

WOODLEA HISTORIC DISTRICT

Number of Properties: 166

Period of Significance: 1928-1955

Predominant Architectural Styles:

Period Revival styles including:
Tudor Revival, English Cottage,
Bungalows and Pueblo Revival

Ranch sub-types including:
Transitional/Early, French
Provincial and California
Ranch

Other: International Style and
Art Moderne

Register Listings:

National Register of Historic
Places (NRHP) 2010

Phoenix Historic Property
Register (PHPR) 1999

The Woodlea Historic District includes most of the original Woodlea Subdivision as originally platted. Homes in a wide range of styles popular in Phoenix during the 1920s, '30s and '40s can be found interspersed throughout the district although the oldest houses are generally found on Mackenzie Drive and 9th Avenue.

Most homes in Woodlea are constructed of brick or concrete block, with the exterior walls painted or stuccoed. A few of the earliest homes are constructed of adobe. The homes are generally one-story in height. Woodlea is graced by an abundance of large palms and deciduous trees which provide ample shade and give the neighborhood a unique charm. The street curbing is vertical and sidewalks are present but there is no landscaped parking strip. Most homes have concrete driveways with detached garages in the rear yard, although several of the Ranch style homes have attached garages.

In 1928, Thomas Mackenzie purchased 47 acres of lettuce fields north of the Phoenix city

limits for \$20,000. He subdivided the property into 190 lots and named the subdivision "Woodlea" for the many trees that bordered the property. Mackenzie partnered with the Lister Realty Company, which held a grand opening for the subdivision on March 17, 1929. Lots sold at a record pace and several homes were completed within the first few months.

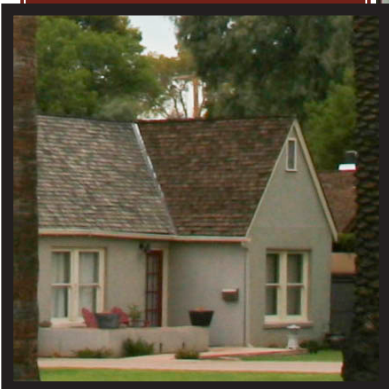
Woodlea featured paved streets, electricity, close proximity to a church and school, and "no city taxes." It was best known, however, for its pure, soft water, which was said to be far superior to any water available in the city. The water was pumped from a depth of 347 feet by a powerful 7 1/2 hp electric motor. Everyone who came to see the subdivision was invited to sample the water. Lister's newspaper ads even encourage people to "bring a canteen" so they could take some Woodlea water home with them.

In October 1929, Lister announced that the progress shown at Woodlea had "far exceeded the company's expectations for that year." If sales continued at the current pace it would

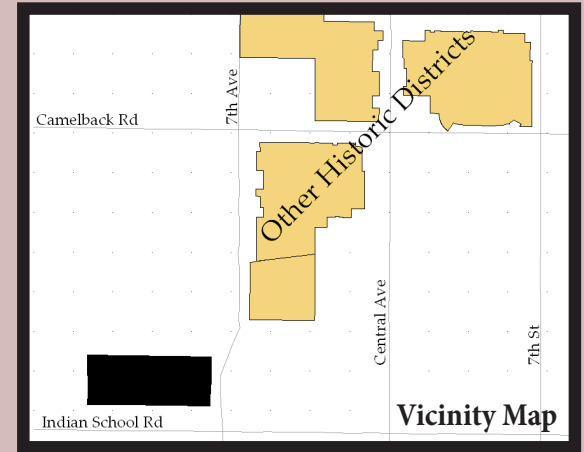
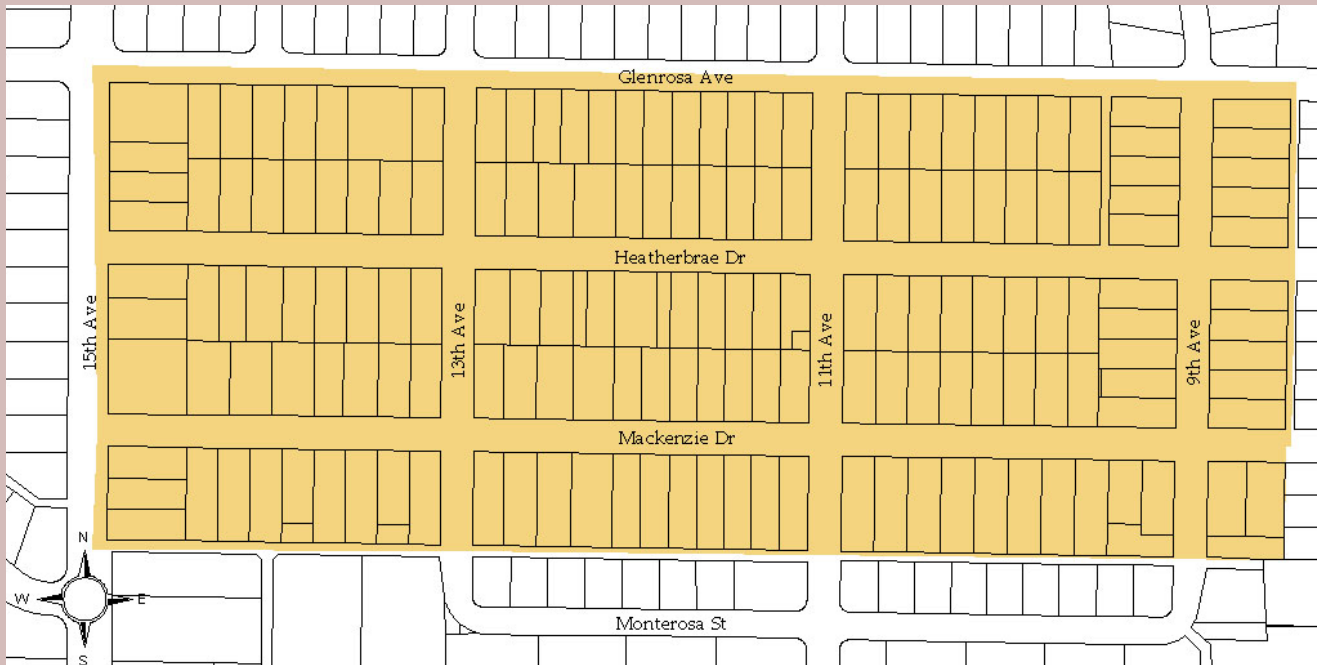
be "one of the fastest developments completed in the history of city real estate circles." To meet this goal, Lister intended to launch an aggressive sales campaign and planned to have approximately 40 houses built by the end of the year.

Unfortunately, these plans were foiled when the stock market crashed, causing sales in Woodlea to drop sharply and then stop completely. Only a few homes were constructed during the 1930s, and by 1936 Mackenzie was forced to foreclose on the remaining lots.

Building picked up again a few years later and boomed during the 1940s. Most of the homes in the neighborhood were built during this period. Some owners hired independent builders to construct their homes, but there were also a few builders who made investments in several lots each. One of these contractors, Andy Womack, built eight houses and would go on to become a major figure in the Phoenix area, including the adjacent subdivision Melrose Manor.



Woodlea Historic District



Ownership within designated historic districts in the city of Phoenix carries with it both benefits and responsibilities. Exterior modifications and new development are subject to design review and approval through the Historic Preservation Office before permits can be issued. The Office also provides technical assistance to historic property owners and administers grants, when funds are available, for the preservation of historic properties.



City of Phoenix

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

200 W. Washington St., 3rd floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003
(602) 261-8699

phoenix.gov/historic - historic@phoenix.gov

The activity that is the subject of this document has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.

For more information or for a copy of this publication in an alternate format, contact Planning & Development at (602) 262-7811 voice / (602) 534-5500 TTY.

Graphic design by Motley Design Group, LLC
www.motleydesigngroup.com

Woodlea Historic District

Phoenix, Arizona