

Towerpoint Tennis Club History

In the mid 1970s a new resort development was started in Mesa, Arizona by **Dorothy Garske**, a vivacious woman, an excellent athlete, and a tennis player. She encouraged new residents to come join her at the courts.

Herb Coleman and his brother were some of the early players drawn to Towerpoint by the tennis program. They loved playing tennis - dawn to dusk.



Initially there were only 2 courts. Note the unobstructed view of the Towerpoint tower, center left, now hidden from view by tall palms.

In the beginning the Tennis Club had only 12 players, men and women combined. Just enough to fill two courts from 7am to 6pm every day. Mixed doubles was the norm. The park continued to attract tennis players. Soon a 3rd court was added.



A - Team

(Note the wooden racquets)



B - Team

This was a self rating system until the Towerpoint Tennis Club joined the East Valley Senior Tennis League (EVSTL).

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On March 14th, 1980, five charter tennis clubs initiated the formation of the EVSTL: Apache Wells, Sun Lakes, Sunland Village, **Towerpoint** and Venture Out.

The Towerpoint Tennis Club hired a pro to evaluate player skill levels (1.5 - 3.0). As usual, there was controversy....but life went on.

1980 - 1981 First Club Fiesta Parades



Bill Farrow Herb Colman Fred BloomField



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In 1980, the Towerpoint residents called this the **“100 Year”** flood, but the nets and the old horseshoe pit backstops are still visible:



On September 27th, 2014 the **“1000 Year”** storm water totally inundated the courts necessitating a extensive silty cleanup.



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Back: Evelyn Long Jane Atwell Helen Ulfred

Front: Jeannie Allen Lil Samlaska Rodi Eberspacher

Another legend at Towerpoint, **Lil Samlaska**, joined Towerpoint Tennis in 1984. It did not take her long to “catch the tennis bug”. She attributes the development of her skills to players: Charlie Davies, Bob Hays, and Evelyn Long, who taught her “how to hold my racquet and really play”. Matches were fun and competitive. Of course, there was also a social side. She joined her many tennis friends, **Vi & Fred Bloomfield**, **Lelia & Roy Fogg**, and many others for league matches and monthly dinner meetings. Of course, there was the annual Tennis Club entry in the Fiesta Day parade.

1988

1994



Towerpoint Tennis Club History

1998-99 - 3.5 Team Captain: Lil Samlaska



Back: Jim Rupp Jim Henderson Joe Moralas Gene Healy

**Front: Richard Karen Lil Ann Peg Vi
Armstrong Healy Samlaska Urichen Adams Bloomfield**



**Spaghetti Dinner
“Official Greeters”**

**1999 First Major
Club Fund Raiser**

**Dick & Mary Ellen
Toeppner**

**Peg
Adams**

**Vi & Fred
Bloomfield**

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**Bob
Norman**

**Herb
Colman**

**Andy
Rodgers**

**Vi & Fred
Bloomfield**

**Gale
Long**

Bob Norman picked his trailer site from a park development chart as the park site was being converted from a cotton field and now was utility trenches and survey stakes. The following year - 1977, he had a spot to park his Airstream. Bob has an incredible history of athletic endeavors - professional ski instructor, bicycling cross country, and running marathons. Finally, after living at Towerpoint for ten years, he was persuaded by his brother-in-law **Herb Colman**, to try tennis. In 2015, Bob will celebrate his 100th birthday. On his doctors recommendation he stopped playing tennis at 95 but still enjoys weekly golf and each afternoon, a cigar and a little scotch.

Herb Colman was a very active member of the Tennis Club from its earliest days. In 2015, Herb will be 94 and still enjoys afternoon dancing at Towerpoint.

Vi & Fred Bloomfield spent 35 winters in Mesa and now live in Vancouver, B.C. They enjoyed dancing at Towerpoint before tennis became their passion. In 2015, Fred will be 97.

Active tennis and a long life span appear to go hand in hand for a number of Towerpoint tennis players.



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1999-2000 Club Executive



Jim Rupp Dick Toepner Loren Michaels Sue Swincicki



Back: Bob Norman Dick Grimm - 3.0 Captain Loren Michaels Paul Dantes

**Front: Marilyn Janelle Lelia Barb Rodi Dick Jim
Long Fisher Fogg Montoya Eberspacher Toepner Putnam**

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Larry Duso was a builder, constructing the Tennis Club Sweet Spot, the original court bulletin boards, and numerous other projects at the courts. When health problems prevented him from playing tennis, he was frequently seen at the courts cheering from his scooter. Almost every day you could find Larry working and teaching in the woodshop.

2004 Towerpoint Open Tennis Tournament

A very popular annual tournament open to all Towerpoint residents.



Norm Waterhouse Marv Broman Joanne Nelson Don "DJ" Johnson
Activity Director



2005 In-Park Tournament

John & Sandy Kwas with racquets specially designed for seniors.

(Spoof purposes only.)

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Larry, Curly & Moe or is it Curly, Moe & Larry? - the annual Festival day parade is always a hoot. Each year a special Festival theme brings out the fun loving creative nature of the tennis club members.

Most years the Tennis Club group entry in the Festival parade comes in **FIRST PLACE**.

The 2007 Festival parade group entry was a bit of a disappointment for the Tennis Club - **SECOND PLACE**.



Towerpoint Tournament awards to **Jack Wakeman and Larry Amiot**

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Steve & Joanne Nelson
2008 Towerpoint Open



Norm & Ann Plunkett



2009 December Tennis Fun Day

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2010 - Cal-Am tore out 4 courts, reconstructed 5 new courts, a large pergola seating area and new landscaping.



Deck party celebrating the opening of the new Tennis Complex



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2012 -Tennis Club adopts the Cal-AM Towerpoint color for team wear.



A popular event at the Christmas break is a fun In-Park tournament. The 2013 theme was a Davis Cup format. Teams became very passionate at representing their assigned country.

Towerpoint Tennis Club History

A pleasant Club social feature is the monthly potluck Tennis Dinner followed by a brief business meeting.



To help recruit new tennis players to the club, a special event called Tennis 101 was introduced in 2015. A social get-together followed basic tennis instruction.



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CREDITS:

Thanks to the many dedicated people who have made a contribution to Towerpoint Tennis - teaching, maintaining the courts, building, fundraising, and volunteering to help at the various Club activities.

Bob Norman, Herb Coleman and Vi Bloomfield - No longer play tennis but were a big part of the beginning of tennis at Towerpoint and re-told many stories of their enjoyable years as part of the Towerpoint tennis community.

Special thanks to **Kathy Duso** whose photo album and notations were invaluable in putting this story together.

Thanks to **Diana Echert** whose initial write-up on the history of Towerpoint Tennis has been incorporated into this story, including photos.

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