

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Chandler History

Dr. A.J. Chandler – The Early Years

The town of Chandler, Arizona, was established in 1912 by Dr. Alexander John (“A.J.”) Chandler. Dr. Chandler was born on July 15, 1859, near Coaticook, Quebec, Canada. He studied veterinary medicine at the Montreal Veterinary College at McGill University, graduating with honors in 1882. He then moved to Detroit, Michigan, where he established a successful private practice. Much of his work was for one client, Dexter M. Ferry, a leading supplier of seed for Midwestern farmers. Dr. Chandler’s knowledge of livestock nutrition was invaluable to the Ferry Seed Company’s research to develop better strains of alfalfa and other feed crops.

In 1887, Will C. Barnes and C.M. Bruce, two officials from the Arizona Territory, traveled to Detroit to offer Dr. Chandler the position of Veterinary Surgeon. The post was responsible for overseeing the Livestock Sanitary Board, a new agency created to set health standards for the territory’s growing cattle industry. The board had searched across the country to find the best man for the job before offering the position to Dr. Chandler. To their surprise, Dr. Chandler agreed to take the relatively low-paying job and move to Arizona. (See Figure 1 for a photo of Dr. Chandler in 1887.)

Unfortunately, when Dr. Chandler arrived in Arizona, the entire Southwest was in the midst of a severe drought. After just 30 days on the job, Dr. Chandler felt he could do no more and resigned his post. As he made plans to move on to California, there was a sudden deluge of rain, which halted all travel. For three weeks, the little town of Phoenix was nearly inundated by the torrential downpour. Dr. Chandler watched from his hotel room as the desert blossomed into a fantastic array of renewed life. The doctor, moved by what he saw and the possibilities it foretold, withdrew his resignation and decided to stay in Arizona.

Over the next five years, Dr. Chandler used his official capacity as Veterinary Surgeon to promote the development of a stock feed industry. He believed that the production of alfalfa on irrigated farmlands could support a thriving cattle industry, despite the lack of adequate natural forage in the barren terrain.

The Chandler Ranch, 1890-1911

In 1890, Dr. Chandler purchased 80 acres southeast of Phoenix and established his own small ranch and trading post. He contacted Dexter Ferry and other business associates in Detroit and convinced them of the potential for developing the surrounding land. They agreed to

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 9

provide him with financial backing, and he began buying parcels of land from dry-farming homesteaders.

Two years later, Dr. Chandler resigned as Veterinary Surgeon and established the Consolidated Canal Company. By creating an efficient network of canals and installing electric pumps to draw groundwater, he was able to transform his ranch into a green, irrigated empire.

Dr. Chandler was soon able to cultivate 3,000 acres, producing enough alfalfa and grain to feed 2,000 head of beef cattle and several thousand sheep. A small settlement known as Headquarters Camp was built at a site near what is now the northeast corner of Ray Road and Arizona Avenue. It included a ranch house, a blacksmith shop, a school and two wells.

In 1899, Dr. Chandler met with David Fairchild, an agent of the U.S. Department of Agriculture who had traveled around the world in search of seeds for new crops that could be grown in the United States. Fairchild believed that the Salt River Valley, with its hot, dry climate would be an ideal place for growing Egyptian cotton. This particular type of cotton was a "long-staple" variety. It produced extra-long fibers, which would make it a valuable crop for Arizona farmers.

Dr. Chandler arranged to have some of the seeds shipped from Cairo and planted them on a five-acre parcel near Mesa. This first planting was successful, and Dr. Chandler became known as the first person to grow the prized Egyptian cotton on this continent.

Meanwhile, Dr. Chandler continued to acquire additional land; by 1904 his landholdings had grown to approximately 18,000 acres. His success at acquiring land prompted questions as to whether he had obtained the land illegally. His practices were eventually investigated by a congressional subcommittee which concluded that he had indeed violated the rules for land acquisition set forth under the Desert Land Act of 1877. Dr. Chandler, however, flatly denied any wrongdoing. Apparently the offense was deemed insignificant, because he was never prosecuted nor was he required to return any of the land to the public domain. Furthermore, none of the recommendations made by the subcommittee to curb such abuses were ever put into effect.

Like many valley land owners, Dr. Chandler recognized that the only permanent solution to the area's water problem was to construct a storage reservoir on the upper Salt River, where the water flowed through steep canyons. A potential dam site had been surveyed in 1889, but area farmers lacked the resources to undertake such a monumental project. Dr. Chandler had even journeyed to Europe to convince wealthy aristocrats to invest in the project, but to no avail.

Congress solved the problem when it approved, and President Theodore Roosevelt signed, the National Reclamation Act on June 17, 1902. The act provided federal assistance for construction of irrigation works, including water storage dams. In February 1903, Dr. Chandler and other land owners incorporated the Salt River Valley Water Users' Association (SRVWUA) to entice the federal government, through the newly created U.S. Reclamation Service, to build

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 10

Roosevelt Dam. The dam was one of the five original federal projects authorized on March 13, 1903 and was the first major project to be completed. Although Dr. Chandler was a member of the SRVWUA's executive committee, he decided not to enroll his land because the reclamation act limited to 160 acres the amount of ground for which any one owner could get water. Instead, in 1904 he organized the Mesa Improvement Company as a means to manage and ultimately liquidate his holdings. Three years later, Dr. Chandler agreed to sell the Consolidated Canal to the Reclamation Service. He also agreed to subdivide and sell his ranch in tracts of 160 acres or less, thereby making the land eligible for water that it otherwise would not have received.

In 1911, Roosevelt Dam was completed and the Mesa Improvement Company (later known as the Chandler Improvement Company) began selling Dr. Chandler's land in 10- to 160-acre parcels. Advertisements announcing the sale of the Chandler Ranch lands appeared in newspapers across the country.

The Chandler Townsite

In the process of subdividing his ranch, Dr. Chandler created a townsite, which was platted in December 1911. The townsite was one square mile in size and was aligned with the cadastral survey system so that its principal roadways were at section lines and its boundaries at half-section lines. The north-south streets were generally named after U.S. states, and the east-west streets were generally named after cities. The principal north-south street was Arizona Avenue and the primary east-west street was Cleveland Street (now Chandler Boulevard). (See Figure 2 for a map of the Chandler Townsite from 1911.)

Dr. Chandler brought in city planners and landscape architects from southern California to design the townsite. Their design was clearly based on the principles of the City Beautiful Movement, which became popular following the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago. The town plan featured a central business plaza laid out around a large park. Unique features of the plaza included fountains, landscaped boulevards and footbridges over the Commonwealth Canal, which ran through the center of the park. The construction of commercial buildings around the park was carefully controlled with deed restrictions. Business owners were required to build "fireproof" buildings reflecting the latest architectural styles. The entire commercial district would be connected with a type of open colonnade known as a "pergola."

The centerpiece of the town would be the elegant Hotel San Marcos (NRHP listed 4/29/1982), designed by California architect Arthur Burnett Benton. Benton had been involved in the effort to preserve the original Spanish missions in California and later became a proponent of the Mission Revival Style. He is perhaps best known for the Mission Inn in Riverside, California, built in 1902. The Hotel San Marcos utilized the same architectural style and was the first

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 11

reinforced cast-in-place concrete structure to be built in Arizona. It was also the first of many upscale golf resorts that would be built in the state to cater to wealthy winter visitors.

Dr. Chandler worked diligently to ensure that his new townsite would have railroad access. The plat map for the townsite reserved a strip of land near the east end of town for the railroad. Dr. Chandler’s long-time business associate, Dexter Ferry, sat on the board of directors of the Southern Pacific Railroad and used his influence to make sure that the new Arizona Eastern Railroad would pass through Chandler. But when Arizona Eastern officials revealed their plans for building a small, simple depot, Dr. Chandler objected. He commissioned Arizona architects Royal W. Lescher and John R. Kibbey to draw up plans for a more impressive structure, also designed in the Mission Revival Style.

The townsite plat also reserved a large parcel of land at the northeast corner of Cleveland and California streets for a school building. By early 1912, the first members of the Chandler School District Board of Trustees had been elected. and work had begun on the new Chandler Grammar School (later known as the Cleveland School). Not surprisingly, the new schoolhouse was designed in the Mission Revival Style, matching the other important buildings in the new townsite.

Although there are many examples of City Beautiful planning in Arizona, Chandler represents the fullest expression of the movement in the state. Other examples were generally much smaller projects or were individual campuses rather than entire towns. For example, the Carnegie Library in Phoenix was situated at the center of a large park with pedestrian pathways, and the Phoenix Union High School campus consisted of three Beaux Arts-inspired buildings set within a circular drive. A smaller example of a completely planned community is the smelter town of Clarkdale, Arizona, which had five public buildings arranged around a park with different neighborhoods for the management and workers separated by race. None of these, however, were as ambitious as the townsite conceived by Dr. Chandler and his associates.

On May 17, 1912, the Chandler townsite office officially opened for business. By the end of the first day, more than \$50,000 worth of lots in the new town had been sold. Sales continued at a brisk pace, particularly in the commercial district. By mid-1914, more than 40 businesses were operating in downtown Chandler, including three groceries, two lumberyards, two restaurants, four dry goods stores, two feed stores, two pool halls, a bank, a post office, a drugstore, a garage, three nurseries, two real estate offices, a newspaper, and a local telephone exchange. The Southside Gas and Electric Company provided electric power for the town.

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12

Deed Restrictions

Like many proponents of the City Beautiful Movement, Dr. Chandler hoped that the park, the presence of the grand San Marcos Hotel, and a uniform design standard for downtown would help raise and maintain property values. However, to ensure this, he made use of deed restrictions in the majority of his sales.

The deeds for all of the lots designed for commercial use carried restrictive clauses as to the type, cost and design of the construction. Business buildings were required to be of “fire proof construction,” with a first floor ceiling not less than 14 feet high for a distance of not less than 20 feet back from the front sidewalk. It was also required that the portion of the pergola between the colonnade and the building be completed by the owner at the time of erection of the building and be “in uniformity with the general pergola plan adopted by the Mesa Improvement Company.” The dates for the beginning of construction were variously stated as “immediately,” “within 60 days,” or, in some deeds, a specific date was stated. Each owner was enjoined to “prosecute the construction of said building to completion with reasonable diligence.” The restrictions in the deed typically remained in effect for 15 years.

Many residential lots also carried deed restrictions. Some simply stated that the properties were only allowed to have residential uses, while others dictated that the homes constructed be located no closer than 20 feet from the front property line and six feet from each side property line. Garages and other accessory structures were typically permitted, but only on the rear half of the lot. The most exclusive lots carried restrictions dictating the minimum cost to build a house on the lot. For example, on Colorado Street in the Silk Stocking Neighborhood, a lot sold in 1917 carried a restriction of \$1,500. By 1919, the cost had increased to \$2,000, and by 1921, it had increased to \$2,500. On Washington Street, a lot sold in 1919 carried a restriction of \$2,000. By the following year, the cost had increased to \$3,000, and by 1928, it had increased to \$3,500. The Washington lots appear to have been more restrictive than the Colorado lots, which still had a cost of \$2,500 in 1928. Again, the restrictions in the deed typically remained in effect for 15 years, although it appears that all of them were set to expire by the mid-1930s.

Interestingly, none of the deed restrictions addressed the subject of race. In upscale developments in other communities, it was common to limit ownership and leasing of the property to those of the “White or Caucasian race.” The Encanto-Palmcroft and Country Club Place neighborhoods in Phoenix are prime examples of where this type of restriction took place. Despite the fact that race was not specifically addressed in the deed restrictions, there was still a de facto segregation based on income. As most Mexican Americans and African Americans were less wealthy, they tended to settle in the less desirable areas of the town, or outside of the town entirely. These groups created their own business and social institutions, since they were often excluded from Anglo establishments.

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

Incorporation

Good city planning, the promise of fertile lands, and guaranteed water allowed Chandler to grow quickly in its early years. However, the burgeoning population soon placed more demands on the Chandler Improvement Company for electricity, water and other amenities than it could supply, prompting open talk about incorporating the town as early as 1918.

On January 21, 1920, a mass meeting of the townspeople showed an overwhelming sentiment for incorporation. A week later, a group of the leading citizens met to make the final arrangements. The corporate limits were determined and a new petition was prepared. The town boundaries encompassed an area somewhat larger than the original townsite but did not include the 80-acre San Marcos golf course.

By mid-February, all the required signatures had been obtained. On February 16, a Chandler delegation presented the completed petition to the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors. After an examination of the document and a short period of questioning, the board approved the establishment of Chandler as a municipal corporation under the laws of the state. The board also appointed the first common council for the town and unofficially named Dr. Chandler as the first mayor.

The first meeting of the Common Council of Chandler was held the following night, at which time the council officially elected Dr. Chandler as mayor. The other members were David A. Jacobson, J.B. Weber, Abe Lukin and Henry L. Peterson. Arthur E. Price, who had devoted much of his time to the legal aspects of incorporation, became the first town attorney and drew up the first ordinances. Other early officials were W.W. Pickrell, town clerk; Daniel M. Arnold, police judge; and C.L. Malone, town marshal. Lukin, Peterson, Price and Arnold all owned property and/or lived in the Silk Stocking Neighborhood.

At his own request, Dr. Chandler served as mayor for only a short time. At the first council election, held in May 1920, his name did not appear on the ballot. Elected at this time were Jacobson, Joseph Smith, Hugh C. Gardner, George R. Armstrong and Fred S. Seaver. Jacobson was unanimously selected as mayor. Gardner and Armstrong both owned property and lived in the Silk Stocking Neighborhood.

The exact population of Chandler at the time of incorporation is unknown, since the 1920 census was enumerated before the middle of February. However, the census does show that the population of the East Chandler Precinct was 2,764, while the West Chandler Precinct was home to 3,224 residents. Later that year, the population within the corporate limits was estimated at 1,600.

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
----- Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
----- County and State
N/A
----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14

Zoning Ordinance

By 1925, continued growth, the looming expiration of the original deed restrictions, and the desire to better manage future expansion prompted town officials to consider the adoption of a zoning ordinance. (See Figure 3 for an aerial photo of Chandler ca. 1925.) At the time, zoning was still a relatively new concept in the United States. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of zoning in the case of *Village of Euclid, Ohio v. Ambler Realty Company* in 1926. However, the State of Arizona had already passed legislation in 1925 enabling cities and towns to establish zoning ordinances. By December of that year, the population of Chandler was divided into two committees to discuss the zoning recommendations put forward by planning consultant Charles H. Chesney. The town council ultimately endorsed the recommendations, and two months later, on February 10, 1926, the new zoning ordinance was passed by voters 76 to 63, with 141 of the 144 eligible landowners casting a vote. Thus, Chandler became the first municipality in Arizona to adopt a zoning ordinance, even before the U.S. Supreme Court issued its decision in the *Euclid v. Ambler* case. Interestingly, the *Chandler Arizonan* noted that many voted against the law for precisely this reason—because they were reluctant to become the first city in the state that was subject to zoning regulations.

In many ways the new zoning ordinance mirrored the intent of the original deed restrictions. Property uses were still strictly controlled, and the design guidelines for the downtown area were retained. The document also placed an emphasis on maintaining the low density and suburban appearance of the town, and on protecting the health and safety of the community by prohibiting certain activities from taking place within the city limits. As part of his recommendations, Chesney prepared a site plan for future growth and amenities. This plan closely resembled the ideals of the City Beautiful Movement with its emphasis on parks and curvilinear parkways, which were a notable departure from the prevailing grid pattern. Generally, the plan was not implemented, except for the proposed relocation of the golf course from the east side of the railroad tracks to behind the San Marcos Hotel.

The Silk Stocking Neighborhood benefited from the zoning ordinance inasmuch as the entire neighborhood was zoned as a Class 1 District, meaning that it was zoned exclusively for single-family residential use. The only exception was at the northwest corner of Colorado and Cleveland streets which was zoned as a Class 6 District, for public and semi-public uses, reflecting the presence of the Roman Catholic Church at that corner. (See Figure 4 for a zoning map of Chandler from 1926.)

Development of the Silk Stocking Neighborhood

Early Neighborhood Development, 1912-1931

From the beginning, it was clear that the Silk Stocking Neighborhood would become Chandler’s premier residential area. In fact, in 1919 the *Chandler Arizonan* observed that

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 15

"Washington Street seems destined to become the leading residence street of Chandler." The neighborhood was ideally located farthest away from the designated industrial area and closest to the golf course (initially located east of the railroad tracks) and the majestic Chandler High School campus, which opened in 1921. The deed restrictions, which were higher than anywhere else in the town, coupled with single-family residential zoning, further enhanced the desirability of the neighborhood. The area was dubbed "Silk Stocking Row" by a 1919 newspaper commentary which noted that the man who could afford to meet the \$3,000 minimum building cost to construct his home there could also afford to buy his wife silk stockings. For better or worse, the name stuck. Current Silk Stocking resident Dorothy Ruoff, who also grew up in the neighborhood, recalls the name being used as early as 1937. It became official in 2004 when the Silk Stocking Neighborhood Association registered with the City of Chandler.

Despite the lure of exclusivity, it took several years before the first residences began to appear in the neighborhood. It is possible that the lots were not immediately offered for sale, but it is more likely that the high degree of restriction made it difficult for potential buyers to purchase and build on them. Ironically, the three buildings that were likely the first in the neighborhood were not the upscale residences that had the town's boosters had envisioned. One was a small dwelling at the rear of the lot at 254 North Colorado Street, presumably built by Robert W. & Gladys F. Merrell, who signed a purchase agreement with the Chandler Improvement Company in 1917. The lot had a minimum building cost of \$1,500 at the time, so it is unclear whether the undersized "alley house" was built legally. The second building was the structure that originally housed the Chandler Improvement Company. This wood frame building was relocated to the southwest corner of Delaware and Erie streets (now 398 North Delaware Street) and converted to a residence. Likewise, the structure that served as the Chandler Improvement Company's second office was moved to the west side of Colorado Street just north of Cleveland Street and was converted to a residence. It was occupied by Ernest J. Koch, who was vice president of the Bank of Chandler and secretary and manager of the Chandler Improvement Company.

By 1919, 10 additional houses had been completed or were under construction. These properties were all on Washington Street, on the block between Colorado and Detroit streets. They included the following:

- Arthur E. Price & Louise C. Price House, 201 North Washington Street (now demolished)
- Henry L. Peterson & Cora A. Peterson House, 218 North Washington Street;
- Will H. Robinson & Grace P. Robinson House, 236 North Washington Street;
- Louis Henry & Velma Henry House, 245 North Washington Street;
- Samuel A. Meyer & Vera J. Meyer House, 255 North Washington Street;
- Hugh C. Gardner & Florence May Gardner House, 264 North Washington Street;
- Daniel M. Arnold & Emma C. Arnold House, 275 North Washington Street;

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 16

- Joseph D. Thorn, Jr. & Caroline G. Thorn House, 282 North Washington Street;
- George L. Gollands & Lillian R. Gollands House, 291 North Washington Street; and
- Clarence A. Baldwin & Emma H. Baldwin House, 100 East Chandler Boulevard (now demolished).

These houses were generally brick bungalows designed in the Craftsman Style with stuccoed exteriors. They ranged in price from \$4,000 to \$10,000, well above the average for a house in Chandler. Several of these houses were built on multiple lots, making them even more impressive. Their occupants were all relatively wealthy white collar professionals. Price was town attorney and vice president of the Chandler Improvement Company; Peterson was a rancher, real estate broker and vice president of the Chandler Chamber of Commerce; Robinson was a noted author and member of the State Board of Agriculture & Horticulture; and his wife, Grace, was manager of the San Marcos Hotel. Henry was a popular painter and interior designer who worked on many of the early buildings in Chandler; Meyer was editor of the *Chandler Arizonan*; and Gardner owned the Gardner & Harmer Pharmacy. Arnold was a bookkeeper for the Chandler Garage; Thorn was an owner of the Reliable Hardware Company; and Baldwin and Gollands were cashier and assistant cashier for the Bank of Chandler. The neighborhood was well represented in local government, as Price, Peterson and Gardner served on the town council and Arnold served as police judge. Price also served as town attorney and Peterson served on the school board and as truant officer.

Although all of these houses were impressive in their own right, it was generally agreed that the most remarkable house belonged to Peterson. The home was a large, single-story bungalow with a prominent front porch, classical columns, and stucco-clad exterior walls. Designed by the Phoenix architectural firm of Lescher & Kibbey and built by Phoenix contractor W.H. Snell, the home cost \$10,000 to construct. The grounds were done Henry Kunst, "expert landscape gardener" for the San Marcos Hotel. In separate articles, the *Chandler Arizonan* described the house as "easily the most handsome" and "most pretentious" residence in the town.

The following year, three more houses were constructed. These included a new house at 300 North Washington Street for Samuel A. Meyer & Vera J. Meyer, who moved from their old home at 255 North Washington Street; a new house at 332 North Colorado Street for Najeeb Basha & Najeeby Basha; and a new house at 237 North Colorado Street for John "Jack" Johnson & Lutie Galt Johnson. The Bashas were Lebanese immigrants who had been in the dry goods business for years before coming to Chandler in 1920. They and their children would go on to establish the Bashas' supermarket chain, which as of May 2010, consisted of over 165 stores serving every county in Arizona, as well as parts of California and New Mexico. The home they built in the Silk Stocking Neighborhood cost \$5,000 and occupied three lots. Mr. Johnson was a rancher who built his home of rusticated concrete block—one of the first residences in the townsite to make use of the material.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 17

Between 1921 and 1925 an additional seven homes were constructed. These included the following:

- Commodore Perry Rogers & Ella L. Rogers House, 318 North Colorado Street, built 1921;
- Robert M. Tyler & Charlotte Tyler House, 364 North Washington Street, built 1921;
- George A. Vance & Martha Vance House, 372 North Colorado Street, built 1922;
- Louis Henry House, 328 North Colorado Street, built ca. 1924;
- Henry A. Stewart & Marie Stewart House, 298 North Colorado Street, built 1925;
- Abe Lukin & Lucille Lukin House, 328 North Washington Street, built ca. 1925; and
- Orpha B. Barr House, 345 North Washington Street, built ca. 1925.

At least two of these residences, the Lukin and Barr houses, appear to have been built as rentals, as city directories indicate that their owners lived elsewhere in the town. While some of these owners were blue collar workers—Tyler was a carpenter and Stewart was a blacksmith—they were sufficiently wealthy to build a home that met the minimum cost requirements for the neighborhood. Vance was an owner of Vance Brothers Bakery and served as town marshal. Lukin was one of the first members of the town council and operated a grocery business.

Between 1926 and 1928, no new homes were built in the neighborhood. (See Figure 5 for a map showing buildings in Chandler in 1926.) However, in 1929, six new residences were constructed. These included the Felix Marion Brown House at 336 North Colorado Street; the Edward S. Goff & Grace M. Goff House at 308 North Washington Street; and the Fred V. Price & Loreen Ackley Price House at 355 North Washington Street. Brown was a retiree, while Goff owned his own automobile dealership, and Price was a teller for the Bank of Chandler and a member of the town council.

In addition, Ralph Hults, manager of the city realty department of the Chandler Improvement Company, built two houses on speculation, at 381 North Washington Street and 355 North Colorado Street. Unlike the earlier homes, which were largely Craftsman bungalows, these were “modern Spanish bungalows,” designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival Style. The two homes, which were designed by architect Claude Norris, with George Bissell as supervising architect, were the first of 16 “inspirational homes” planned by the firm, in partnership with the Lincoln Mortgage Company. The Washington Street residence was used as a model home and was open to the public for a special six-day event during “Better Homes Week.” The event was widely advertised, and the *Chandler Arizonan* reported that 800 people saw the model during this time.

Other property owners also engaged in speculative building efforts during this time. William H. Pace, who was the general manager of the Alfalfa Milling Company of Arizona, purchased two lots in the Silk Stocking Neighborhood, at 290 & 298 North Washington Street. He built a

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 18

Spanish Colonial Revival-style residence on each lot, similar to the ones built by Hults. Pace and his wife, Anamae, had originally planned to live in the house at 290 North Washington Street, but instead decided to build themselves a \$13,000 home on a five-acre tract at Chandler Homeacres.

Unfortunately, these speculative efforts were not without their problems. A number of mechanics' liens were filed against the Pace properties during the summer of 1929. When the stock market crashed in October 1929, it spelled the end of the project, as the economy spiraled downward into the Great Depression. Pace was forced to sell the properties in 1931, even though the house at 298 North Washington Street was still not completed. This house was eventually owned and occupied by Loran P. Cloward & Daisy Cloward; Mr. Cloward was manager of the Pecos Valley Alfalfa Mill and a member of the town council. The house at 290 North Washington was eventually owned and occupied by J. Eugene Dudding & Mona E. Dudding; Mr. Dudding was the proprietor of Dudding's Rexall Drugs and was also a member of the town council.

Due to the comparative wealth of Silk Stocking residents, the neighborhood was still in a good position financially and politically to seek improvements in city services. One project that greatly enhanced the appeal of the area was the paving of Washington Street in 1930. Like the previous downtown paving project in the mid-1920s, the project concentrated on the business areas of downtown. The notable exception to this was the paving of Washington Street, which was the only purely residential project. Improvements included concrete paved roads, sidewalks, driveways and curbing. The project was to be paid for by taxing the beneficiaries of the project. Such a luxury may have been available to other residents of Chandler, but it is likely that only those of Washington Street could afford to pay the cost. The project was officially awarded to O.F. Fischer by the town council in June and was completed later that year.

One final house was built in 1931, before building came to a six-year standstill during the Great Depression. This house was located at 301 North Washington Street. It was owned and occupied by Berta Festner, a widow who was a retired newspaper publisher. This house is the lone example of a Tudor Revival-style residence in the neighborhood, and represents the close of the Period Revival era in Chandler architectural history.

A Time of Transition, 1931-1945

Due to the expiration of the original deed restrictions, the financial hardships of the Great Depression and World War II, and changing tastes, homes in the Silk Stocking Neighborhood built after 1931 were generally smaller and less ornate middle-class homes built in the Minimal Traditional or Ranch styles. Because most lots on Washington Street had already been built on by this time, most new construction took place on Colorado and Delaware streets from the mid-1930s through the mid-1950s. However, throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the Silk

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 19

Stocking Neighborhood retained its association with downtown businessmen and leading citizens. Residents at this time included Frederick P. Austin, who was the first superintendent of Chandler Schools; Wilfred G. Austin, who also served as Chandler school superintendent; and R. Lynn Williams who was the editor and publisher of the *Chandler Arizonan* and a member of the town council. In 1937, Joe & Alice Woods, owners of Chandler's Rowena and Parkway movie theaters moved from their home in the Old Town district southwest of downtown to 245 North Washington Street in the Silk Stocking Neighborhood. Their daughter, Dorothy Woods Ruoff, recalls the friendly atmosphere of the area, remembering it as a close-knit and safe community where children played at the banks of the canal before it was covered by Erie Street and where their parents took great pride in their homes and often spent the evenings outside visiting with each other on the porch.

World War II brought even more changes to Chandler. The founding of Higley Field in 1941 (renamed Williams Field in 1942 and Williams Air Force Base in 1948) approximately 10 miles east of Chandler marked an important point in the town's development. Over a span of 52 years, more than 26,500 men and women earned their wings at Williams. The base was the U.S. Army Corps' foremost pilot training facility, graduating more student pilots and instructors than any other base in the country and supplying 25 percent of the Air Force's pilots annually.

Throughout the summer of 1941, the site of the new air base was the scene of feverish activity. Runways, shops, streets and buildings of all kinds were hastily constructed. Scores of airmen and construction personnel sought living quarters in Chandler, where housing had been inadequate for years. Some lived in garages, hastily equipped with the barest necessities; sometimes several men would jointly rent a house, if they were fortunate enough to find one. Many of the newcomers had the foresight to bring house trailers, and space was provided for these in several different locations.

In order to accommodate the influx of new residents, Chandler undertook its biggest building program in 15 years. By December 7, 1941, many new homes and stores were under construction. A few days later, the town was designated a defense area with the consequent release of many priority materials. In February 1942, the Chandler Housing Corporation, financially assisted by the Federal Housing Administration, planned and subsequently constructed 62 homes in the north part of the community. Of the 62 homes, 23 were constructed on Washington and Colorado streets in the Silk Stocking Neighborhood. Twenty-one of these homes are still standing today. The plans for the defense housing project were designed by the architectural firm of Lescher & Mahoney, and the homes were constructed by Andy Womack. The two- and three-bedroom frame and stucco homes were designed in the Minimal Traditional Style, representing a notable departure from the earlier Craftsman and Period Revival homes in the neighborhood.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 20

The Postwar Years, 1945-1973

Although new homes were constructed in 1943 or 1944, building began in earnest once again in 1945, when the war came to close. Between 1945 and 1950 a total of 17 new homes were constructed in the Silk Stocking Neighborhood. These homes were designed in the Minimal Traditional and Ranch styles. While the neighborhood had become home to more blue collar residents, it still retained its reputation as one of the premier residential areas in Chandler. Neighborhood residents during this time included Wayne C. Stapley, vice president of the O.S. Stapley Company; Homer S. Kerby, who owned an automobile dealership and was a member of the town council; A.C. Plake and George Trosper, who also served as councilmen; Bert L. Lewis, who served as both a councilman and mayor; Nelson T. Roach, who served as town clerk; Jerry Skousen, owner of Diamond S Real Estate & Construction; Robert H. Althoff, who also owned a real estate agency; Jackson Bogle, owner of Bogle Farms; and Leonard F. Monti, who owned Monti's La Casa Vieja Restaurant. The neighborhood was also home to La Vonne "Bonnie" Record, who was Arizona's only female fire chief in 1955. Bonnie was the holder of the state's largest fire fighting franchise, Southside Fire Protection, with 14 paid men on call. She operated the franchise from her home at 298 North Colorado Street.

Building slowed after 1950, with only two homes built in 1957, one in 1962, one in 1968, one in 1969, and one in 1973, when buildout was complete. The later homes include multi-family residences, which became increasingly common as the original single-family zoning was changed. (See Figure 6 for an aerial photo of Chandler ca. 1960, near the end of the period of significance.)

St. Mary's Catholic Church

No history of the Silk Stocking Neighborhood can be considered complete with a discussion of St. Mary's Catholic Church. The church was one of the town's most venerable institutions and, for many years, was located on Colorado Street, just north of Cleveland Street. The first Sunday Mass for Chandler's Catholic congregation was held on March 30, 1915 in the Koch residence, about a year after the family moved to Chandler from Los Angeles. The home had previously been the second office of the Chandler Improvement Company before being moved to its location on Colorado Street in 1914. Priests from Tempe and Phoenix drove in weekly to celebrate mass. The Koch family was known for their kindness to the Mexican American population of the town and often assisted other church members seeking a priest for the sick or dying. Many years later, one of the Koch daughters recalled that "my mother and my sister were always interested in the Mexican residents." According to a newspaper account, the Koch family's sensitivity may have stemmed from their own background—Mr. Koch was half German and half Spanish and Mrs. Koch was Spanish.

Mass was held in the Koch residence for many years until the congregation was able to begin building a church. One of the priests who gave mass in the house was Rev. James Davis,

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 21

who later became the Archbishop of Santa Fe. Rev. Davis helped build the basement of the original church where mass was held until the rest of the building was finished in 1935. Construction was completed in part by the personal labor of Rev. Vincent Mestre who was the first pastor of St. Mary's Church. He later built himself a home on Washington Street, immediately west of the church property. Other members of the construction crew included Chandler's prominent Hispanic families such as the Navarrete family, whose son Raul became Chandler's first Hispanic mayor. St. Mary's Church was an adobe building designed in the Mission Revival Style, with simple ornamentation. Less than a year after finishing construction, the congregation was already working on a 14' x 35' addition to the rear of the church to house the sacristy, offices for the church, and living rooms. Work also included finishing the plastering on the inside walls and installing a new altar donated by a Catholic parish in Chicago.

In 1938, Rev. Joseph N. Patterson came to Chandler and built a successful ministry that served both the Hispanic and Anglo Catholic populations in the town. Chandler resident Mollie Muniz remembers the St. Mary's ministry as a focal point for the Mexican population. Upon arrival, Rev. Patterson saw a need to provide recreational services to the youth of Chandler. The padre organized sports clubs, religious organizations, outings, and drama programs designed especially for youth. To support the project, Rev. Patterson converted the Church basement into a youth center and furnished it with a pool table and a stage on his own credit. An *Arizona Republic* article written three years after his arrival reported that Rev. Patterson had effectively solved the problem of delinquency among the Mexican children of Chandler, which had become a "problem of no little concern to residents of that community." The congregation held other community programs such as fundraisers, summer Bible school, and an annual fair.

When the Catholic congregation had grown sufficiently, Rev. Patterson initiated yet another building program in 1944 to construct a Catholic grade school on the same grounds as the Church to offer an alternative to Winn School, which was specifically set aside for Hispanic students. The first principal, Sr. Rita Marie, presided over a school that boasted four classrooms, six grades and a total of 123 students, all of it built by Rev. Patterson and church members. Eventually, the parish would construct a high school and offer a private Catholic K-12 education. The high school—Seton Catholic—was named a diocesan school in 1973, operating under the supervision of the Diocese of Phoenix. Unfortunately, in 1980 the school was destroyed by a tragic fire. The campus was rebuilt in 1983 at a new site approximately three miles away at Dobson and Ray roads. Ultimately, the entire property owned by the diocese was demolished and nothing remains today except for several vacant lots.

Conclusion

On May 24, 1954, Chandler's status was upgraded from town to city. In the years that followed, its population increased dramatically. In 1950, there had only been 3,800 residents;

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Silk Stocking Neighborhood Historic District
Name of Property
Maricopa County, Arizona
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 22

forty years later the number had risen to 90,533. By 2000, the city's population had increased to 176,581. Much of this growth was fueled by the establishment of manufacturing plants for communications and computing firms such as Motorola and Intel. A 2005 census estimate put the fast-growing city's population at 234,939, making it the fifth largest city in Arizona.

Although the Silk Stocking Neighborhood is no longer the exclusive area it once was, it is making a comeback due to the efforts of long-time residents and new owners who have taken an interest in historic preservation. Support from the City of Chandler Neighborhood Resources Division has been vital to the rehabilitation effort. The future of the neighborhood is bright, and its past will never be forgotten.