

JACK DUNCAN BROCK
February 9, 1998

Joan Horne, and myself, Ann Townsend, interviewers for the Town of Paradise Valley Historical Committee, are privileged to speak with Mr. Jack Brock, former Councilman and Mayor of the Town of Paradise Valley.

Interviewer: Thank you, Mr. Brock, for setting aside some time for us in your busy day to talk with us. May we have permission to quote on any or all of your conversation?

Mr. Brock: You certainly may.

Interviewer: Thank you. First of all, are you a native Arizonan?

Mr. Brock: No, I might as well have been though, I've been here since I was eight years old. I could almost consider myself that. What would that be, around 49 years.

Interviewer: Where did you come from?

Mr. Brock: I spent most of my childhood in Evansville, Indiana, although I was born in New York. Three to four months later, we moved to Evansville, Indiana.

Interviewer: You were on the Council, 1974 to 1984, ten long years. (That's correct.) It's really unusual for people to participate that long. I think I met only one other person,

Jack Huntress who was Mayor and on the Council for ten years. I think that's very commendable.

Mr. Brock: Actually it was preceded by a stint of three years on the Board of Adjustment where I eventually served as Chairman.

Interviewer: What made you decide to run for Council. Were there certain issues happening during the 1974-84 time?

Mr. Brock: There was one particular issue that actually came to heart when we began to build our house that gave me the idea that perhaps it might not be a bad idea if I were to serve. One obviously, the intent of the service to the public, but the other was in the process of building our house, we wanted to underground the utility. At the time, the lot we had purchased in 1965 did not have any electricity to it. Consequently, it was required to come from across the street. In the process of discussing this with Mrs. Helen Marston at the old Town Hall, we tried to explain what our intent and purpose was and knowledge. I don't recall exactly what happened other than the fact that Linda and I were on side of the counter, she was on the other and the file folder came flying at us. At that particular point in time, Linda and I discussed it later and thought that it might be a good idea if I got involved with the Town. It was over that particular issue that got me involved.

Interviewer: Whether you could get electricity to your property?

Mr. Brock: The manner in which I wanted to do was to underground it. For some reason, I could not make that clear or at least acceptable and was told constantly that there was a pole down the street and you could get power from that but I was dead set on undergrounding.

Interviewer: How ironic because we are still working in 1998 on undergrounding utilities.

Mr. Brock: I understand. We created some incentive during my period on the Council to have undergrounding done to some relief. It worked very well at the time. This was back in 1968 or so. I just couldn't get across the point that I wanted to underground.

Interviewer: Wasn't it about the late '60's when they had a policy that that was their ultimate goal?

Mr. Brock: I think it has always been an ultimate goal since the beginning of incorporation in '61. There had never been much done about it other than the philosophy. I wasn't until the early '70's that there was a fund created for an improvement district.

Interviewer: Are there are other things on the Council that were a challenge to you? Is there anything you want to share?

Mr. Brock: There are several things that I was pleased or happy about. One was the development of Lincoln Drive. We had lost a little girl named Becky Levi by an accident there. The development of streets are based on certain warrants. Consequently, that warranted the need to look into the street. We have always felt that we did not want to have a thoroughfare through the Town, but the reality of Scottsdale on one side and Phoenix on the other, is that the street in its present condition was being used for that purpose.

Interviewer: Was that at the time when Lincoln was just a two-lane country road?

Mr. Brock: With a dirt base and a shoulder. It was just a very dangerous situation so we thought that that was a necessity. The Council approved it. Unfortunately, we were recalled over it. The process prior to the recall situation, I was very sensitive to the fact that I knew that there were some problems out there that needed to be addressed. I have an architectural background and model building. I built a model of the roadway and indicated 26 different changes or what I considered to be improvements to it. They were approved by the Council. Consequently, I think some consideration was given to that in the recall process because I fared better than others, although I think it was a three to one relationship to approve the Council's action.

Interviewer: I remember reading about that in the history books which are made up of clippings at the time, all the Council members survived that recall.

Mr. Brock: Yes, as I said, I think the vote was three to one in support of the Council's action.

Interviewer: Even then, people didn't like change.

Mr. Brock: I'm not too sure it was so much change in that nature as it was to creating something as beneficial as it was. In other words, perhaps if there had been a median between what it is today and what it was, that may have been acceptable. I think what we were trying to do was to look far enough ahead that the road would be worthy of use 25-30 years from now. I think that we have accomplished that.

Interviewer: Yes. I moved here after it was widened and I just can't imagine it never being like before.

Joan Horne: I was here when it was still two lanes. I was asked to sign the petition. Of course, I wasn't a resident and that was out of the question. But I often conjecture about what would have happened if we had a good road but left it at two lanes. Would it have forced Scottsdale and Phoenix to find alternate routes?

Mr. Brock: We had enough background and knowledge to believe that that alternate route would have been MacDonald.

Joan Horne: In other words, it wouldn't have been out of Town. I thought maybe Camelback.

Mr. Brock: That is what everybody assumed that it would be. We began to look at the traffic pattern when you would check down Lincoln at a certain period of time, they would go to MacDonald. That is one reason that we were not supportive at that particular point in time in removing the difficulty of MacDonald with a gyration of the roadway because all it would do is increase traffic. The concept of it going out to Shea and out to Camelback was not realistic. People by nature are going to try to take the shortest route to travel.

Interviewer: Any other challenges? That was a big one.

Mr. Brock: The other one was the mountain preserve. It had always been an initiative to try to maintain the appearance of the mountains. Actually, it was Barry Goldwater's first initiative also. With the quantity of building that seemed to be going on, creating a preserve was the most logical thing to do. In the process of that, many of the developments contributed land. One particular one I can remember, I believe we received something like 13 to 16 acres of their land for the preserve, which benefited all the citizens. We also had a number of people whom we had requested to donate their land. That was accomplished as well. If I'm not mistaken, I believe that same program is going on today.

Interviewer: Yes, in fact, they have a new Trust that Bob Plenge has set up. It is a wonderful program and they are slowly marching forward. Thanks for your initiating that.

Mr. Brock: Well, it's something that I thought was important. The other was the appearance of the mountains. There had been a number of them, especially the ones facing south viewed from Lincoln, where there had been a lot of cut and fill. I could remember being up on that mountain and we had requested and received by donation a company's product, (I'm trying to remember the product, I think it was Eonite) and actually sprayed the mountain myself (on Glen Drive). The intent was to try to make it blend in more toward the mountain than to see that cut and fill. That was something I felt pleased about. The other was the financial position of the Town. We did function in a manner that our second greatest source of revenue was the interest that we gained on the accounts which very few towns have been able to accomplish. As a matter of fact, I think we were the only one in the state. A lot of that is credited to Mary Ann and Oscar who I was fortunate to serve with during that period of time. One of the other considerations too was the contribution we had made. Duncan, Arizona had been flooded and were in dire need of assistance. We had the ability at the time because of a number of surplus funds to donate or contribute the money to the Town itself. I believe it was around \$10,000 or maybe \$15,000.

Interviewer: Where is Duncan?

Mr. Brock: I don't remember. It has absolutely no relationship to my middle name. I thought that was something that I am pleased about too - that we could reach out and help other communities.

Interviewer: You've done a lot already. I see you have a page written of numerous items listed.

Mr. Brock: Some of those are not too good though. One thing that I probably would like to have turned around. I, for some reason, was not able to convince the Council that something called "time share" was a change in use in zoning. Consequently, they approved the time share within the Town at the Hermosa Inn. That project took a toll on the Town as well as the investors in that it was only to benefit one particular individual. Again, I'm not sure how you're using this, I was very disappointed. There were one or two people that could understand this. Baxter, who has passed away since then, was aware of that. He was in real estate and had enough background. We had done some research out of Colorado, New Mexico and so forth, to determine indeed that time share was a change of use. Well there are two things that could have happened. One, I know residents around the area were intimidated. One particular individual that headed Del Webb was confronted in front of the Town Hall and threatened. I had been threatened by phone. It was a fortunate thing in the sense that the person threatening me had his attorney standing next to him advising him he shouldn't be doing it. That had occurred. Plus there is still some funny feelings I have as to whether or not everybody was real

ethical at that point in time and didn't benefit by approving the time share. That's just a candid opinion.

Joan Horne: Well, of course, it went away, as you know. I was at that very heated meeting when you had a dialogue with a member of the audience. There was some name calling going on. (You mean Bill Bliss?.) Yes, that's who I mean. I was at the meeting and it was ugly. I agreed with your position.

Mr. Brock: I think that meeting may have been the one that the gentleman was confronted outside. I know that _____ had confronted me prior to that. The threats, in essence, amounted to the fact that you're not going to live if you disapprove it. I don't know why. I just felt that way about it. It was the inability to convince the other part of the Council that it was a change in use.

Interviewer: Well you lose control if you had passed that.

Mr. Brock: It did pass anyway.

Joan Horne: I mean that it was financially unsuccessful.

Interviewer: That was good, but the Town would feel that they lost control over what could happen with it.

Mr. Brock: It was one of those things that the value inflated overnight. I think it sold for \$1.3 million initially, and before we knew it, the value was well over \$7 million. You just don't do that. There was an awful lot of investors that lived in the Town that I think under the circumstances fought the Town. They were totally supportive of the program. It was just an unfortunate situation. But that was one of those things. I would have preferred for there not to have been a recall although I think in the long run, it probably strengthened the Town a little bit. Unfortunately, the four that were had a little extra work to do. Again, I'm being very candid about this. I probably should have seen that the Planning Director was no longer with us. What he supported or did not support had nothing to do with that particular situation. There were times where I was spending hours reviewing plans that went back to Planning and Zoning and to the Board of Adjustment to identify what was in violation and what wasn't. Not that I thought that wasn't my job or I shouldn't be doing it, but I felt that that capability should have been there. Of course, there were other things that citizens were unhappy about. The way they felt things were handled. I had gotten feedback from developers who said it was totally favorable to them. He had been crazy to go out of his way and do things that really shouldn't have been done. For that reason, I felt strongly about it. As you well know, he eventually had a problem within the Town that is totally unrelated to his ability to function.

Interviewer: Then you became Mayor.

Mr. Brock: That was during that period of time, from '80 to '84. I had begun my quest for the Council at a period of time when there were 19 candidates. I'm 26, new to the

Town and didn't really identify any supporting factors. I had made the cut so to speak, which was the Primary and realized that if I were to be successful then I needed to do something other than what I was doing. I put together a group of people, about 15, and consequently they had advised me on certain things and how to approach things. These were residents of the Town. Not that I knew the 15 people. One just dominoed to the other. Fortunately, John Long was involved in that. John at the time was involved in the Homeowners Association. I think that he may have even been President that year. With their assistance, I was able to come out of that as the top vote getter during the General Election. The same thing occurred at the end of the 10th year. I didn't really want to run but I had an awful lot of people saying, "You need to. You need to." I went through the Primary and was trying. I just didn't have the momentum or feeling that I thought was necessary to make that same effort to be successful. Simply, at that point in time, I withdrew my candidacy.

Interviewer: You gave 10 very important years out of your life for the Town.

Mr. Brock: I've been reminded of that several times by my wife. (She's forgiven you, hasn't she?) No, not really. That may have been what led to the divorce. (I'm sorry, I didn't know.) We had a number of situations that had done that. We also lost a child who was hit by a car on Stanford when he was seven years old. He lived for about five years and the divorce came about 15 years after that. We had worked together constantly at that time, for nearly 25 years. We were married very young at 15 and 17, so 33 years of marriage is reasonable considering the things that had happened. If you look back, she

was exceptionally supportive and it was only because of her that a lot of this could have been done. There was a time I was spending at the end something like 35, 40 hours here.

Joan Horne: I know the feeling.

Mr. Brock: You've been through it.

Joan Horne: If you don't want to answer this, it's okay. But I would like your feelings about two issues, the staggered terms and the direct election of the Mayor.

Mr. Brock: Keeping humor in relationship to the concept of the Mayor and how they are elected, ours was done obviously by the Council as it currently is. Again, coming in somewhat new, not having a political back ground and the age of my fellow Council Members, I was surprised to have the support of being Mayor. I ran against individuals who felt that they should be Mayor. The best reason that I could understand that they came up with is that they look like a Mayor. Peter always said that's the reason he should be Mayor because I guess I didn't at the time, nor do I now, perhaps represent what the average person in this community looks like or dresses like, or whatever. Peter felt that he should be Mayor because of the way he looked. Peter at the time was Vice Mayor. I have for whatever reason been told that I am very political. I'm not sure that I agree with that but that is one of the reasons that Peter had become the Marshal. He had shown an interest in the Marshal but it also eliminated that in line position to the next turn.

Interviewer: Do you think it's a good idea to have staggered terms?

Mr. Brock: No, I don't because of the continuity. As I look back on it, I think people ought to live in the Town for awhile before they get involved. I think they ought to understand the history of the Town and study that a little bit. They have got to have respect for the citizens and staff. In my particular case, I came because I found fault with the staff. I grew to see that difference and importance of having a good sound staff. I think there is a tendency to come in to the Town because they are dissatisfied with how it functions and they are going to change it. I think they need to listen more to the people and to do the best job they can.

Interviewer: It sounds like you're giving advice for current and future Councils.

Mr. Brock: Well, perhaps that's what it is.

Interviewer: That's okay, I was going to ask you that question.

Mr. Brock: I think there is a necessity and I think the reason that motivates a lot of people are egos. I wouldn't have gotten involved if it hadn't probably been for some ego of some kind. To some degree, most people that are in do it because of that reason. It doesn't necessarily mean it can be detrimental, but I think if you place the facts, that in part is probably the reason in some cases. I don't believe in the staggered terms for that basis. As far as electing the Mayor from the standpoint of the general public, I don't

think that leads to the best type of a team. I think that you're dealing with a group of people who have been elected. They're going to best determine or best know who is going to serve the Town better and who is going to be the best leader of their team. What I think that's doing is separating or isolating the Mayor's position from the Council and it can't necessarily work together or feel that you are a group of seven people. Six opposed to one, perhaps. I think more responsibility lies on an individual if he is elected on that basis.

Interviewer: It keeps it from being a popularity contest.

Mr. Brock: That also could lend to it. Generally speaking in the past, and this is years past, it had been a popularity contest, even to the degree that people assumed they were to be Mayor if they were the highest vote getter. I think for a long time, until I got there, that probably was true. The longer you're there, the less votes you're going to get.

Joan Horne: You have baggage that you can't help because you have to make decisions that somebody is going to disagree with.

Interviewer: No, you can't please everyone so you will obviously make somebody unhappy.

Mr. Brock: I have heard not in detail that the Town itself needs help with people being pitched out of Council meetings and stuff like that.

Joan Horne: The four year staggered term I think is more for continuity then you don't have the whole Council up for election and the possibility like if you have twelve people running, of having all new people and nobody to carry forward. That the advantage I see. On the direct election of the Mayor, I haven't made a decision. I agree with what you were saying except for the fact what happened ___ how I did it. The argument for the Council making the decision, vote, it's over and you're a group of seven. That's the only reason I think it came up.

Mr. Brock: During Barbara vonAmmon's last term, there was someone with a difference of opinion and no matter what the subject was, there seemed to be quarrels. I can remember many times as I sat between them that it was simply a matter of eventually saying settle down both of you, control yourselves. Here again is a situation where I really think that the Council itself appoints the individual, that they are going to be able to work better with him or her. He or she knows that they are the ones that put them there.

Interviewer: Those among the group put him or her there.

Mr. Brock: Yes. Thomas is the Mayor now.

Joan Horne: No, Marvin Davis.

Mr. Brock: Who is Thomas?

Joan Horne: Thomas is a Council Member.

Mr. Brock: That name has come up and I didn't know who he was.

Joan Horne: He's not part of the four majority.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

Mr. Brock: I think it's kind of a philosophy that I believe may have been lost after awhile and that is the least amount of government I feel is the best amount of government.

Interviewer: Well that certainly seems to be in the past. We need to regain that, especially this Town.

Mr. Brock: I think that when I'm talking about going back and understanding the history of the Town, that that is part of what they learn.

Interviewer: Very much. They all have to work together very stringently.

Mr. Brock: The times that I can remember, I think the Councils really worked together. They respected each other and respected the positions they were in. It seemed to be happier times for some reason. Why I am not totally sure. It could have been the makeup of the people. It could have been the issues at the time and most of those issues seemed to be supported by the majority. There were a number of people that ran. But it seemed consistently the ones that had been the "old guards" so to speak were the ones that were successful. I have always contended if a stranger could probably come into this Town and win an election.

Joan Horne: There aren't enough people getting out to vote. (Tape skipped)

Mr. Brock: That's true. That was another thing I think may have been instigated during our period of time is the ability for them to meet the candidates other than just the publication. In turn, it was beneficial to us as well as far as "the elected people" it gave them the ability to understand who they were. There seemed to be a networking. In the past, it was frowned upon if you organized yourself. I mean this is back in the Huntress period of time. If it looked like you wanted to be Mayor, that was death. Everybody was very patient. They didn't push those kind of things. If somebody was serving time, Huntress, for example, decided he wasn't going to run, then Tribken became involved. Granted, he was the Vice Mayor at the time. There also seemed to be some form of progression, an orderly progression. That doesn't seem necessarily to be the story anymore. There seems to be somewhat of chaos, and perhaps to some degree, that's bad and good in other ways. One other particular thing that I was thinking about and had just

forgotten it that occurred when I was on the Board of Adjustment and Chairman of the Board. There was an issue that had come up. It was a Frank Lloyd Wright building that a resident (Donahoe), it was the Donahoe property, I can remember. We were in the small living room of Helen's where the Council meeting was, and the citizens had sat down. This tremendous barrage of suits with plans walked around. Then they formed around the wall. There might have been 20 to 30 of them and went ahead and made the presentation.

Interviewer: For the Donahoe family, you mean.

Mr. Brock: No, this was supporting the Donahoe family and the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation. They were submitting the plans. There was obviously a violation in reference to the height regulation. It exceeded 30 feet. I would have loved to have seen that house built, not necessarily violating the ordinance. But I think it was a situation you feel differently about something primarily because it was a Frank Lloyd Wright house. The fact that you had to take the position of denial because it violated the ordinance. For at least a half hour and at least 10 different times, I had asked what the height of the zoning was. Finally, I told him what the height of the zoning was and he was a little surprised because most people at that time were not able to read the plans. Plus a lot of the people serving on the Board were in their 60's and 70's and I'm not sure they really understood the concept of what was happening. That I think helped in my quest to be on the Council. Service on other levels are beneficial. Not only to that particular Council or the Town, but also perhaps for the individual.

Interviewer: At that time, they could have built it if they had kept it down to 30 feet.

Did that count the spire? I have seen the drawings of the house and it would have been a spectacular thing.

Mr. Brock: No it did not.

Joan Horne: There were a lot of things that were wrong with it. That came to Board of Adjustment when I first went on it. Bell was the attorney.

Mr. Brock: It may have come back. I think it did.

Joan Horne: Yes. ___ can't you make some changes , it wasn't minimizing but it didn't meet Code. (Tape skipped)

Mr. Brock: It's unfortunate because the architect had done marvelous things. One of the stories about Wright is that he had done the Guggenheim house. Guggenheim was having a party that evening and had invited a tremendous amount of people along this long, long dining room table. It began to rain and right in front of Guggenheim. To save embarrassment, he had the butler bring him the phone and he called Wright. He opened the speaker to let everybody know he was talking to him and said, "What do you expect me to do. It's raining and I've got guests." Wright's singular answer was, "Move." In other words, if its raining in front of you, move to the side. There was another story

about Wright. At the request of an architect he was asked to preview a particular project that he had done. For almost an hour he was totally silent. And the architect finally said, "You've not commented throughout this. What do you think about it?" He said, "Sure missed the boat on this one." Linda's grandfather used to be on the ration board. He used to come in wanting rubber tires and so forth for his school. He'd always turn him down. He'd have that cape and Helen said that he'd throw the cape over his face and walk out. He was good and had a lot of influence in this Town as far as architecture.

Interviewer: That was wonderful. Thank you.

Mr. Brock: Thank you. The only relationship is the fact that Calvin Goode served on the City of Phoenix Council, Herb Drinkwater was Mayor of City of Scottsdale, and I used to work at the District Service Office together. As a matter of fact, Herb worked for me in the Drafting Department. We would have lunch together almost three times a week and none of us had ever discussed politics at all. Then later when we all left the school system, we went our different ways and found ourselves in almost similar positions. It is interesting that we didn't discuss politics.

Interviewer: You used that time to just enjoy each other.

Mr. Brock: Yes, I knew Herb before he married Jackie.

Interviewer: I want to thank you ever so much. You have been just so informative and you had some very exciting 10 years, stressful and...

Mr. Brock: Let me tell you another story. We had a next door neighbor who we believed had killed one of the dogs. The police had checked into it. We also had the dog tested and there was a particular chemical. The chemical was found inside the garage of this neighbor. Well, for whatever reason the neighbor did that, I don't know, but he used to come to the Council meetings to the point where we were a little afraid because he sat in the front row. We didn't know what he was going to do. He had acted strange at certain times, very much a hermit-type individual. There was one time that the belief was that he might be carrying a gun. I was the Vice Mayor at the time, wound up wearing a flap jacket underneath my coat.

Interviewer: You mean a bullet proof jacket?

Mr. Brock: Yes. Two plain clothed policemen sat on either side of him. He didn't know it. Barbara is sitting to my left. We got to talking about it because she was aware of the fact that this was happening. She was really panicking because she was scared to death that he'd miss me and hit her. It really frightened her. He actually reached into his coat at one point in time and we could see the two guys leaning over. He eventually moved to Sun City.

Interviewer: The moral of the story is that there are eccentrics in every Town.

Mr. Brock: That's true. One other funny thing, it's not funny in the sense that it happened, is when the Levitt's house burned down, Peter was the Town Marshal at the time, and felt that he should stand guard over that house that night for vandalism. I think he stayed there two nights. Then we started piecing together the situation. The dog wasn't to be found, the husband was out of town, a variety of other things and couldn't find the location of the lights. Peter stayed there for two nights with her body in the rubble. You've got to know Peter to appreciate that. If you recall at his party, I'd given him a tank and wrote "Town of Paradise Valley" on it because if Peter would have had his way, he would have put that tank down on Tatum and Lincoln and sat in it and given people tickets. He was a volunteer Deputy Marshal, along with one of the other Council Members, when he came on the Council for the County. He has always loved service like that. He's torn down the house that he used to live in and I thought that he went up to Flagstaff.

Joan Horne: They went up to Flagstaff. He was talking about building over here.

Mr. Brock: His son Jonathan, in a joint partnership with another friend of mine, have for the past five years, develop small tracks and build houses.

Interviewer: Thank you very much, it's been wonderful.