in resurrecting these particular writers, Smith has raised a number of interesting questions about the intersection of modernism, primitivism, feminism, and popular culture, with the role Indians played in them. Still, *Reimagining Indians* will help us rethink what happened to Native Americans in the Euro-American mind in the period after the "Indian problem" had allegedly been "solved."

None of the writers examined by Smith is discussed or even indexed in Shari Huhndorf's *Going Native*, and it isn't merely that she examines other subjects. "Going native" describes a wide range of practices where Euro-Americans adopted "some vision of native life" in order "to maintain European-American racial and national identities" (p. 8). In Huhndorf's view, therefore, "[w]hile those who go native frequently claim benevolence toward Native peoples, they reaffirm white dominance by making some (usually distorted) vision of Native life subservient to the needs of the colonizing culture" (p. 5).

Employing theoretical apparatus developed by Tony Bennett, Stuart Hall, and others to unpack the meanings of popular culture, Huhndorf wants to demonstrate that "going native" contributed to the dominance of "particular visions of the nation's history," and how "their inherent contradictions both conceal and betray white America's colonial past and its hegemonic aspirations" (p. 12). With this rather blunt instrument, Huhndorf whacks away, in chapters which consider the expositions of 1876 and 1893; the Boy Scouts; the film "Nanook of the North"; Asa Carter's two novels *Gone to Texas* (probably

better known in the Clint Eastwood adaptation "The Outlaw Josey Wales") and *The Education of Little Tree*; the New Ager Lynn Andrews and her book *Medicine Woman*; and a brief visit to the new Heye Center museum in New York. In each chapter, the subjects are different but the conclusions are largely the same: whenever white Americans go native, they really celebrate their whiteness in ways that deny that that's what they're doing, recapitulating and reinforcing the nation's history of violence and conquest.

Huhndorf is at her best when she gives us close readings of texts (both written and celluloid). The juxtaposition of *Medicine Woman* with Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative is particularly good. She is considerably less adroit as an historian, and that's a problem since much of this book constitutes an historical project, arranged as it is chronologically across the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Indeed, the book evidences remarkably little of what historians would consider primary or original research, and relies almost entirely, instead, on the work of other scholars. In some cases that simply means a lot of rehashing—her treatments of the two fairs, for example, offers nothing that Robert Rydell and others haven't already pointed out.

More problematically, however, this reliance constitutes a kind of scholarly laziness. On page 31, for example, she quotes William Dean Howells after his visit to the 1876 Centennial to the effect that the inevitable extinction of the Indians was "a cause not for sorrow but for celebration." In fact, she has quoted scholar Robert Trennert quoting Howells. Had she bothered to pull the 1876 volume (38) of the *Atlantic* off of the shelf, she would have discovered that Howells made his brutal remarks specifically about the Apaches and Comanches whom he saw as victimizing the "peaceful and industrious" Pueblos of New Mexico. Howells says vicious things in this essay that bolster the point Huhndorf wants to make, but at the same time he plays with the idea that "bad" Indians ought to go extinct so that "good" Indians can survive, a more subtle and complicated position than Huhndorf has made it out to be. Likewise, in discussing the complicated relationship the Cherokee had with slavery, white southerners and the Civil War, Huhndorf says that "the majority oppose[d] slavery on ideological grounds . . ." (p. 144). That's an extraordinary assertion to make without a footnote, and it isn't at all clear how she knows this to be true, if in fact it is.

In these ways, *Going Native* isn't so much polemical, which it surely is, as reckless. How many books justify themselves with such apocalyptic prophesy as, "I also suggest that white America's failure to come to terms with its terrible past destines it to repeat the violence marking its origins" (p. 18)? There is much here that is surely right, but Huhndorf's thesis is so over-argued, there is no room for nuance or complexity. As a result her condemnations are sweeping and indiscriminate. Two examples will suffice in this regard. In discussing *The Education of Little Tree*, a Native American growing-up tale that turns out to have been written by Klan member and George Wallace speech writer Asa

Carter, Huhndorf finds it “indicative of postwar American history that the political left and the far right—both ultimately concerned with maintaining white dominance—could converge in Asa Forrest Carter and his work” (p. 136). The jaw drops at the political and social history conflated and elided in that sentence.

She concludes, likewise, by charging visitors to the Heye Center with complicity in Native American colonization: “the conquest is reenacted daily by the museum’s visitors, who gaze upon these displays of Nativeness much as their predecessors had a century earlier . . .” (p. 201). Really? By merely walking through the door? In fact, she hasn’t the faintest idea what museum visitors take away from the exhibits—her notes don’t indicate that she spoke to a single one—she simply assumes them to absorb dumbly the insidiousness she has revealed. Instruments of popular culture were sites of “consent and resistance” on page 13 in Huhndorf’s work; by page 201 they represent merely heavy-handed hegemony. And so it goes.

The back cover blurbs on my copy of *Going Native* call it “brave” and “courageous.” These seem odd choices to describe a book that marches so rhythmically in lock-step with the fashions current among many literary critics and the orthodoxies that govern the nouveau American Studies. Little here will strike readers familiar with recent critical theory or analytic methods as particularly new, much less brave. Indeed, given the way in which scholarly winds have blown, Shari Huhndorf may have taken greater risks if she had tried to revive, at least a little bit, the reputations of the authors she considered rather than indicting them as nothing more than agents of oppression and genocide.

Steve Conn  
*Ohio State University*



# Collecting the Past



## Selections from the Nevada Historical Society January 17 through June 28, 2003

### PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

#### Collecting The Past Speakers Series

- **February 12 - Peter Bandurraga**, Nevada Historical Society Director, talks about the making of the exhibition, *Collecting the Past: Selections from the Nevada Historical Society*
- **April 16 - Howard Rosenberg**, UNR Professor of Art. Collecting Antiques
- **May 14 - Jim McCormick**, UNR Professor Emeritus of Art

Admission is free.  
All programs begin at 7 p. m.

### PROGRAMS FOR KIDS

- **February 15 - Pastel workshop**, oil pastels on colored construction paper, creating landscapes.
- **April 5 - Portraiture and self-portrait**
- **May 3 - Portraiture and self-portrait**, with instruction given in Spanish.

All classes are taught by **Margery Hall Marshall**, and are on Saturdays, from **10a.m. to noon**, for children between the **ages of 6 and 8**. Classes are free of charge. Due to space limitations, **class size is limited to 15** so **pre-registration is required**.

*All lectures and classes are at the Nevada Historical Society*

# Nevada Historical Society Docent Council

## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

- The Nevada Historical Society Docent Council will award a scholarship/stipend to any graduate student working on an aspect of Nevada history, attending a University of Nevada campus, for the purpose of attending a professional seminar to present a paper. The amount of the scholarship for the 2003 year will be \$300, and more than one may be awarded.
- The completed application must be returned to the Nevada Historical Society Docent Council by June 1, 2003 for consideration of funds to be awarded in September, 2003. In addition, a letter of recommendation, signed by the student's graduate advisor, is required.
- To obtain a copy of the scholarship application call 688-1190 or get on line at *www.nevadaculture.org* and go to the Nevada Historical Society website to download a copy.

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\_\_\_\_\_ **Nevada State Museum**  
600 North Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701

\_\_\_\_\_ **Lost City Museum**  
721 South Highway 169  
Overton, NV 89040

\_\_\_\_\_ **Nevada State Railroad Museum**  
2180 South Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701  
*(Please contact this museum  
directly for membership,  
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\_\_\_\_\_ **Nevada State Museum and  
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700 Twin Lakes Drive  
Las Vegas, NV 89107

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- 15% discount at all museum stores
- Selected invitations to exhibition openings, public programs, educational opportunities and special events
- New Division of Museum and History newsletter to learn all the latest museum and division news

*Check out the back pages in this issue of the  
Quarterly for more details regarding  
new membership categories and benefits!*

# *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*



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Founded in 1904, the Nevada Historical Society seeks to advance the study of the heritage of Nevada. The Society publishes scholarly studies, indexes, guidebooks, bibliographies, and the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*; it collects manuscripts, rare books, artifacts, historical photographs and maps, and makes its collections available for research; it maintains a museum at its Reno facility; and it is engaged in the development and publication of educational materials for use in the public schools.