

Note from the President-

Since we didn't have a meeting in July, there is no meeting updates to pass on. With that, I will defer to a message received on Facebook from someone who used to live in our neighborhood. I love the idea of revisiting our history and would encourage anyone with a story they'd like to share to send it.

Memories from a former resident of 1333 W. Portland (1953-1966)

My parents moved to Phoenix from Rockford Illinois in 1953. The doctor told my mom to move me to Arizona as I had terrible bronchitis every winter in Illinois. They sold everything and moved here with no jobs. We first lived for a short while in a rented duplex on the corner of 15th Ave and W. Woodland Ave. My father, who was a manager in a knitting factory in Rockford, worked as a janitor to keep us going and my mother worked as a waitress at Bill's Chicken In the Rough restaurant on the NW corner of 15th Ave and Van Buren.

They then purchased the house at 1333 W. Portland for approx. \$6,000 totally furnished. I attended Franklin Elementary School on McDowell near the fairgrounds through the 6th grade, and then Kenilworth School for 7th and 8th grades. I then attended Phoenix Union High School and graduated in 1962.

My mother worked as a cashier at Henry's Market across the alley on 15th Ave and Roosevelt. It was a large complete grocery store at the time owned by a family from China.

My father joined AirResearch as a precision hone operator making parts for the space program etc. He won several awards for his inventions which he created in his favorite space, the garage behind the house.

My Father's name was Valdy James Nelson. My Mother's name was Anna Nelson. My legal name is Valdy Charles Nelson although people know me as Val.

Two doors west of us (next to the Henry's parking lot) was Mr. and Mrs. Cruze (not sure of the spelling - I was around 9 years old)

Next door to the west was Mr. and Mrs. Parent. He was quite elderly and, every evening he would put on a suit with jacket, tie and nice hat and go walking using his cane. His two adult daughters lived with him at the time. Cannot remember much about his wife.

Next door to the east was, first, Mrs. Litrell (spelling?). A very nice lady living alone. When she left a couple named Mr. and Mrs. Wolinski moved in with a boy near my age named Barry Wolinski.

Initially, at 1333, there was an apple tree in front just east of the front porch. Green edible apples were great each year. When it died, my dad cut it down leave about 3-4 feet of the trunk to which he attached a bucket style planter and kept beautiful flowers in it.

My father owned a couple of Studebakers over the first few years and I learned to drive in one of them. I have fond memories of a Studebaker parked in the driveway which was just two strips of cement and my father maintained a beautiful green lawn including the grass between the strips in the driveway. He was very proud of his lawn and people would actually stop and ask what he did to make it so lush and green.

In the Henry's building, with it's storefront facing 15th ave was a laundry owned by Mr. Danner. No self serve, just leave laundry and pick it up. He would pay us kids one penny for every wire clothes hanger we could get going door-to-door asking if they had extra clothes hangers.

The little room you walked through going from the kitchen to the back porch was the laundry

room. The old washer with the ringer on top was in there. Mom would then hang the clothes on the clothes line in the back yard.

My bedroom was the one in the rear and had two twin beds. My parents shared the front bedroom.

No air conditioning was installed until around 1967 after I married and moved out. The only cooling was a giant evaporative cooler mounted outside on the dining room's east wall in the middle. We would close the bathroom door and leave the bedroom doors open to allow the powerful cooler to blow directly across the dining room, hit the bathroom door and then to the bedrooms.

Sorry about the sequence of this all, just typing as I remember things.

When we bought the house, it had a wooden contraption with kind of half metal barrel cut lengthwise on the roof near the rear on the west side. It no longer functioned but was told it held water and was a water heater at one time. When my dad had a new roof (green wooden shingles replaced) they removed the water heater.

In the living room was a closed-off fireplace with a large gas heater in front of it.

The backyard (alley side) was a white picket fence with a gate next to the garage. Complete privacy because of 10 foot-high oleanders lining the alley behind the picket fence.

Wish I had pictures. They were somehow lost or give to a relative.

As always, please contact me if there's anything I can help with.

Will Denney (w_denney@yahoo.com)/(602)291-7637