

## TUCSON'S MOVERS AND SHAKERS

### Business

Movers and shakers in business enabled the growth and development of Tucson. Beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, **Fred Ronstadt**, helped Tucson through its transition from a territorial agricultural village to an awakening Arizona industrial town by evolving his business from carriage making to hardware and farm equipment to providing automobiles. Son of Jewish territorial pioneer, Jacob A. Mansfeld, **Monte Mansfield**, a Ford dealer for 44 years, was pivotal in bringing Davis-Monthan Air Force Base to Tucson, establishing our civilian municipal airport, and in convincing Howard Hughes to establish Hughes Aircraft in the our city – these events building the backbone of Tucson’s aerospace industry. Great nephew of territorial pioneer Philip Drachman, corporate real estate developer **Roy Drachman**, regarded by many as “the most influential person who ever lived here,” was key in building Tucson’s first shopping centers, arranged the land deals that brought Hughes to Tucson, and was instrumental in bringing major league baseball to Tucson. Finally, “Renaissance man” **John P. Schaefer** – academic, astronomer, photographer, and conservationist - led the University of Arizona as president for a dozen years, accelerating the development of Lunar & Planetary Sciences and Astronomy – technology efforts that enabled the UA to grow into today’s largest Tucson employer.

**Fred Ronstadt** (1868-1954), son of a German immigrant to Mexico, was born in Sonora Mexico and came to Tucson in 1882 to learn the blacksmithing and wheelwright trades. He formed the F. Ronstadt Wagon and Carriage Company to manufacture wagons, buggies, harnesses and saddles - for just about everybody in town. When the automobile came to Tucson in the early 1900s, Ronstadt added an Oldsmobile dealership to his operation. Following World War I Ronstadt dropped the automobile business, and under the F. Ronstadt Hardware and Machinery Company, concentrated on farm tools, tractors, leather goods and water pumps, and added general hardware, becoming the largest business of its kind in southern Arizona – lasting into the 1980s.

Fred Ronstadt was also an active community leader. He served a two-year term on the Pima County Board of Supervisors, was active in Chamber of Commerce work for almost 50 years, and supported numerous political campaigns and causes.

Ronstadt’s cultural legacy is music. A guitarist and vocalist, he taught many Tucsonans to play instruments, founded Tucson’s first professional orchestra, the Club Filarmonico Tucsonense in 1896, and helped organize the Tucson Symphony Orchestra in the 1920s. Ronstadt’s granddaughter is the internationally acclaimed singer, Linda Ronstadt.

**Monte Mansfield** (1884-1959) was the son of Jewish German immigrant Jacob Mansfeld, who opened Tucson’s first bookstore and library and was instrumental in getting the UA started. Monte Mansfield was born in Tucson, attended the UA (without graduating), started a Ford dealership in 1917, and added an “i” to his last name in 1923.

The first of Mansfield’s contributions to his generally acknowledged reputation as “the man who played the greatest role in Tucson’s growth” occurred in 1935, after more than 10 years of strenuous effort,

with the opening of the Stone Avenue underpass. As chairman of the state highway commission, Mansfield was able to replace many of Tucson's rutted dirt roads with paved roads. Just before the start of World War II, acting for the Chamber of Commerce, Mansfield convinced officials in Washington DC to locate Davis-Monthan field in Tucson. In 1948, when it became apparent that the City didn't have the resources to operate the new civilian airport, Monte Mansfield led 15 municipal leaders to form the Tucson Airport Authority, raising money and paving the way for aviation in Tucson. In 1951 as president of the Tucson Airport Authority, Mansfield worked with four other local businessmen to bring Hughes Aircraft Company to Tucson. Finally, in 1958, after 44 years of operations, Mansfield sold his Ford dealership to Holmes Tuttle.

Over the years Mansfield also served a term on the Tucson City Council, was president of the Tucson Chamber of Commerce, the Arizona Pioneers Historical Society, and the Arizona Automobile Dealers' Association.

**Roy Drachman** (1907-2002) was born, raised and educated in Tucson. His grandfather Philip Drachman was among the earliest Jews to settle in Tucson and became a successful businessman. When his father Emanuel Drachman became seriously ill, Roy Drachman left the University of Arizona to manage his father's theater business. In 1939 Drachman became manager of the Tucson Sunshine Club to promote tourism and Tucson's healthy climate. Thereafter, he raised the funds that established Tucson Medical Center. Before being drafted into World War II, Drachman helped sell six million dollars in war bonds.

After World War II, in 1946 Drachman established his own real estate brokerage business. He partnered with developer Del Webb and sold houses for Webb in Tucson's first large housing development. Also with Webb, he co-developed the first shopping centers in Arizona. He put together the land deals that attracted Hughes Aircraft to Tucson. Drachman also helped found the Ramada Inn hotel chain.

Drachman, who played semi-pro baseball, was key in bringing major league baseball spring training to Tucson. He also helped launch the Conquistadors, hosts of the Tucson Open Golf Tournament.

Roy Drachman's devotion to civic duty included being a staunch supporter of the UA, helping raise funds for the Medical School, and over his lifetime donating three million dollars to the university.

Drachman wrote two books, "This is Not A Book: Just Memories" and "From Cowtown to Desert Metropolis: Ninety Years of Arizona Memories," chronicling nearly 100 years of growth in Tucson.

**John P. Schaefer** (1934- ) was born in New York City to German immigrants. He earned a Ph.D. in chemistry at the University of Illinois, did post-doctoral work at the prestigious University of California at Berkeley, began teaching there in 1959, and came to the lesser-known UA in 1960, attracted by the challenge of making the university a regional and national presence.

Schaefer had a meteoric career at the UA – first research and teaching, later leading the Chemistry Department and College of Liberal Arts, and finally serving as University President from 1971-1982. While Schaefer was president, he started the Department of Lunar and Planetary Sciences and supported the development of the Mirror Lab. These efforts helped spawn numerous U.S. space

probes, and mirrors and associated telescope programs that enabled the UA to grow dramatically. Schaefer also guided UA and Arizona State into the PAC-10 Conference.

Following his 21 years at the UA, Schaefer continued his passion for astronomy by joining the Research Corporation for Science Advancement as president and was a key player in developing one of the world's most advanced optical telescopes, the Large Binocular Telescope, now operational atop of Mount Graham, near Safford. Next, Schaefer became the chairman of the nonprofit corporation overseeing the development of the "most significant" Large Synoptic Survey Telescope, scheduled to be mapping the universe twice a week in 2022 from a mountaintop in Chile.

John Schaefer has also published six books on photography and was the founder, with friend Ansel Adams, of UA's renowned Center for Creative Photography. As a conservationist he helped organize the Tucson Audubon Society and The Nature Conservancy in Arizona. His tireless community support includes the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, the Tucson Museum of Art, and many other arts and social service groups.

**Selected Sources and Information:** *Another Tucson*, Bonnie Henry, 1992; *Arizona Daily Star*, Doug Kreutz, 2010; *Arizona History Makers*, Arizona Historical Society, 2010; *Tucson Citizen*, David Pittman, 1999; *UA News*, Daniel Scarpinato, 2002 ; Wikipedia (Federico Jose Maria Ronstadt, Large Binocular Telescope, Large Synoptic Survey Telescope, Planetary Science Institute).