

ENCANTO PARK
(Dorris-Norton Park)
2700 North 15th Avenue
Phoenix
Maricopa County
Arizona

HALS AZ-28
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

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HALS NO. AZ-28

Location: 2700 North 15th Avenue, Phoenix, Maricopa County, Arizona

Bounded approximately by 19th Avenue on the west, Thomas Road on the north, 8th Avenue and 12th Avenue on the east, and Holly Street on the south.

Much of Encanto Park is within Encanto-Palmcroft Historic District.

33.476580, -112.089957 (Encanto Park Clubhouse - Main Office, Google Earth, WGS84)

Significance: Part of the Encanto-Palmcroft Historic District, “Encanto Park, constructed between 1934 and 1937, is characterized by meandering lagoons, a picturesque distribution of deciduous and palm trees, and a scattering of buildings designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival and Moderne styles. The overall romantic conception and building styles of the park provide a harmonious continuity with the adjoining subdivisions to the south.”¹

Mr. William G. Hartranft, the president of the first Phoenix Parks and Recreation Board in the City, conceived the park in 1934. He was inspired by the Golden Gate and Balboa Parks in California to create an oasis of palms, lagoons and canals, surrounded by a golf course. The park would provide respite from the harsher aspects of desert life and an escape from the hustle and bustle in the newly established urban area of Phoenix. Encanto Park represents Hartranft’s vision of creating a Pleasure Park incorporating both quiet and active recreation.

The original park construction included two golf courses designed by William P. Bell, notable golf course designer and developer and founding member American Society of Golf Course Architects.² The park also has several buildings designed by the noted local architecture firm of Lescher and Mahoney.³

Description: Spanning 222 acres in the center of the City of Phoenix and enjoyed by an estimated 100,000 people per year. No oasis is complete without water, originally and currently represented by two miles of meandering lagoons and canals, punctuated by a three-foot-high waterfall in Encanto Lagoon, and several

¹ Minor, 1984, Section 7.

² Born 1886, died 1953. Fifty golf courses to his credit in California, plus Arizona Biltmore Golf Course and Mesa Country Club.

³ 1922-1975 under this name.

other smaller waterfalls, all with pumped, recirculating water and a maximum depth of ten feet. The canals create islands accessed by small bridges⁴ and are paralleled by meandering walkways meant for strolling. The two islands contain specific uses – Enchanted Island, originally Picnic Island, and Amphitheater Island, originally the site of the Bandshell (since demolished) and its informal, terraced, lawn seating.

Amp Island⁵ has a separate waterfall and two picnic areas with ramada shade structures, picnic tables and grills. The entire Island can be reserved and can accommodate up to 300 people, often for weddings. There are approximately sixty picnic tables throughout the park.

The original painted brick Clubhouse, with a tile roof, was described by the architect (Lescher and Mahoney) as “Monterey Style”. It includes a ballroom with original wooden floors, glass doors, a full kitchen and outdoor patio. It can be reserved for large banquets and gatherings.

The Boathouse, also painted brick and tile roof, is attached to the Clubhouse by a pergola, and is still used as the concession building to rent paddleboats and canoes.

Also joined to the Clubhouse by pergola and by the same architect, is the Pro Shop (originally called the Locker House), now used for offices.

The original Pitch and Putt, built in 1926 by Lakin & Peter Investments,⁶ has been expanded to a full eighteen holes, straddling 15th Avenue, and a short nine on the west side, just north of Encanto Boulevard. The public municipal golf courses are managed by the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation personnel, although the maintenance of the course is currently contracted out.⁷ Two groups, the Encanto Women’s Golf Association (1944-current) and the Desert Mashie Golf Club (1946) and their Junior Golf program, call the Encanto home.⁸

The courses are described as walkable⁹ and urban,¹⁰ with the front nine harder than the back. The most difficult hole might be the ninth, the hardest par four in all of Phoenix.”¹¹ The 1978 driving range is always populated, due to the courses’ adjacency to downtown. The short nine is popular with the robust youth outreach program as a good teaching course and hosts about 20,000

⁴ Currently there are nine bridges in the park.

⁵ “Amp Island” is a modern name for the island not used historically.

⁶ Lloyd C. Lakin and George T. Peter, original developers of the Encanto Subdivision.

⁷ Dale Larsen, interview with author, 2019.

⁸ Desert Mashie, (2019).

⁹ Forty percent of all patrons prefer to walk rather than ride a golf cart.

¹⁰ The Central Avenue skyline is visible looking towards the east.

¹¹ Dale Larsen, interview with author, 2019.

rounds per year.¹²

The golf courses and east side turf open play areas (nearly seventy acres) were originally watered by the flood irrigation technique, using water provided by Salt River Project,¹³ but are now automatically irrigated. The Sports Complex landscape is also watered by an automatic irrigation system using potable water and sprinklers for the turf areas and drip for all the other vegetation.¹⁴

The Sports Complex, south of Encanto Boulevard, includes a swimming pool and bathhouse, tennis and basketball courts, open play areas and an extensive playground.

Hundreds of Palms – *Washingtonia robusta* and *W. filifera*, *Phoenix canariensis* and *P. dactylifera* - were originally planted at the golf courses and around the lagoons, where about 800 remain today¹⁵ and give Encanto Park its iconic skyline. At one time, there were more than 120 species of trees in the Park.¹⁶ The golf courses were also graced with Cottonwoods, *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, Aleppo pines, and salt cedars, which thrived when the park was flood irrigated, but did poorly when the park adopted spray irrigation. In 2008, during a fierce monsoon storm, about 120 old-growth shade trees were downed. The City has recently planted new shade trees¹⁷ and plans to continue to replace any lost tree with a new one. Planted species include several types of acacias, eucalyptus, hackberry, desert willow, oak, pistachio, jacaranda, Bradford pear, tipu, and sissoo.

There was motorized boating in the 1940s in the lagoon and canals, where canoes and paddleboats were also available for rent from the Boathouse. The replica miniature *Delta Queen* made an appearance in the 1950s.¹⁸ By the early 1980s, motorboats were no longer allowed, but pedalboats and canoes are currently available. Fishing in the lagoon has been allowed since the Park's inception, and the lagoon is currently stocked by Arizona Game and Fish with trout from November to March, catfish from September to November and March to June, and bass or sunfish in springtime. Although many of the Parks' sponsored events were unfunded around 2013, Easter celebration has remained a significant multi-generational cultural event. "Octoberfish" and evening musical events are other popular events. The Park is popular with birders, particularly views of water birds, and is one of the practice grounds for the Society of

¹² Michael Swartz, Golf Pro, interview with author, July 8, 2019.

¹³ The separation berms are visible in some areas, as are the port valves.

¹⁴ Since 1988.

¹⁵ Michael Swartz, Golf Pro, interview with author, July 8, 2019.

¹⁶ Ebersole, 2018.

¹⁷ The City planted sixty-six shade trees in 2017 and eighty-eight in 2018.

¹⁸ Hartz, 2007.

Creative Anachronisms Kingdom of Atenveldt.¹⁹

In the mid-1950s, Side B, south of Encanto Boulevard, was developed with a snack bar, public swimming pool and pool building/sports office, eight tennis courts, and a softball field, to better supply recreation to the public. The archery range was demolished in 1988. Currently there are also three full basketball, three pickleball, eight four-wall handball, four volleyball and two sand volleyball courts in Side B, which since the 1980s renovations is called the Sports Complex.

The major vehicular entrances are off Encanto Boulevard, between 7th and 15th Avenues, and off 15th Avenue, south of Thomas Road, leading to parking lots at the southwest corner and the west side of the Park. Parking lots were added along with concrete walkways in the 1988 renovation. A pedestrian entrance at the corner of 8th Avenue and Encanto Boulevard was added with money raised by Friends of Encanto Park in 2010, for the park's 75th anniversary. Elaborate entry monuments were designed by the historic architecture firm of Swan Architects and installed in 2013, part of the 3PI (Phoenix Parks and Preserves Initiative) \$3.9M bond.²⁰

Two types of light standards are in the park. The first type has a steel pole with all new luminaires. The second type are the original Marbelite poles, some with their original iron lantern with flaring spiked top. These poles were also used throughout the Encanto-Palmcroft neighborhood, and a reference and drawing can be found in the original Encanto brochure.²¹

In 1984, one hundred acres of the park, including the eighteen-hole golf course and the lagoons were listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Encanto-Palmcroft Historic District by the Encanto Citizens Association. Indeed, the boundaries of the park are edged with Phoenix Residential District Historic Properties: North Encanto, Encanto Manor, Encanto Vista, Margarita Place, Del Norte Place, Fairview Place and Encanto-Palmcroft.

Enchanted Island is surrounded with mature palms reaching heights of twenty to thirty-five feet. The attractions include a one-third scale train, a carousel, amusement rides, a pirate cove with an amphitheater, a rock climbing wall, concession stands, restroom services, and gathering areas for large and small groups.

Enchanted Island is accessed from the east and south parking lots. After crossing under the arched entry sign and over the canal bridge you come upon a

¹⁹ Ebersole, 2018.

²⁰ The 3PI, sometimes labeled PPPI, sets aside one cent of sales tax for every \$10 of purchases to improve and renovate existing parks, and to expand and improve the city's desert preserve system.

²¹ Asch Investment Co., ca. 1935.

horse statue created by artist Snell Johnson on April 12, 1989.²² The entry circle is well-landscaped with a combination of mature olive trees and date palms providing filtered shade. The entrance crosses the train track. Immediately to the left is a scaled-down clock tower with the entry booth underneath. Behind the clock tower is Encanto Station, where patrons board the train. The train is a one-third size replica of the C.P. Huntington Train. It was installed for the grand re-opening of the amusement park in 1991. Its course takes seven minutes and is about a third of a mile.

Straight ahead at the entry is a view of the carousel with its canopy housing shell. All the major pathways are paved and wide enough to accommodate heavy crowds. The path splits in two directions at the carousel, the left path leading to the Pirate's Cove gathering area/amphitheater and restrooms, the other leading to movable vendor stands on wheels, and then the main concession stand on the right. Pirate's Cove is currently under renovation, beyond which you can see multiple amusement rides for young children. To the left are a whirly plane ride, a car ride, and a mini-roller-coaster with a dragon theme. A bumper boat and splash zone pool with a large group party spot is in close proximity. To the right are the parachute ride, castle water cannons, and the helicopter whirly ride.

The newest attraction on Enchanted Island is a giant climbing wall in the very back of the complex, which was installed May 5, 2017, donated by the 2015 National Football League Fan Experience. It was created to resemble the Grand Canyon, and four climbers can climb at once with varying levels of difficulty.

The City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department currently occupies the Norton House on the west side of the Park with an entry off of 15th Avenue. A part of the original purchase of the land for the park, the District offices have been housed there for decades.

The Valley Garden Center, located on the east side of 15th Avenue between Coronado and Holly Streets, is the home for a self-funded and non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that was incorporated in 1939. The building and grounds support garden clubs and plant societies meetings, weddings, and other events. The south parcel, near McDowell Avenue, is maintained by the Tree Council.

History: Pleasure Parks, or English Garden Parks, evolved from mostly European land uses such as Pleasure Gardens (examples Vauxhall, Marleybone, Cremorne) and were further developed as a fixed place for public amusement with the advent of the idea that children should have a separate place to “play” and adults to “recreate” in mostly pastoral settings on the edge of a city.²³

²² As stated on a memorial plaque in the center of a formal entry circle.

²³ Cranz, 2000.

Parks developed in America included this kind of approach but evolved into smaller, more democratic parks, designed to give working class immigrant children places to play off the street, and to improve the health of their parents. Beginning in the 1930s, the community's justification for parks as a social necessity was revised by New York City's Robert Moses whose operating assumption was that parks and recreation was a city service, and that the city was to provide active recreational activities such as sports fields and courts to its citizens.²⁴

Encanto Park includes both of these ideas – places for unstructured recreation such as the boats in the lagoon, picnicking and fishing, and places for structured recreation such as Enchanted Island, the golf courses, and the Sports Complex in Side B.

When Hartranft moved to Phoenix in 1900, flush with money from selling his successful cement manufacturing business, he established his home at 1626 North Central Avenue in an area known as “Millionaire’s Row.” This location brought him and his family into contact with other philanthropists such as Dwight B. Heard of the Heard Museum at 2201 North Central, diagonally across the street, who also advised him to consider investing in residential real estate, as well as ostriches and trailers for cars.²⁵

Shortly after Hartranft arrived, Phoenix became the capitol of Arizona Territory, and remained the capitol when Arizona became a state in 1912. At statehood, Phoenix had a population of 23,000 citizens on 3300 acres of land. Between 1907-1915, Phoenix’ philanthropists funded St. Luke’s Home for Tuberculosis, land for a Carnegie Library with a “parklike” area, Verde Park (1909, 916 E Van Buren St), Central Park (1910, 2nd Street and Tonto Street) and the very popular Eastlake Park (1914, 16th Street & Jefferson), which had a lake for boating, a baseball stadium, a swimming pool and picnic areas.

Heeding Heard’s advice, Hartranft bought 80 acres north of the original City of Phoenix townsite and began developing the Kenilworth Addition in 1910, and then teamed up with his friend and neighbor Heard in 1926 to purchase land from James W. Dorris, who owned a half-section of land north of McDowell between 7th and 15th Avenues. This became Palmcroft 1 and 2.²⁶ At about the same time, Lloyd C. Lakin and George T. Peter were developing the Encanto (1928-1929) subdivision, located at 7th-15th Avenues, north of Palm Lane to Encanto Boulevard, as Dr. James Collier Norton was developing the Del Norte Place²⁷ subdivision.²⁸

²⁴ Cranz, 2000.

²⁵ “Society News,” *Arizona Republican*, 1910.

²⁶ McDowell north, 7th-15th Avenues, begun 1927, open for building 1929.

²⁷ 15th-17th Avenues, Virginia Avenue-Encanto Boulevard, generally built 1927-1935.

²⁸ City of Phoenix, 2007.

Each developer interpreted principles of the City Beautiful/Garden City Movement - or more realistically, the Garden Suburb - in laying out their residence park. These principles were modifications of Ebenezer Howard's fully realized comprehensive approach to suburban planning which includes a unification of architecture, community planning and landscape design.²⁹ These movements called for innovative street plans, street landscaping, ornamental light fixtures and parks integrated into the housing areas. The small triangular parks located at 9th Avenue/Monte Vista Road demonstrate this type of open space, and the custom-designed Marbelite streetlights, palm-lined streets and Encanto Park itself indicate the movement's influence on the developers of the area.

To address the public's desire for more parks to serve Phoenix' fast-growing population,³⁰ the citizens approved a \$1,900,000 bond election. The Phoenix City Charter was amended to create a Parks, Playgrounds and Recreation Board, which would be appointed by the City Council. A \$915,000 portion of the bond program³¹ was for establishing new parks and taking over maintenance of existing parks from the Streets Department.³² William G. Hartranft was the original head of the Board, a position he held until his death in 1943. Because of the role he played in initiating and establishing some of Phoenix' greatest parks, he is known as the "Father of the Phoenix Parks System."³³ Hartranft desired to create a Pleasure Park, such as Golden Gate Park (begun in 1871) in San Francisco, where his son had moved in 1919, or like Balboa Park (begun in 1915) in San Diego. Originally thinking that South Mountain Park would be perfect, he and his fellow board members soon realized that the topography there would not be suitable, and they searched for some less challenging areas nearer to Phoenix. And what better area than where he and his friends were developing a series of Garden Suburbs?

By November 1934, the Board purchased the first 200 acres from the Dorris estate and Norton families and Lloyd C. Lakin & George T. Peter Investments, with a \$900,000 grant from the federal Public Works Administration. The Norton³⁴ House, built in 1912, was included in the purchase. This acreage was located between 13th and 19th Avenues, north of Encanto Boulevard to Edgemont, and was not yet within the city limits. Designated as a "Class A" municipal park space, it was to include a golf course and lagoon system, a Clubhouse and support buildings. A linear parking loop was built parallel to 15th Avenue, to the south of the main entry drive that led to a roundabout serving the

²⁹ Howard, 2002.

³⁰ The population was 48,118 people in 1930.

³¹ The bond included a \$720,000 ERA/Public Works Association loan.

³² Janus, 1986.

³³ City, 2010; Janus, 1986.

³⁴ Dr. James Collier Norton was the Territory's veterinarian from 1893-1912.

Clubhouse. “Municipal buildings” were located on Encanto Boulevard and 17th Avenue in the southwest quadrant of the park.

An additional twenty acres was purchased from the Lakin & Peter Investments, which was intended for district recreational use (“Class B”).³⁵ This area (Section B) was south of Encanto Boulevard, between 15th Avenue and 12th Avenue, with some portions extending all the way to McDowell Boulevard. The five-acre pitch and putt miniature golf course, a tennis court, archery, croquet and horseshoe-pitching courts, quoit grounds, and kiddie’s playground portion built by Lakin & Peter for the private use of their subdivision³⁶ were enfolded into the larger park and then the entire Park was named after the southern-adjacent subdivision: “Encanto, the Park Enchanting.”

Preliminary site plans were completed in March 1935 by architect L.M. Fitzhugh,³⁷ but proved too costly and were later modified by Lescher and Mahoney, a noted local architectural firm, so the Clubhouse, Boathouse, Golf Locker House and a Bandshell could be included.³⁸

The WPA supervised the planning and construction of the park, which proceeded over three years and was completed in 1938 by the William Peper Construction Company, winning with a low bid of \$66,247.³⁹ As stated on the TLCF website, “The overall design of the park is probably attributable to William G. Hartranft, the first Parks & Recreation Board President, but the WPA very likely had a hand in it as well.” The National Register of Historic Places form declares that the layout of the Park “represents the most coherent expression in Phoenix, and possibly Arizona, of the concept of the naturalistic romantic park.”⁴⁰

Perhaps inspired by the 1934 inaugural US PGA tour and the Phoenix Open (1932), Hartranft sought out William Bell (and perhaps his son “Billy” Bell), a California golf course designer already known for the Adobe Golf Course at the Arizona Biltmore (1928), to design and oversee the construction of two golf courses at Encanto, the first municipal courses in Arizona.⁴¹ The eighteen-hole golf course, opened to the public on November 26, 1936, with the first nine holes a par 36, and the second, west of 15th Avenue, labeled a par 39. Mr. Hartranft handed over the keys to the first Golf Pro, Frank Madison.⁴²

The Encanto 9 golf course was located on the east side of 15th Avenue,

³⁵ Janus, 1986.

³⁶ Lane-Smith Investment Co., ca 1935.

³⁷ The plans were presented to the public in the *Arizona Republic*, March 10, 1935.

³⁸ Janus, 1986.

³⁹ New Municipal Golf Course, 1936.

⁴⁰ Minor, 1984.

⁴¹ William Bell, Golf Course Designer. *Wikipedia*, 2018.

⁴² New Municipal Golf Course, 1936.

surrounding the Lagoon on three sides, while the Encanto 18 comprised most of the east and west side of the park, extending from Thomas Road on the north to Encanto Boulevard on the south, and to 19th Avenue on the west. The west side course may have been designed by Billy Bell, William Bell's son.⁴³ The original Locker House was located off the looping drive that also accesses the Club House on the east side of 15th Avenue. A second Golf Clubhouse was built near Encanto Boulevard and 17th Avenue to serve the Encanto 18.⁴⁴

Emulating the success and popularity of the man-made lake at Eastlake Park, the nine-acre lagoon was designed for boating and fishing, surrounded by the golf course and picnic turf areas and sited so the Club House overlooked it. In 1935, the primary Lagoon and two original islands, Picnic Island and Amphitheater Island, were graded.⁴⁵ The islands were built up with the earth available from the digging of the lagoon. Bermuda grass was seeded in the summer of 1936, and plant materials installed in November. All of the palms and most of the citrus trees used at the park were provided by Riverside Nursery in Phoenix and the Norman Nursery, a California company.⁴⁶

Tennis, archery, horseshoe and shuffleboard courts, basketball courts and bowling greens were nearing completion in the southern portion of the Park, under the supervision of Hartranft and Les Mahoney.⁴⁷ All the courts were lighted. George Hillis took over as architect during construction; he remained the Parks architect until he retired in 1944. The eighteen-hole golf course opened to public use on Thanksgiving Day, 1936. Soon after, the buildings were begun and completed in April 1937 by local contractor William Peper Construction Company.⁴⁸

Water was provided by the Salt River Valley Water User's Association in an underground-piped gravity irrigation system that is still in use today, known as "flood irrigation."⁴⁹

By all accounts the Park was a huge success.

Hartranft continued to lead the Parks Board, although he summered in Glendale, California, and died there in August, 1943. His legacy was acknowledged by a plaque dedicated in 1940 at Encanto Park by various civic groups⁵⁰. It reads "This plaque is a tribute to William G. Hartranft, through whose vision, talent,

⁴³ Billy Bell also designed the Maryvale Golf Course in Phoenix.

⁴⁴ The original clubhouse was torn down in the 1980s to make way for the current building.

⁴⁵ Janus, 1986.

⁴⁶ Janus, 1986.

⁴⁷ Of Lescher and Mahoney.

⁴⁸ Janus, 1986.

⁴⁹ Asch Investment Co., ca. 1935.

⁵⁰ Chamber of Commerce, Dons Club, Exchange Club, Junior Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis Club, Lions Club, 20-30 Club, Scottish Rite Club.

energy, devotion and guiding force the park system of Phoenix has been created.”

The next wave of park improvements (1948 bond) resulted in the construction of Kiddieland on what was originally Picnic Island. As its name implies, the purpose of the island was changed from a passive family-oriented picnic area to an intensive and commercial feature serving young children and their attendant parents. The lagoons and single bridge ensured that no fences were necessary. Kiddieland was dentist Frank Nelson’s idea, and he and his family ran the concessions until the 1960s. Although ownership changed hands, the rides remained relatively unchanged until 1986. Kiddieland elements included the 20 wooden horse Herschell Carousel moved from California in 1948, a Molina roller coaster, the miniature train, and eleven rides with names like the “Little Dipper,” “Sky Fighter,” plus a small Ferris wheel.⁵¹

The Valley Garden Center Board, representing twenty-eight Garden Clubs and 1200 members at the time, signed a ninety-nine-year lease in 1946 with the Parks and Recreation Board for three acres located within the boundaries of Encanto Park for the sum of \$1.00 per year as acknowledgement of their outstanding war bonds sales efforts and community support. The members, under President GG Williams, had the land rezoned and, after some delay due to lack of materials, were able to construct a “ranch-type house with a library, meeting rooms and living quarters for a caretaker. Designed by Edward L. Varney and built by contractor Farmer & Godfrey for \$20,000, it was dedicated in February, 1949. Since finding a home within Encanto Park, an Arboreal Garden and a Test Rose Garden were developed.⁵² The grounds include a 125-year-old Mesquite tree that was already there when the Garden was incorporated.⁵³

The advent of air conditioning brought unprecedented growth to Phoenix (population 106,818 in 1950), along with sales tax money and desires to upgrade existing parks and establish new parks. Encanto South, Side B, was again updated in the mid-fifties, with the addition of a swimming pool, tennis courts, and a softball field. In 1956 two lagoon bridges were added, providing better access to Enchanted Island, and more tennis courts. And in 1958, Helen B. Rogers bequeathed \$5000 for a sculpture she called *World Progress through Scientific Research in the Laboratory*. Phoenician Charles Badger Martin completed the mixed-metals sculpture, which can be seen today from 15th Avenue, near the Park entrance.

In 1971, land purchases, maintenance and vision for the future of the City’s parks was reassigned by City Charter to the Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department, relegating the Board to an advisory role, although the Board is still

⁵¹ Towne, 2015.

⁵² Valley Garden Center History Scrapbooks, 1936-1950.

⁵³ website, 2010.

active today.⁵⁴

The Encanto-Palmcroft neighborhood's 50th anniversary in 1977 prompted G.G. George, president of the Encanto Citizens Association, to propose the nomination of the Encanto-Palmcroft Historic District for the National Register of Historic Places, which was granted on February 16, 1984. Included in this nomination were 100.84 acres of Encanto Park, including only the property north of Encanto Boulevard and east of 15th Avenue.

Originally operated as an enterprise fund account⁵⁵ under the Golf Division, the City reassigned the Encanto Golf Courses to be a part of the Parks and Recreation Division's care and budget, overseen by a Head Pro under contract. From 1951-1958, the Head Pro was Charles "Chuck" McCool⁵⁶, followed by Mel Coggins (until his retirement in 1971), Ken Kier, then Jim Farkus. Mr. Michael Swartz is currently the Head Pro and an employee of the City of Phoenix.⁵⁷

Notable players include Ben Hogan and Byron Nelson. Until Karsten⁵⁸ was built, Encanto was one of the teaching courses, and the site of the seventy-two-hole Phoenix City Amateur Tournament. In the 1960s, Encanto Golf Courses had 90,000 rounds of golf per year.⁵⁹ In 1978, under Golf Pro Ken Kier, fairways were shifted, lagoons were added, and all eighteen tees were elevated and enlarged, and a new automatic irrigation system was installed. The courses marked their fiftieth anniversary in 1985 with a celebration and installation of a plaque at the first tee. The most recent improvements include the opening of a new restaurant, restroom renovations, and improvements to the play of sandtraps and bunkers.⁶⁰

Unfortunately, the bandshell burned down January 4, 1987 (Arizona Republic), coincidentally right before the money was coming in for park improvements from the 1988 one-billion-dollar bond fund.⁶¹ The first area of Encanto Park that benefited from the bond fund was on the south side – game courts replaced the archery field, and parking and play equipment was added.

Renovations on the park's north side began in 1986 and included revitalizing the lagoon and channel systems, building new restrooms, sidewalks, adding lights and more play equipment. Kiddieland was closed and all the rides were sent for

⁵⁴ City, 2010.

⁵⁵ Funds used to account for operations that are financed and operated in a manner similar to business enterprise.

⁵⁶ Inducted into the SW Section PGA Hall of Fame in 2011.

⁵⁷ Robin McCool, interview with author, March 20, 2019.

⁵⁸ Karsten Golf Course on the Arizona State University campus, built in 1989, now closed.

⁵⁹ Robin McCool, interview with author, March 20, 2019.

⁶⁰ Michael Swartz, Golf Pro, interview with author, July 8, 2019.

⁶¹ (City of Phoenix Public Information Office, 2008.

auction, including the carousel. The “Encanto Carousel Fund” was begun to save it by Athia Hardt and Toni Neary, which earned enough to buy and restore the Carousel, and store and install it when the island was re-opened on November 5, 1991 as Enchanted Island Amusement Park. In 1998, the Fund gifted the Carousel to the City.⁶²

The north side, also known as Area A, saw a new boathouse, restroom, storage building, all designed by Orcutt Winslow, constructed in 1988.⁶³ CellaBarr Associates designed a new automatic irrigation system for most of the turf areas.

In 1961, the maintenance building on the west golf course burned down when fertilizer stored there exploded.⁶⁴ A new and larger facility, designed by Orcutt Winslow, was built in the 1980s.

The Encanto Citizens Association (ECA), formally chartered in 1973, pledged to undertake a “Renaissance of the Gardens,” including the Rose and Arboreal Gardens, as an official Arizona Centennial Legacy Project in 2012. As part of the State’s celebration, a 1960 sundial in the Valley Garden Center Rose Garden was restored by Simon Wheaton-Smith, a former resident of the neighborhood, who also gifted a new sundial to the Arboreal Garden.⁶⁵

The ECA and the City of Phoenix proposed and sponsored the expansion of the National Register listing to include Side B (Encanto to Holly, 15th to 12th Avenues), also known as the Sports Complex, the 1912 Norton House, and the western portion of the Park from 15th to 19th Avenues on the east and west, and Thomas Road on the north to Encanto Boulevard on the south, so now the entire Park is in the listing and on the City’s Historic Property Register.

Another of their projects was to relocate Hartranft’s memorial to its original position in front of the Clubhouse, designated the “William G. Hartranft Entry Garden.” It was rededicated to his memory in March 2017.

A Historic Preservation Exterior Rehabilitation Grant⁶⁶ of \$70,000, matched by the Parks & Recreation Department, was obtained in mid-June, 2018 to restore the double-hung and casement wood windows of the Norton House.

The Friends of Encanto Park volunteer group was started in 2005, “advocating for capital improvements.” Some of their privately funded projects include the Encanto Entrada, a pedestrian portal at 8th Avenue and Encanto Boulevard

⁶² Towne, 2015.

⁶³ Various City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation construction documents and final manuals.

⁶⁴ Robin McCool, interview with author, March 20, 2019.

⁶⁵ George, et al., 2014.

⁶⁶ The Grant is funded by bond money and is administered by the City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Committee, and is available for Registered residential properties.

designed by Landscape Architect Vollmer & Associates (\$79,860 donation value), and The Garden of Dreams, created by Arizona State University's Lodestar Center (\$100,000 donation). The Entrada was dedicated at the 75th anniversary celebration for the park (November 27, 2010), and the Garden dedicated September 23, 2011.⁶⁷

The Phoenix Parks and Preserve Initiative (P3I), originally passed in 1999 and renewed in 2008, is a sales tax approved by 80% of Phoenix voters. Encanto's share as of 2018 was \$5,800,000. It has been used to renovate the lagoon water system, add LED lighting and chilled drinking fountains throughout the park, four new ramadas, fitness stations, new monument signs at three park entrances, and in Side B/Sports Complex, new ornamental fencing, shade structures, new playground equipment, and additional trees.⁶⁸

- Sources:
- Chronicles of Encanto Women's Golf Association*. 1944-current.
 - City of Phoenix Public Information Office, "Out of the Ashes," November 2008.
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Photographer: John Gonzalez
November 11, 2021



West Entrance, looking East (John Gonzalez, 2018.08.24).



Amphitheater Island Waterfall, looking Southeast (John Gonzalez, 2018.08.24).



Lagoon Waterfall, looking East (John Gonzalez, 2018.08.24).



Golf Course, looking Southwest (John Gonzalez, 2018.08.24).



Palms and Lagoon North of Enchanted Island, looking Northeast (John Gonzalez, 2018.04.06).



Sports Center, looking Southwest (John Gonzalez, 2018.04.06).



Train and Carousel Pavilion, looking East (John Gonzalez, 2018.04.06).



Norton House/City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation District Offices, looking West (John Gonzalez, 2018.04.06).



Valley Garden Center Patio and 125-year-old Mesquite, looking Northeast (John Gonzalez, 2018.04.20).



William G. Hartranft Memorial Stone (John Gonzalez, 2018.04.20).