**A HISTORY OF THE**

**IRONWOOD COMMUNITY AND THE HIGHLANDS**

**History of the Community**

The history of the Ironwood Community and Ironwood Country Club is very well documented in a book published celebrating its 25th anniversary. The book is available at the Club Office. It makes very interesting reading and one can learn about the complexities and the evolution of both the Club and the community.

The Developer (Silver Spur Associates) acquired many acres of land both to the north and to the south of Portola and, at one time, had visions of creating a 3,000 home development. A number of Hollywood celebrities owned some of the adjacent land (including Bing Crosby, Phil Harris and Randolph Scott) and did not wish to sell their properties to Silver Spur. As a result, the gated community was built around these parcels which, by the way, happened to be adjacent to The Highlands location at the top of Ironwood. These adjacent parcels were given access rights through Ironwood’s gates.

The Coachella Valley Water Authority owned most of the land surrounding the community, much of which was considered a flood plain. Some of this land was leased by the developer and was used to create most of the two golf courses. The Ironwood Country Club eventually purchased this golf course land.

The developer eventually reduced the scope of the project to include about 1,000 homes, two golf courses and a tennis center. Some of the excess land eventually was sold and became part of the Big Horn Development. Ironwood was established in 1972 and most of the homes were built over the next ten years. The original community included fourteen Home Owner Associations (HOA’s) as well as a Master Maintenance Association that is now known as The Ironwood Community Association (ICA).

In recent years, the community has continued to grow as more associations featuring custom home sites were added, resulting in 92 additional lots. Of these, 52 were part of the Canyon View Estates Association, located along the South Course. The other forty lots resulted from the sale of land formerly owned by the Hollywood celebrities in areas adjacent to The Highlands. Eighteen of these lots were organized as an HOA on property formerly owned by the Phil Harris family. This association is located along Heather Court, and is known as The Estates of Ironwood. The remaining twenty-two lots were located on land adjacent to the Highlands.

**History of The Highlands (Ironwood Owners Association IX)**

Ironwood Owners Association IX also known as The Highlands originally consisted of 39 parcels of land designated for the building of custom-designed homes on half-acre lots. There were two groups of lots, 19 located primarily along Sunrose and 20 located along Carriage Trail, Della Robia and Calle de la Silla. Soon, three additional lots owned by Phil Harris and located between Sunrose and JFK were included. In 1987, 10 new lots were developed along the south side of Crosby Lane and were originally established as The Crosby Lane Property Homeowners Association, a separate HOA. This Association voted to be annexed into The Highlands in 2006.

There were also seven new lots developed during the mid-1990’s along the north side of Crosby Lane. These were built out over time and thus avoided the need to be organized as an HOA or even being annexed as part of the Ironwood Community Association (ICA). During recent years, 3 of these lots volunteered to be annexed into The Highlands. Another is a flag lot that has been landscaped only and will most likely remain un-built. It is the Board’s goal to have the three remaining lots annexed into Association IX in the future.

Hollywood actor Randolph Scott owned a 2.5-acre plot located along the corner of Sunrose and Crosby Lane, which remained vacant for many years. In 2006, the Scott estate sold this plot to a local resident who then developed five lots. This 5-lot development became part of The Highlands.

The above actions resulted in The Highlands growing into 61 buildable lots. There are three other remaining properties located south of Crosby Lane and adjacent to the mountains that were part of the original Bing Crosby Group. One of these parcels, a 2+ acre site, was sold to an investor in 2012 and lends itself to sub-dividing into multiple units and may annex into The Highlands in the foreseeable future. The Board will remain alert to work with all of these owners and to have them become part of The Highlands.

The Developer of Ironwood assigned a number to each HOA in the sequence that they were launched. As such, our association became officially known as Ironwood Owners Association IX. The last two Associations that were launched adopted names in lieu of numbers. Subsequently others followed this practice as well. The use of a name provides more personality to an association. Therefore, Ironwood Owners Association IX adopted the name “ The Highlands” at the association’s annual meeting in 2011. Our legal name will remain as Ironwood Owners Association IX but we will also be known as “The Highlands”. Our preference is to use the name “The Highlands” as much as possible as it connotes a better image from an owner and realty viewpoint.