



Courtesy

Gene Vogt at the lake in the 1960s.



McCulloch's free flights brought many eventual residents to Havasu

By SARAH DIXON
SPECIAL TO TODAY'S NEWS HERALD

"Roads? Where we're going, we don't need roads."

It seems as though Dr. Emmett Brown from Back to the Future traveled to the 1960's when Robert McCulloch transported potential home and business owners by airliner to see the "wonderful small world of Lake Havasu City."

Before development, Havasu was a vast desert with mountainous terrain, over 400 miles of coastline, and few roads, electricity, or neighbors. Rather than showing a mock-up of their plots or a model of the city, McCulloch decided to bring his clients to it.

So how does McCulloch entice hundreds of people to visit the isolated frontier, you ask? "If you are Bob McCulloch, you buy a fleet of 11 airplanes and start an international sales campaign to fly prospective lot purchasers in to 'See Before You Buy,'" reads a plaque in the Lake Havasu Museum of History.

McCulloch placed advertisements in newspapers across the nation, specifically in the Northeast and Midwest where winters were (and still are) particularly harsh. The ads offered free flights from the local airports to Lake Havasu City. When ads were answered, a salesman showed up at the house to share a filmstrip which further discussed the amazing opportunities the city had to offer.

Lake Havasu was described as majestic, sun-drenched, and free from smog and fog with a community environment that is tension-free.

If the description didn't pull people in, the all-expenses paid trip sure did.

THE TOUR

According to the Lake Havasu Museum of History, the following sequence is the McCulloch Fly-In experience:



Holly Development Company salesmen

1. You're met by a young man in a white shirt and black tie who introduces himself as your Holly salesman representing McCulloch properties. As he puts you on a bus for a short ride to either the Havasu Hotel or the Nautical Inn, he makes an appointment to join you for dinner to discuss tomorrow's schedule.



The tour of Havasu included a trip to Wheeler Park, a visit to the 18-hole golf course and a stop at the McCulloch chainsaw factory.

2. The next day, your Holly salesman meets you for breakfast and then takes you on a tour of the city, which includes Wheeler Park and City Hall, new home construction, the 18-hole golf course, and the McCulloch chain saw factory.



Visitors disembark off the boat following a tour of Lake Havasu in the 1960s.

3. The tour ends with a boat trip on beautiful Lake Havasu. You are especially impressed when one of the salesmen dips a cup into the water and drinks it down. You wouldn't do that at home!

4. After the boat trip, you and your spouse get into a white Jeep Wagoneer and go look at available lots.

5. After lunch, it's time to re-board the plane for the long flight home. You find that many of your fellow passengers also purchased residential or commercial lots. Like you, they came to take advantage of a free flight to a sunny climate, and ended up becoming a part of the "Wonderful Small World."

With its last flight on December 11, 1978, McCulloch's Fly-in program lasted for 15 years. The airliners took approximately 2,702 flights and carried nearly 137,000 passengers.

The man who sold Lake Havasu City to the rest of the world

By BUCK DOPP
SPECIAL TO
TODAY'S NEWS-HERALD

H.E. "Gene" Vogt knows, more than any other living person, how the empty lots were sold on the 16,640 acres of desert acquired by Lake Havasu City Founder Robert P. McCulloch. As vice president of sales for the Holly Development Company, Holly was in charge of selling them.

McCulloch Properties, Inc. purchased the Holly Company in 1964 to take advantage of their licensed real estate professionals who were the leaders of the pack when it came to selling new communities in Southern California.

They were considered the best at selling properties and their leader was Gene Vogt.

It didn't take long to set up 37 offices in Midwestern and Northeastern cities such as Des Moines, Chicago, Cleveland, Boston and New York. The print ads in those cities sold the American Dream, Havasu-style. "Come to Lake Havasu City! — where Opportunity is Growing, and the Living is Fun—where Hundreds TODAY are Building their Futures—in a Land where Each can see His own Opportunities!"

The pitch included an offer hard to refuse for those frozen tundra dwellers who suffered through harsh winters. "We have a program for flying you there from certain cities of the nation—round trip, all expenses paid. Flights—both one-day and overnight—are made in giant multi-engine airliners under the command of million-mile pilots."

Offering an expense-paid mini-vacation followed by a heavy sales pitch, Vogt invented what is now known as "the give-away vacation," a favorite tool to sell time-shares, retirement communities and ski chalets.

This giveaway vacation was unheard of in the 60s and in addition to that, no one had considered using free airline flights to lure prospective real estate buyers until Gene Vogt employed the tactic.

He began with five Lockheed Constellations, previously part of TWA's fleet, that carried 80 passengers each, usually 40 couples. Charter airlines operate under an FAA-Part 91 certificate, but Lake Havasu Airlines had the full professional certificate that airlines like United or American receive. That was a big deal in those days.

The clients were treated to a night in the Lake Havasu Hotel or the Nautical Inn and given tours in white 4-wheel drive Jeeps by friendly and enthusiastic sales reps hand-trained by Vogt to paint a dream that included plenty of sunshine out of a pile of rocks and sand.

The Havasu salespersons were required to

Come to Lake Havasu City!

— where Opportunity is Growing and the Living is Fun —
— where Hundreds TODAY are Building their Futures —
— in a Land where Each can see His own Opportunities!

In the past, you may have been offered far-away property which looked good on a map, but probably couldn't have stood the test of your personal inspection.

Not so, Lake Havasu City!

We want you to come and see it. We want everyone to see it. We know we have everything to gain from your on-the-property inspection, and nothing to lose. Because once you see this City's astonishing growth — its superb beauty and potential — what may have been mild curiosity on your part will surely turn into exclamations of sincere wonderment. We know this, because we've seen it happen to thousands of people.

Yes, we want you to see Lake Havasu City. In fact, we have a program for flying you there from certain cities of the nation — round trip, all expenses paid.

Flights — both one-day and overnight — are made in giant multi-engine airliners under command of million-mile pilots. You fly as guests of McCulloch Properties, Inc., developer of Lake Havasu City.

Why not plan to take this exciting free trip soon? A postcard to our address below will bring you the details.

SERVICES and FACILITIES

Each homesite at Lake Havasu City will front on or have access to a paved street; utilities to each homesite will include water and electricity. Peninsula recreational facilities including launching ramps, docks and beaches are available to everyone. Title insurance through Phoenix Title and Trust Co. will be provided at no cost to purchaser upon closing of property.



HOLLY DEVELOPMENT CO.
Agent for McCulloch Properties, Inc.,
Developer of Lake Havasu City

For information about industrial and commercial properties, contact:

Administrative Offices: Holly Development Co.
1111 West Foothill Boulevard
Azusa, California 91703
EDgewood 4-6241 Area Code 213

McCULLOCH PROPERTIES, INC. A Subsidiary of
McCULLOCH OIL CORPORATION OF CALIFORNIA

Holly sales brochure

Growing with Havasu

30 DAY FREE

Trial Membership

Belonging to the Chamber of Commerce can bring the exposure you need to grow your business. Take a 30 Day Test Drive and get your first month of membership free!

During your 30 day "try it before you buy it" you will experience:

- Connection Events
- A hands-on session to learn everything Chamber
- A committee meeting - learn more about the Chamber's role in the community

Certain restrictions apply — participation in the events listed above required during your complimentary month. Grand openings/ribbon cuttings will occur following the introductory period.



www.havasuchamber.com

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