

OSCAR BUTT
May 19, 1999

Joan Horne and myself, Ann Townsend, interviewers for the Town of Paradise Valley Historical Committee are privileged to interview Oscar Butt. Mr. Butt has been a long time resident and active participant in the Town's government. Thank you, Mr. Butt, for letting us come and talk with you today. May we have your permission to quote you in part or all of our conversation today? (Oscar Butt: You do.) Thank you. Tell me a little bit about yourself. What brought you to Arizona?

Oscar Butt: When I retired from the Air Force, my wife and I had always planned to retire in Santa Barbara. In 1972, during the Vietnam War, there was a lot of activity going on around the university in Santa Barbara. Students were burning books and all the other things. On the way out here just to look things over, we stopped in Scottsdale. When we compared the two, we liked Scottsdale better, so we moved to Scottsdale and have never regretted it.

Ann Townsend: After you came here did you move right to Paradise Valley?

Oscar Butt: Yes, we bought this house and have lived in it for 27 years, since 1972.

Ann Townsend: Did you get active in the politics right away?

Oscar Butt: When I first came here, I needed a job because I had kids that I was putting through college and it would be nice to supplement my Air Force retirement income. I looked around for a job and went to work for the City of Phoenix. They were building a new communication system. I heard that the Town was looking for a Town Manager. I thought I didn't have to drive so far and it might be fun. I submitted an application and I think the only reason they probably interviewed me was because I was

the only Town resident applying for the job. We hit off very well and the Council hired me.

Ann Townsend: How many years of fun did you have as Town Manager?

Oscar Butt: Thirteen, almost to the day. I went to work in February 1972 and retired in February 1986.

Ann Townsend: What kind of fun things as a Town Manager do you want to recall?

Oscar Butt: I would think that probably my best accomplishment is the Indian Bend Wash. Scottsdale had been using federal money to do the Indian Bend Wash and develop it as a flood plain. The Town (Paradise Valley) had a policy of not wanting federal money. We did not like to accept any federal money and tried really to reduce the government's share which was implemented in 1974/75. We started working with the plan before we could develop the Indian Bend Wash. The Council approved having plans drawn for the Indian Bend Wash, the way we would like to have it built. We wanted to put a golf course in it. All these nice plans and when the Council approved it, I said, "We'll have this project finished by 1978," having no idea how we might do it. Having the plans gave the developers an incentive. Camelback Inn wanted to enlarge their golf course. The Town's only investment in the entire project was the \$10,000 we spent for the plans and a few bridges we put in at Invergordon and Doubletree. The total expenditure on that was not very much and we got a great flood control project.

Ann Townsend: Is there any question that you want to ask him about it, Joan?

Joan Horne: I just want to reiterate, you did not submit any of this to the federal government and we did not use federal money?

Oscar Butt: Absolutely, no federal money.

Joan Horne: Up until the time I left the Council, we were still trying to maintain that same philosophy.

Oscar Butt: You know the interesting thing about the Town and the thing that really attracted me to the Town once I got to know it was the belief that the least government is the best government. They really believed that. Some of the characters that started the Town would have gotten their eyes picked, the government was bad, they didn't want any part of it. I subscribe to that -- I think government has a part, but I don't think government is the answer to everything.

Ann Townsend: Once you give in to take a little, then they feel they have the power and right to tell you how do it.

Oscar Butt: They had implemented revenue sharing and we were getting \$25,000 at the time which wasn't very much and there was some strings attached to it. But we didn't look at things like that. The Council instructed me to see if we couldn't get rid of it. There is no way we could really turn it in. We could donate it to somebody but there was no way to get the government to take us off revenue sharing. We wrote a letter to John Rose, who was in Congress at the time, which Mayor Bob Tribken signed, asking that they please stop revenue sharing. We don't need the money. We don't want the money. Rose did not read the letter but he wrote back and said, "I agree with you, we've got to fight to keep revenue sharing."

Joan Horne: What did you finally do with the money?

Oscar Butt: Well, we used it. You could spend it without having to question it, so we just rolled it into police hours. That philosophy in not wanting federal money is one of the strong things the Town did. We did ask and get state help one time when there was

flooding back in 1977. We made an application for some state money, and out of the Governor's Emergency Fund, they gave us \$10,000.

Joan Horne: That was a lot.

Oscar Butt: Then it was. Our budget was \$230,000. As soon as we spent that money building new culverts that were washed out, another Town had a flood. But the Council then gave \$10,000 back to the Governor's Fund so he could use for those people. We repaid that \$10,000. It was a grant from the Governor but we repaid it, which I think is pretty nice for the Town to do.

Joan Horne: Talking about the flooding, how do you feel about Doubletree?

Oscar Butt: I think the Council is being very biased. There is not a severe flooding problem on Doubletree. I talked to the Mayor very recently and he said one of our problems is that we've got to look at Doubletree and build a Doubletree project so that Doubletree won't be washed away. I said, "Doubletree has been here a long time." In the time that I've been here, we've had a couple of 100 year flood and it has never been washed away. I don't think they need to worry about that.

Joan Horne: The only problem I can remember is the people on Foothill Manor Drive, next to the school, had the berms up. I don't think we need to spend money on 100 year flood protection, but I would think something less intrusive. But there is flooding because I've been caught in it a few times.

Oscar Butt: In the desert, every time there is a rain storm, there is going to be flooding because there is no place for the water to go. You could not build a storm drain large enough to carry the flash flood that we get in the desert. It is better to plan to not let people concentrate the flow of water so that you have the problem. It has been

concentrated, but there is still one or two homes that are built lower than the Town Code requires, so if you get water in the front yard, it will be in the house. You are required to have your floor level one foot above.

Joan Horne: The idea behind it is to divert the water to the wash. I thought that was a good plan.

Oscar Butt: It's so big. It's just so big.

Joan Horne: Taking the County money isn't really taking government money because we pay into that.

Oscar Butt: But I think that personally that County money is what's driving the project. Without it, I have heard Councilmen say, "we can't afford to let that money go." That, in my opinion, is not good government.

Joan Horne: That started when I was on the Council and some background information may not be known, but I did write a letter to the Council just to give them some background. The money was gone after, after we decided we need to do something, not the other way around, and then we finally got some contribution. We still have to improve that street, it needs improvement. But the impetus to correct the situation didn't come from the fact that the County was giving money because that factor wasn't there. What this Council is thinking, I don't know.

Ann Townsend: It sounds like it's reverse.

Oscar Butt: I think the Council is genuinely trying to do a good job. They have listened to stories from both sides very carefully and I think have weighed carefully. But I think they have had some poor advice. I don't believe the engineering studies show an accurate picture of what the problem is. I think there are much subtler ways to solve the

problem than that big mammoth Flood Control project. This will, in my opinion, really ruin this neighborhood when you start lowering Doubletree.

Joan Horne: That was not what was going on when I was there. The biggest problem has been that Phoenix would do nothing and they build those homes over there, which is what's running through Doubletree.

Oscar Butt: But it's not a major problem. I have lived here 27 years and I have seen the floodwaters. We had some problems with some homes because when the developer for this area built them, he came in and leveled the land without considering any wash. It was nice level land when I moved in, no drain ditches or anything else. They're saying that we have those drainage ditches back. The neighbors themselves, when I was the Manager, built this little ditch back behind their yards and took it around to Doubletree. And the Town took it from Doubletree down to the Indian Bend Wash. With the exception of one home whose finished floor level is too low, we have not had any problems.

Ann Townsend: Was that house finished before the Code?

Oscar Butt: Yes. It's an interesting problem and one, of course, that I think the Town needs to be involved in, but you cannot let it be driven by engineers.

Joan Horne: I just remember the yelling and screaming from the neighbors on Doubletree, but the neighbors along the Cherokee wash and anybody where the water really affected them said, "Do something," and we tried.

Oscar Butt: When I became the Manager in 1972 we had a big storm that really flooded this area, the northeast part of the Town up in Berneil and Fanfol. Scottsdale had, unbeknownst to the Town, built that ditch along Invergordon. Here's a big ditch

that's been built for Scottsdale flood waters. The Town had made no provision or anything else for it. The Berneil ditch had been drowning that land up there. Then in 1972, all that water flooded into Town. The Town approved a Flood Control District and had a flood plan. The plans were drawn and we would spend \$100,000 to solve that problem. The bid came in at more than \$100,000. That's about the time I became the Manager. The bid was turned down because it was too much. The rules of the Improvement District were that you could not spend more money than was voted on. So I thought there's got to be a way to do it. The Berneil ditch and everything up to it had become dirty. We had to remove that dirt in order to dig the ditch underneath to get the floodwaters down. I had a man that wanted to buy that dirt, and we sold him the dirt. The Town had the Berneil ditch in the Articles. We sold this man the dirt, gave it to him, provided he dig the ditch. We got it built for less than \$100,000 for the improvement by selling that dirt. At that time, Doubletree was not paved across the Indian Bend Wash; it was dirt. Every time it rained, Doubletree became unpassable. We were always needing to put dirt in there and finally piled some dirt and built back up a little bit.

Joan Horne: I know someone who lives on Doubletree and we were there for a Labor Day barbecue and we were stranded by a downpour. They had Town employees out with a truck but you couldn't drive a car through it. It took an hour or two before the water subsided.

Oscar Butt: You have to expect that there will be times when we have a hard rain that the washes will be filled. The bridge over the Indian Bend Wash only carries a five-year storm. Any water above a five-year storm goes over the top of the roadway. That was

the way it was designed. So if you have a ten-year storm theoretically, you should not be able to go across the Indian Bend Wash until it goes down.

Joan Horne: When we had that last heavy rain, I was on Hayden and Indian Bend and you couldn't go through. I saw the cars going through totally ignoring the signs.

Ann Townsend: They also pay a large fine if they have to be rescued.

Oscar Butt: When I first came here, we had an awful lot of rain. People were getting stuck in the washes down on MacDonald. There are quite a few washes that you couldn't go through. Nona, my wife, had to get pulled out of the wash on Tatum. We were used to driving with water on the roadway.

Joan Horne: I think that we need to have the washes cleaned out, but I think that we need some intelligent command of providing flood control, considering the increase in traffic.

Oscar Butt: One thing I think the Town can do is to keep the washes that we have open. We do not maintain the washes. We have some washes that are clogged up with growth. Most of them are not dedicated as easements. The Town can go in and make those people who own the land keep the wash clean.

Joan Horne: I don't think the people know that they are responsible. I think when people buy homes, they should look into that. People should know that they can't plant trees and dump garbage into the washes; they have got to be kept open.

Ann Townsend: Maybe they need a yearly notice because people will forget.

Oscar Butt: The Town when I was the Manager would send out letters saying that an inspection has revealed that the wash behind your house needs a little attention, could you please do it? We would send it to all the neighbors along that wash. They would get

together for a few bucks and hire someone to clean it. We explained to them that it would be cheaper than having the Town do it because if you don't do it then we will and charge them.

Joan Horne: Well somehow that fell by the wayside.

Ann Townsend: By July 1, it ought to be all cleaned up ready for the monsoons.

Oscar Butt: When I came, I think the management types of how the Town is run has changed. When I became the Manager, we had four employees and the Manager. We had Mary Ann (Brines) who was the Town Clerk, personnel officer and treasurer; we had Dorothy who was the bookkeeper; and we had Evie who was the secretary. In the Police Department, we had the Chief and five officers. All of our dispatching was done by Maricopa County. We did not have a communications dispatcher. We only had five officers and that's enough for one man around the clock. We did not have two men any time. It was suggested that we have two men on duty at all times. That meant we had to double the police force because to fill one position, you need five people if they will work 24 hours a day, provide for leave, sick time and vacation. That was one of the things we did right off. Our attorney and engineer were on contract. We had Rockwell of Hook, Rockwell for the engineer, and we had a Town Attorney whose name was Taylor. The first employee that we hired were the police officers so we could have two on the beat at a time, and then we hired the Town Engineer, a guy by the name of Charlie Washington. Then we hired an attorney whose office hours were not the same as the Town's. He liked to work at night and stay off during the day. I said, "You ought to be here when I'm here." He said, "But I work, I put in more time." I said, "That's fine, I know you work," but he couldn't make that adjustment. That really started the Town as a

professional staff because unless you have an attorney and an engineer on duty all the time, you don't have a professional staff. Mary Ann, God rest her happy soul, did just a fabulous job. She did everything that was required of her and then much more. She never said no to a task, and she did everything perfect. She never made a mistake and she always had a smile on her face. She did everything very professionally.

Ann Townsend: Any more things during the time you were the Town Manager to remember for all of us? Any other accomplishments besides the Indian Bend Wash?

Oscar Butt: Well, of course, we published the Hillside Building Regulations. Before then, we did not have a complete set of Hillside Building Regulations which have been amended and modified many times, but we at least put forth the first set. We worked on the Code with the help of the League of Arizona Cities and Towns. We went through the Code and completely redid the Code, probably in 1975. We had a flood study done of the Town. With the many floods we had, we wanted to know what could be done. We had the whole Town laid out in a flood study, a very complete flood study that showed projected washes for 100 years time and all the washes through the Town. We became very interested in sewers and tried to provide the Town with sewers. We were piece feeding it because every time a subdivision would come, we would consider whether they could economically put in sewers, and if they could, we would require it. We didn't have plan, however, so we did a sewer study of the whole Town; laid out the Town where the sewer lines should be and how they would go. I think that helped a lot to develop a good sewer system plan in the Town.

Ann Townsend: A lot of homes are still on septic tanks. Is there a possibility that the Town Council could set up that we put the sewers in and put it on our taxes? A lot of towns in the country would pay it out in the water bills.

Oscar Butt: There are many ways to do it. The Town has the philosophy I believe still today that we will have no taxes. We could build it as an improvement district and that's the way much of it has been done. We put in sewer systems in local areas where the neighbors get together, and then the Town issues bonds that the neighbors pay off in time. The Town is helping you do it but they are not actually buying anything. But also the Town, in the interest of getting sewers, is now paying 25% of the cost of the sewer.

Joan Horne: That I think is right. That part of the capital improvements was put on hold with the last Council. If somebody wanted to hook up, they could. People felt septic systems just wouldn't work anymore, and they had to know where to go. The Town does pay part of it. That's come along because we get the money from APS as well.

Oscar Butt: The last contract that the Town drew up with APS was back when I left the Town which provides that APS pay 25% of the undergrounding costs.

Joan Horne: Actually we renegotiated that contract.

Oscar Butt: You got APS and the Town paying for it, and the neighbors who benefit from it pay a small percentage.

Ann Townsend: I guess I thought if our water was coming from other areas like Phoenix, then our sewer tax was put on our Phoenix water bill, we'd be paying the tax through our water bill to Phoenix so it wouldn't be as if Paradise Valley technically was charging a tax.

Oscar Butt: Well, our biggest problem right now in sewer is that since we are not a member of that multi-city sewer district, we've had to piggy back on either Phoenix or Scottsdale. You remember the big fiasco we had a couple of years ago with Scottsdale. Neither Phoenix nor Scottsdale is real eager for us to increase the sewage flow. That's caused a problem. Back when I was the Manager we had the opportunity to join that multi-city sewer district and we probably should have done it.

Joan Horne: I don't even know if we still have the time to go in.

Oscar Butt: We paid Scottsdale an awful lot of money to get out of that thing.

Joan Horne: There was no reason for that to ever have happened.

Oscar Butt: Absolutely not.

Joan Horne: I also had the background on that and shared it with that Council. It was unwritten discussion between Councils and they said they would consider it. All of a sudden, when they stopped them from giving the sewer which had nothing to do with that, that's what happened. We never said they couldn't put the sewer in. We use it, how could you tell them not to put it in. It never needed to happen.

Oscar Butt: It shouldn't have happened and it unfortunately cost the Town a lot of money. I'd like to talk a little bit about some of the people that I have known that really are the forefathers of this Town.

Ann Townsend: Yes, you're welcome.

Oscar Butt: Jack Huntress, who became the second Mayor of this Town, elected by the Council. He was Mayor for ten years and he probably set the pattern of the Town better than anyone else. He was very conservative. He had a great feel for the people and a great feel for the area. The people that first incorporated the Town were individuals who

found themselves more and more going down to the Board of Supervisors fighting development planning. They wanted this area left alone. If you came into the Town in 1972, you had a lot of 10-acre parcels of land and little houses on them. They were individualists who wanted just open space around them, like Barbara vonAmmon. When they wanted to build a racetrack at Doubletree and 56th Street to Mockingbird, they decided (this is hearsay on my part because I wasn't here) that they should quit this and have their own Town and run it the way they would like it to be run. People like Barbara vonAmmon, Jack Huntress and many others started to circulate the petition to incorporate the Town. When the Town was first incorporated and the incorporation was approved, Scottsdale and Phoenix started lawsuits against the Town because they didn't want to put an upshot Town here. Those lawsuits were in the courts for a long time. I was the Town Manager before the court finally threw it out. I think it was probably in 1974 or 75 when these things were finally decided. (The State Supreme Court decided Paradise Valley was a legal town in 1972) We had people like Jon Bonnell and the Town's first meetings were held in Jon's house. Helen Marston served as the Town Clerk for a long time without pay. She kept most of the records in her spare bedroom. If you wanted anything done, you had to go to Helen's house to make an application. Helen was a wonderful person; she was from Texas, a true pioneer western spirited gal. She had a program that if you had a chuckhole in front of your house, she would provide the material and pay you 25 cents for every chuckhole you filled. You would come down to her house, pick up the material, she would pay you 25 cents and away you'd go.

Ann Townsend: This was just dirt, it wasn't black tar was it?

Oscar Butt: No, it was black tar. Helen, if she liked you, she would grade your driveway; if she didn't like you, you couldn't get her to grade your driveway. She served as the Town Clerk for many years. Later she was paid, but she was a wonderful little old lady. When we dedicated the new Town Hall, we had a big long rope to raise the flag. We wanted to get all the old towns people to help raise the flag. When it came time to raise the flag, Helen rushed over and raised the flag all by herself and we had the long rope with all the people were holding never had a chance. She wanted to pull it up herself. She was murdered.

Ann Townsend: While she was still Town Clerk?

Oscar Butt: No, she had retired. She was murdered and we were never able to solve it.

Joan Horne: I had heard, and this is only hearsay, that they suspected who it was but they couldn't prove it.

Oscar Butt: We had a very strong suspicion of who it was.

Ann Townsend: Would you reveal it?

Oscar Butt: No, I don't think it would be fair.

Ann Townsend: Is the person still living?

Oscar Butt: I don't know. He was a relative. But I don't know.

Ann Townsend: Did you know Raymond O. Mitchell?

Oscar Butt: No, I didn't him.

Ann Townsend: He lived in the Town, but he was on the County Board of Supervisors, and was an attorney and helped do the legal work to incorporate the Town. I wondered if you had had the privilege to know him?

Oscar Butt: No. Les Naumann, I'm sure you've interviewed him.

Ann Townsend: Yes, we have.

Oscar Butt: Les has just been a wonderful resident of the Town and was the Marshall for many, many years.

Ann Townsend: Ten years, the same length of time as Jack Huntress.

Oscar Butt: He served all of that time without any compensation. Finally, the Town did start paying a car allowance. He was the only officer in the Town most of the time. We were using Maricopa County and would call them, not the posse but the regular sheriff. They would come out and do the work in the Town. But Les was in the Town and he was the Marshal for a long time. Then there was a baseball umpire, Jacko Connley. Jacko was Marshal for a day, I think. Jacko found out that the Town wasn't going to pay him, he decided he didn't want to do it. He was a league umpire, Jacko Connley. His son was a columnist for awhile. He was a major league baseball umpire who lived in the Town. We had a lot of honorary deputies. Barry Goldwater was an honorary deputy. Jacko was an honorary deputy after he turned down the job. They did whatever was necessary. It is an interesting part of the history of the Town because we had law enforcement that was done by the citizens.

Ann Townsend: Kind of what Joe Arpaio's men are doing now?

Oscar Butt: Yes, he had his posses going. Les was a true Marshal. He and Helen played the roles. If you went into Town Hall when Helen was the Town Clerk, if she liked you, you could get anything you wanted, but if she didn't like you, you'd better not go in there. I had the privilege of knowing Helen later on. I had dinner with her the night before she was murdered. Helen must have suspected something because Nona, Helen and I went up to John Gardiner's for dinner and when I took her home, I went in her

house with her. She went in every room; she had a stick that she kept by door and poked it under the bed; she opened every door and checked every window to see that her house was secure.

Ann Townsend: She was really rather fearful but she never complained.

Oscar Butt: That's why I felt that someone that knew her had to have come in the house because she wouldn't open the door to anybody she didn't know. She had at least two bolts on every door. It took her 30 minutes to get in and out. We had the Maricopa County Sheriff's Department help us with that investigation but it was never solved. I hope that Jack told the story that when the Town was first incorporated, they had no money to operate on. Five citizens of the Town, the only one I remember is Jack, each went down to the bank and signed a note for \$1,000 each. The Town had \$5,000 to operate on until money could start coming in. At the time I worked for the Town, that was the only debt the Town had ever had.

Ann Townsend: The first budget was only \$40,000. That's pretty amazing.

Oscar Butt: When we moved into the Town, I knew I lived in the Town of Paradise Valley but that's as far as I knew. When I decided to apply for the job, I couldn't find the Town Hall. I jumped out and asked the first townsman and no one knew. Then when I found it, I almost tore up my resume. Did you ever see the Town Hall?

Joan Horne: No, I got here in '79.

Oscar Butt: We rented half of the building owned by Clyde Alexander on Malcomb Drive, the first south of Lincoln Drive. There was a little building that housed that air conditioning place. At one time it had an art studio in it, the Valley Presbyterian Church met in that building, and the Town rented the space from Clyde Alexander. When I

walked in, there was a termite train coming from the ceiling all the way down to my desk. The Town had drawn plans for the Town Hall but didn't know how it was going to go. After they hired me, I told the Council that the first priority would be to build the new Town Hall. They said, "You can build if you can pay for it." We built it and paid for it the first year. We didn't do a lot else, but we paid for the Town Hall. As I recall, it cost \$235,000 for the whole building. We had a great contractor and a great architect, William Bruder.

Ann Townsend: He was a young architect working for an architecture company in Tempe.

Oscar Butt: This was his first building. He has since gone on to do some great things. The Town has won many awards on that building. Bruder's idea was that if it's government, it should be art. He designed the building so that if it has steel in it, you will know it's steel because you're going to coat it to look like steel. If it's wood, it will be wood; and if it's concrete, it will look like concrete. The building when it was built, if it was concrete, it looked like raw concrete; if you went in and looked at wood, it was wood; and if it was steel bolts, then it's steel. It was supposed to be an honest building and we won quite a few awards. When we first looked at the building, Jack Huntress and I were on the Building Committee. We went in and asked that they turn it over to us and the ceiling was not the way it was supposed to be. We met with the architect and he said, "Look, I had to substitute the wood, but the difference is so minute you couldn't notice. I couldn't get the fir I was supposed to. It's exactly what it's supposed to be. It looks perfect and I like it." In other words, "You'd better learn to like it," which I did, but it

was a shock when you first went in and saw these sheets of plywood stuck on the ceiling. It didn't look like I thought it should.

Ann Townsend: Maybe that's the material that he used.

Oscar Butt: No, that was the design that was approved.

Ann Townsend: That's a very basic and honest material.

Oscar Butt: Yes, if it's plywood, it will look like plywood, and it did, a sheet of plywood. I learned to love it.

Ann Townsend: A little shellac on it warms it up. Anybody else you want to remember for us?

Oscar Butt: Jon Bonnell was on the Planning and Zoning Commission. He ran the White Hogan. I never knew Jon senior. He died before I came here. His son then went on the Planning and Zoning Commission. The first group of people were really intent on keeping it open. They wanted to keep it like it was. They wanted no changes in it. They didn't want it to become urban area. They wanted it to be just a regular place where you could get out and holler across the way to your neighbors. I think that philosophy that the Town had early in the game was that if you didn't like the way we were doing things, don't come. It worked pretty well. It's kind of hard to get things through the P&Z and the Council if you want to make changes. I think the Town since 1961 has done a lot to keep this character of the Town, and you can only keep that character if you follow the zoning ordinances and keep the zoning up to date.

Ann Townsend: And uphold the philosophy of the founders.

Oscar Butt: It's hard to do because now most of the people don't know anything about the philosophy of the Town and most of the people could care less about it. But they

argue now that if it's close to Phoenix, it's a nice area and they want a big house. I must say it looks a lot different than it did when I came here.

Joan Horne: I'm not at all sure that it's an improvement.

Oscar Butt: I think it is.

Joan Horne: Some of it, but I think it was a mistake by not restricting the size of the new homes. I remember arguing with Muin Khalla on that issue.

Ann Townsend: That was probably the first clue that things were really changing when people wanted huge houses.

Oscar Butt: They had to follow the Code. When we met and developed a new master plan, we hadn't thought of that. So there was nothing in the master plan that said we wanted to keep the houses small. When somebody comes in with a new plan and it meets your master plan and it meets your Code, what can you do?

Joan Horne: But that was like a warning bell that maybe it needs to be stopped. It's too bad that it has gotten through. There's little acreage left.

Oscar Butt: La Place du Sommet of course is the one that we really had a lot of problems. It was a pristine mountain property. Robert Burns had developed La Place and he wanted them to come on with La Place du Sommet. He met the code. He would tear up the mountain. The P&Z had a lot of meetings, but as I recall, they recommended approval. The Council agreed that it was much too close and they turned it down, which you can't do if it meets the Code. La Place du Sommet filed a suit against us because it met the Code. We finally negotiated and settled it. We cut down the number of lots and did a lot of things to make it look better through that negotiation. But we had the Hillside

Building Regulations in effect at that time and he met the Hillside Building Regulations. That was the first really bad one.

Joan Horne: There was something about the fact that there had been some changes made when the application went in. They couldn't do it and that's why they had to settle. I remember Joan (Lincoln) telling me that.

Oscar Butt: It really was a loophole. It was just that he got the "fish" and didn't qualify under the old Regs. He was grandfathered in on it.

Ann Townsend: I want to ask you about the Donahoe property. I think it was in 1958 when the Town denied it and at that time passed the Code that you couldn't build that high on the mountain.

Joan Horne: It wasn't incorporated then.

Ann Townsend: No, it couldn't have been.

Oscar Butt: I wasn't here at the time. It was early in the Town's history and they wanted to build this beautiful house but it would dominate the whole top of the mountain. The Town said no.

Ann Townsend: Where I'm going with this is that I thought it was at that time that they restricted the altitude of how high a house could be built on the mountain. What I'm asking is what happened to La Place du Sommet when some of those houses are now higher than what the Donahoe house would have been.

Oscar Butt: The attorneys told us that you cannot restrict the height. You can restrict how you build, how much you cut, but you can't restrict the height. When the Hillside Building Regulations were first put out, there was a height restriction, but the attorneys said you can't do that. Then we finally came out that you can't break the ridgeline.

Ann Townsend: Which has been done now.

Joan Horne: There was a loophole which was that if you restore it to what it looked like, and that's how that house got built on the east end. But that's closed up again. They did something with the Code. That was after my time. When I was called in, I heard the application and sat in on the Hillside meeting. I walked out, I just couldn't hold it back, I was so upset by the fact that somebody would do that.

Oscar Butt: In hillside building, there has always been a profit. If you have enough money and are willing to spend it, then you can build on any site.

Joan Horne: That's right, except now you really can't break the ridgeline. You know what's interesting because the Donahoe was the first property I heard (tape unclear). We can't change a thing. They way it was, it didn't meet Code.

Oscar Butt: I guess both parties still live in the Town. Dan Donahoe was on the Board of Adjustment.

Joan Horne: I knew Dan.

Oscar Butt: And his younger brother, Michael, I haven't seen either one in awhile. They weren't mean like some people could be.

Joan Horne: One of the things that happened was that the '96 Council condemned their property which was another stupid thing to do. I had seen that plan and there was nothing wrong with it. They had dedicated acreage to the Town and then you're going to condemn it? We got that settled, not my Council, but I'm saying this Council did.

Oscar Butt: That Council was a disaster and that's the truth. I never did no harm. I really didn't. I don't know how they could do it. You probably know a lot more about it than I do because I tried to stay out of it. We've been very fortunate with the people that

have served the Town. Out of all the Councils, we've had great Councils and only one bad one.

Joan Horne: I really think that as long as I've been in Town, this is the first time that I've ever seen anything like that.

Oscar Butt: Yes, a very dedicated, very loyal group of people. Most of time the Councils that I've served with had only one thing in mind and that was to keep the Town together and do what was best for the community.

Ann Townsend: Do you think most of the Council still hold that thought?

Oscar Butt: Yes, I think so. I think they have, and you just have to agree with them. Sometimes you have disagreements with them about different things, but their interest and their hearts are in the right place.

Ann Townsend: That's why it has been so rewarding to interview you, Jack Huntress, Les Naumann, Jon Bonnell Jr. and others. I love the philosophy, the energy and the eyes sparkling when they talk about the Town.

Oscar Butt: It's such a good philosophy and it's too bad we don't have more people like that. I used to go to all of the Town management meetings and was always thrilled to be able to talk about ... people were talking about how their staffs were growing, and I would say, "Well, my staff isn't growing because I don't need anymore staff." Our staff was occupying maybe 13% of our budget and theirs were 50%.

Joan Horne: Well we have many more employees now. I don't understand why that Planning Department has expanded and remodeled, I understand that but that still doesn't justify that kind of expenditure.

Oscar Butt: Well, bureaucracy has a way of feeding upon itself, and there's never any end to what a bureaucracy can grow. There's no end to it at all. It's feeding on itself. I called the other day to report a yard sale and I had to talk to somebody who is called the zoning ordinance enforcement officer. I said, "This is a neighborhood yard sale," and she said, "I don't think so, people can have yard sales." I said, "I think I'm familiar enough with the Code to know what this is and I would like you to check this." She said, "Well, we can't because we don't have anybody here because they're at a retreat." This guy was hauling in stuff from the store, he's a merchant. He had brought stuff from his store into the yard sale. He had a great big sign up on the front that said "SALE" that was six by eight feet. He did it for two weeks. The first time I didn't complain.

Joan Horne: The best way to deal with that is to call Tom Martinsen (Town manager).

Oscar Butt: I called Tom's office and he was at the retreat too, but he called me back. He sent the Chief (Wintersteen) and the Chief got rid of the sign. I'm all in favor of yard sales, I think they're fun.

Joan Horne: When you have a yard sale, my daughter has it on her driveway.

Oscar Butt: I think the State should have investigated him because he is a retailer and he wanted to charge sales tax.

Joan Horne: I think that we have to watch the number of people when they do remodels, if they can hire somebody from outside because if somebody's in there full time, you can't get rid of them. They have to pay benefits. But if you do a contract, then they're only there as long as they're really needed.

Oscar Butt: When I became the Manager, we had one man in the Building Department. His name was Jule Hart. He walked very slowly. They were building all

of these homes in here. There was probably as many building permits then as we have today. Jule had a legal pad. He'd come in and make his inspections and write in that little legal pad, and when he filled up the legal pad, he left. We have no records of anything. I don't know what Jule said what my job was or whether he did inspections or not, but he retired soon after I became the Manager. Dorothy was our bookkeeper, very frugal. She married a very rich guy and moved to Minnisota. I think it's wonderful because I would never guess that Dorothy would ever marry because she was what I would consider to be a typical old maid. But she married this guy and I think that's wonderful.

Ann Townsend: He probably trusted her that she would be frugal.

Oscar Butt: I don't think that in the 13 years that I was Manager that we ever ended a year without putting more money in the savings. Even the year that we paid for the Town Hall, we ended up with a savings. I was real proud of that.

Ann Townsend: How was the Town Hall financed?

Oscar Butt: We paid for it out of the budget. What we did was that we just didn't spend the money on anything else.

Joan Horne: You didn't have any priorities then.

Oscar Butt: And government can still do that. In the building the new police building, we could have established priorities and built the police building without having to go through the bond and not incur the debt. It's unfortunate that people today view that the surplus is something that should be spent and they are spending it.

Joan Horne: Well, to some extent that's true. The problem was that there was so much going into the debt (tape skipped) but rather to have no money and collect more. I wasn't sure what way we should go on that.

Oscar Butt: I think the state law was written specifically for our size debt, to keep Councils from going off state. They say if you want to go above your spending limitation, go to your citizens and ask them.

Joan Horne: We did. We had an overwhelming response 2 to 1.

Oscar Butt: I don't recall that vote. You had an election?

Joan Horne: Oh yes, and we voted on it. Maybe you were travelling since you're a big travelling man.

Oscar Butt: I hope I was out of Town.

Joan Horne: One of things is having too many ordinances (tape skipped)

Oscar Butt: That's the trouble with our state government and our federal government. We just keep packing more laws and not enforce the ones on the books. I guess up in the school shooting in Colorado, there were 34 gun laws that were broken by those kids(gun laws on the books). We're not enforcing the laws that we have.

Joan Horne: Too many agencies overlapping each other.

Oscar Butt: I would like the Town to continue the philosophy that the least government is the best government. I would like for them to continue the policy that we'll do it on our own if we need something we'll be able to do rather than ask for federal aid or state aid. In an emergency, you can do it. Like we did when we got the money out of the Governor's Emergency Fund, we repaid it. The state was flabbergasted. We came

back down and said that we wanted to return the money. I think we said to give it Peoria who needed it.

Ann Townsend: The Town of Paradise Valley stands alone, an ideal in our country.

Oscar Butt: The Indian Bend Wash on Scottsdale Road is a great project and I love it. But they spent millions and millions of federal dollars. We have a flood control plain that goes through the Town that is getting served and we have no money invested. Now we don't have a parkway where citizens can go play in it like they can in Scottsdale and go fish. At least I don't think our citizens would use it anyway.

Joan Horne: I remember a big discussion on the park on one occasion. The consensus was that we did not want the headache of having to police it and it costs money to have somebody run it, to clean up and all the associated problems that came with it.

Oscar Butt: One of the early Councils said it. They appointed a lot of park committees. The reports came back and most of the people said we don't want a park in our neighborhood. If you want to build a park, build it somewhere else, not in our neighborhood.

Joan Horne: A lot of people said that because the property is so large, you could put in your own play equipment. Many have tennis courts and pools, there would be no use for parks.

Ann Townsend: It would only bring in nonresidents. In this day and age, society is changing.

Joan Horne: Same thing with the community center. I was not happy about it.

Oscar Butt: I wasn't either. When we built the Town Hall, the Council established the policy that the Town Hall would not be loaned out to any group other than government

because you would have all the homeowners who would like to have a meeting, or a bridge club to play in the afternoon. So the policy was established that it is a government building and will be used only for government functions. I think that was a good policy.

Joan Horne: That's right.

Ann Townsend: Does that carry over for the new police building?

Oscar Butt: Well, they changed that a little bit.

Joan Horne: The Police Department allows some other functions.

Oscar Butt: I'm sorry to see it. You can't build a building large enough to allow for all the functions. You have 13 churches in the Town that you can go to them. I think the Town has done a great job and I'm proud to have been associated with it. I think it's got a great future and I think that we have people in it that will see that we stay the course and continue to develop like the churches. I'm proud to live in it.

Ann Townsend: So are we. Any last recommendations or words to any future Councils?

Oscar Butt: I think that this book you are writing might be helpful because I think you can't start off without knowing where you come from. I think you need to know the history. We have a very complete section of newspapers that all the clippings of the Town that have been saved. [We've been using them.] It's very interesting. When I became the Town Manager, I felt lost because I didn't know what the Town was all about. Helen Marston was the first person who collected all of them. When I finally got all the clippings from her bedroom and brought them to the Town Hall, I started going through them and I learned a lot about the history of the Town. It was fascinating.

Joan Horne: One of our committee members started reading the early ones, but we told her to pick up from 1986 for our anniversary book.

Oscar Butt: You did the history for a number of years.

Joan Horne: Yes, I did it for five years.

Oscar Butt: I think you probably took it over from Helen. I don't think anybody else had been doing it.

Joan Horne: I don't know, I took it over in 1978.

Oscar Butt: Helen was killed in 1974 or '75. Were there a lot of boxes when you took it over?

Joan Horne: No, I don't know what happened. I had to read all the newspapers and clip the articles. Now they have a clipping service and all you have to do is put them in the book. When I used to go on vacation, I'd come home and have to go through the pile of papers to clip out the articles about the Town.

Oscar Butt: For a long time, the Town has not had good representation in the newspapers. I think that the *Progress/Gazette* and the *Arizona Republic* have not done a good job of covering the Town.

Joan Horne: No, just the *Independent*. We used to have the reporters come to the meetings.

Oscar Butt: The *Independent* is not a newspaper.

Joan Horne: Well, that's another story.

Ann Townsend: I want to thank you very, very much, Mr. Butt.

Oscar Butt: It's been my pleasure. I have thought about it in a long time and it's nice to sit down and remember things.

Ann Townsend: You have a very well organized mind and it was our pleasure. We learned so much. It was all very, very valuable. You were telling us about Carl Peachy?

Oscar Butt: Carl Peachy was the Town judge. He was a very stately looking gentleman who looked the part of a judge. He was actually in real estate. He lived with his wife of some 60 years. She was a lovely little lady. She would come by the office and say hello, always with a good smile. She reminded me a little bit of Mary Ann. Carl was our judge up until the Supreme Court ruled that judges had to be lawyers. Carl was not a lawyer. He served the Town and we paid him \$75.00 a month. He had all the trials and I never had a complaint about him, even from people whom he had fined. He looked the part of a judge and they never questioned it. I think the Town and the judges had a good program. The judges have been volunteers. They are now lawyers but they are still volunteers.

Joan Horne: They're all volunteers but they're not all lawyers. They cut out the Hearing Officers. That's what he (Elliot Horne) was doing. He went to Scottsdale and was appointed a Pro Tem. Then Elsa called him and she's also a Hearing Officer, despite the fact that she's a paid Court Administrator, she can hear trials. She asked Elliot to come back. He goes there two days a week. I don't know about that far back.

Oscar Butt: I don't know either because when the Supreme Court decided they would regulate municipal courts, they put out a bunch of information which I was told by our attorney that we couldn't have Carl any more.

Joan Horne: I don't know of anything strange. I have never gotten involved in it.

Oscar Butt: Carl did his job. He arranged his schedule so he was always in court on time. He was dedicated to the Town and did a good job. His wife was a lovely little lady. I think they were married 60 years since she died first.

Joan Horne: Yes, I think she did. I knew them.

Ann Townsend: Do you know a man nicknamed Adobe Pete? Wagner was his last name.

Oscar Butt: Yes. He was in the Street Department. He was a friend of Helen's.

Ann Townsend: What was his real name?

Oscar Butt: I don't know. I never met him. This is all hearsay. He was gone when I came. He was the maintenance or Street Department. He and Helen would go out together and cut trees and such. I don't think he was paid. If he was, it was a very little bit. He was just a friend of Helen's and when Adobe Pete went, we never heard of him anymore.

Joan Horne: We heard that he was one who circulated the petitions of incorporation.

Oscar Butt: Yes, I think he did.

Ann Townsend: If he was a friend of Helen's of course he would have.

Joan Horne: The only other thing was that we tried to get Jon Bonnell to give us either a copy of the original of the first Planning and Zoning Ordinance.

Oscar Butt: Did he have it?

Joan Horne: Well, he said he would have to look for it but we have never heard back. I don't know. The Town doesn't have a copy of it.

Oscar Butt: It might be with Cathy Connolly at the League. When Cathy re-did the Code in 1973, she had all of the early stuff. Whether she still has it or not, I don't know.

Joan Horne: I'll give her a call.

Oscar Butt: That was an interesting thing. When we got the Code, they took what we had and wrote the book that we now have with our changes and gave it back to the Council. The Council when they got it almost pulled their hair because she had all these sophisticated things in it that we didn't want. They patterned it after the other communities' code. That was an awful lot of trouble that she went through. We had many, many special meetings, going through every word in it, deleting what we didn't want. The League did that Code.

Ann Townsend: Thank you again. We mustn't take up any more of your time.

Oscar Butt: I enjoyed it.