

Glendale Arizona and The Arizona Canal



In the late 1800s what is now known as Glendale, Arizona, was all desert. William John Murphy, a native of New Hartford, New York, who resided in the town of Flagstaff in the territory of Arizona, was in charge of building a 40-mile-long (64 km) Arizona Canal from Granite Reef to New River for the Arizona Canal Company. In 1885, he completed the canal, which would bring water to the desert land.

In 1887, Murphy formed the Arizona Improvement Company. His objective was to sell the land and water rights south of the canal. Murphy raised capital from out of state sources in order to meet payroll and construction expenses. He decided to refer to this land as "Glendale". In order to develop and interest potential investors and settlers in this new town, Murphy also provided a better way of access from Phoenix to Glendale and ending in the town of Peoria by building an 18-mile-long (29 km) diagonal road which he named Grand Avenue. The construction of a railroad from Prescott to Phoenix was made possible with an exchange of the right-of-way made by Murphy along Grand Avenue.^[5] The railroad allowed Glendale settlers to transport goods to the north and easily receive building materials.

Several miles upstream (east), 640 acres on the canal's south side were purchased in 1888 by a former Civil War chaplain named Major Winfield Scott, establishing what is now Scottsdale. Murphy later built the Ingleside Club hotel near Scottsdale (in what is now Arcadia), laying the foundation for the area's vital tourism economy.

The **Arizona Canal** is a major canal in central Maricopa County that led to the founding of several communities, now among the wealthier neighborhoods of suburban Phoenix. The canal, nearly 50 miles (80 km) long, is the northernmost canal in the Salt River Project's 131-mile (211 km) water distribution system. Beginning at Granite Reef Diversion Dam, northeast of Mesa, it flows west across the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, downtown Scottsdale, Phoenix's Arcadia and Sunnyslope neighborhoods, Glendale, and Peoria before ending at New River near Arrowhead Towne Center.

Several resorts - The Phoenician, Biltmore, Royal Palms, a Pointe Hilton and a Ritz-Carlton - were all built close to the canal between 1929 and 1988. Also, five shopping malls of varying size and affluence - Borgata, Scottsdale Fashion Square, Biltmore Fashion Park, Metro center Mall and Arrowhead Towne Center - now reside along the canal's route.