

MARANA HISTORY



Prehistory Period (2200 B.C. – 1450 A.D.)

Archaeologists have documented about 4200 years of continuous human occupation in Marana and the surrounding middle Santa Cruz Valley. The prehistoric inhabitants of this valley were the first farmers, potters, canal builders, and villagers in the Southwest.

Corn arrived to the area from Mexico about 4000 years ago, and cotton pollen found at archaeological sites in Marana reveal either wild native cotton or domesticated cotton from Mexico was cultivated in this area as 800 years later. At this time, canals were used to irrigate cotton, corn, squash, beans, and tobacco. About 2800 years before present Marana's occupants started using the bow-and-arrow with the older spear-thrower-and-dart tool to harvest game, representing the earliest documented use of the bow-and-arrow in the Southwest.

On the slopes of the Tortolita Mountains extensive areas of wild agave were cultivated by clearing rocks and building rock-piles, terraces, and check-dams to slow storm runoff. One species of agave growing in this area today is outside of its natural range, and probably represents the descendents of plants brought there by prehistoric farmers.

Many important archaeological sites occur near Marana. The following are some of the most significant:

i) Las Capas (the Layers) is a large, long-occupied early agricultural site related to the nearby Costello-King site near Ina Road and the Interstate 10 interchange. There are numerous layers of occupation dating between about 4,200 and 2,500 years ago. Among the significant artifacts recovered are stone smoking pipes with tobacco residues, the oldest tobacco pipes in the world. The

site is most important for the presence of the oldest cemetery in the southwest and the oldest canals in North America.

ii) Los Morteros is a Hohokam ballcourt village ruin located on the Santa Cruz floodplain near the Point of the Mountain at the northern end of the Tucson Mountains. It was occupied between 850 and 1300 A.D., and is one of the largest prehistoric communities in the Marana area. The remains of 770 prehistoric features were uncovered, including 349 houses, an adobe-walled compound, five discrete cemeteries, and artifacts numbering in the tens of thousands. It was during the study of Los Morteros that evidence of the historic Pointer Mountain stage station was found within the limits of the nearby Puerta del Norte trailer court. Los Morteros has also been identified as the probable location of the Llano del Azotado campsite used by the Juan Bautista de Anza expedition in 1775. The village Father Kino refers to as El Valle de Correa is in the vicinity of this site.

iii) Linda Vista Hill is the Trincheras component of the Hohokam Los Morteros site in the Tucson Mountains, dating between 1200 and 1350 A.D. The Trincheras culture inhabited the on mountain slopes overlooking arable land along streams. These have been interpreted both as agricultural sites and/or defense positions. The Linda Vista hillside has over 150 terraces, 75 pit-houses excavated into the terraces, and a massive adobe-walled compound located on the hill summit.

iii) The Marana Mound site is the remnant of a large platform mound that was once the focal part of the community that lived between the Santa Cruz River and the Tortolita Mountains during the later phase of the Hohokam Culture (1150-1300). The mound is surrounded by an adobe compound wall from which multiple rooms were constructed. This structure, in turn, is associated with 30-35 additional nearby residential compounds, multiple house features both inside and outside the compounds, wall segments, and trash mounds that collectively cover an area of approximately one square mile.



Hohokam Pottery

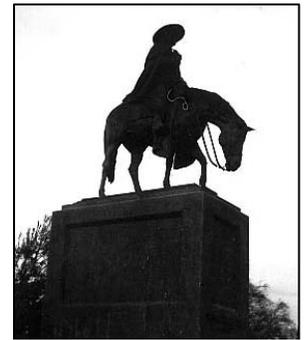
Long before the coming of the Spanish Conquistadors and missionaries in the 17th Century, the area now called Marana was inhabited by the Hohokam Culture (550 to 1450 A.D.). These people were the probable ancestors of the present day Tohono O’odham, which are part of a regional culture called Papago or Pima. The Hohokam developed extensive canal systems and used waters from the Santa Cruz River to irrigate crops. When the first Spaniards arrived in the 1690s, the Hohokam had long since vanished, and their irrigation canals were in ruins.

Turning Point (1450 – 1690)

About 1690 the history of the Marana area changed forever with the arrival of the Spanish and Apache—the Spanish from the south and the Apache from the north. The local O’odham culture was invaded by two new cultures with conflicting agendas. One wanted to convert souls to Christianity and the other to plunder and steal assets. What happened to the original inhabitants during a period of about 240 years is a matter of historical debate.

Spanish Period (1690 – 1821)

The first European to visit the Marana area was a Jesuit Priest, Father Eusebio Francisco Kino in 1694. Father Kino explored the Santa Cruz Valley from 1691 to 1711 and founded a series of Jesuit missions, the most famous being San Xavier del Bac, south of Tucson.



Statue of Fr. Eusebio Kino

Early Spanish accounts of the Marana area report the existence of villages of Sobaipuri people, who spoke a dialect of the O’odham language different from the Tohono O’odham, near the confluence of the Santa Cruz River and the Rillito River. Until the Spanish established a presidio (fort) at Tucson in 1776, the Marana area lay under the domination of these people, who themselves were subject to the domination of the Apache.

In 1775, Juan Bautista de Anza, Captain of the Presidio (fort) of Tubac in Sonora (now southern Arizona) led an expedition north along the Santa Cruz River to found the city of San Francisco, California. The colonizing expedition of about 200 included 30 soldiers and their families, and an array of escorts consisting of cowboys, translators, mule-packers, Indian guides, priests, escort soldiers. They brought over 1,000 head of livestock, horses, mules and cattle. Their campsite was Llano del Azotado at Point of Mountain near the present day Arizona Portland Cement Plant in the Town of Marana. The route they took is now designated the “Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail” by the National Park Service. A 15-mile segment of this trail passes through the present day Town of Marana.



Statue of Juan Bautista de Anza

In 1810 war between New Spain and what later was to become known as Mexico further altered the cultural dynamics of the region.

Mexican Period (1821 – 1854)

With independence from Spanish colonial rule in 1821, official jurisdiction over the Marana area passed to the new Republic of Mexico and remained so as part of the State of Sonora until 1854.



Early Mexican Flag

The American flag came to the Marana area for the first time in 1846, carried by about 350 troops of the Mormon Battalion on their way to San Diego, California. They blazed the first wagon road along the Anza Trail, which, in part, later became a stagecoach route, railroad, and corridor for Interstate 10.

Territorial Period (1854 – 1912)

Despite the trek of the Mormon soldiers to secure Mexican Territory for the United States, when the Mexican war ended with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, all of Arizona south of the Gila River remained in the hands of Mexico. With the Gadsden Purchase in 1854, 29,640 square miles of New Mexico and Arizona south of the Gila River were purchased from Mexico for \$10 million, about 53 cents an acre, and opened a transcontinental corridor for the Southern Pacific Railroad.



Southern Pacific Train

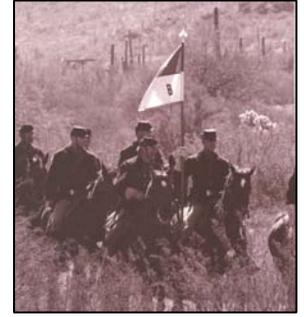
During the Gold Rush to California in 1849, some 10,000 49ers followed the Santa Cruz River through the area of Marana, north to the Gila River then on to California. About this time, many Mexican ranchers established large cattle ranches in the area, displacing many Tohono O'odham. With the Marana area under the jurisdiction of the United States in 1854, prospectors seeking mineral riches intensified their efforts in the region. Gold was not discovered in abundance, but by 1865, high-grade copper ore was being shipped from mines in the Silver Bell Mountains to Yuma, and then by ship to Baltimore for smelting.



Butterfield Stagecoach

The Butterfield Overland Mail Company arrived to Marana in 1858 and established the Pointer Mountain Station about 18 miles northwest of Tucson. It carried mail and passengers until 1861 when it was discontinued after the outbreak of the Civil War.

During the Civil War, Union troops withdrew from southern Arizona to fight in the east. Confederate troops moved in to occupy the Tucson Presidio and extended their control through the Marana area and north to the Gila River. In early 1862, Union troops were sent eastward from Yuma to take back southern Arizona. These troops engaged a patrol of about 12 Confederate Cavalry at Picacho Pass, site of the westernmost fatal battle of the war. The Union prevailed and the troops rode south to retake Tucson and replanted the American flag in May of 1862. In 1863 Arizona became a Territory of the United States.



Reenactment of historic Picacho battle



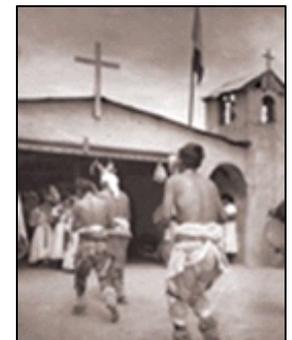
Early miners

Mining booms began in the 1860s with the opening of the Silverbell Copper Mine (1860s-1920s), and later resumed with the reopening of the Silver Bell (1948-1980s). Sasco, a present day ghost town, was a smelter town for mines at Silverbell and Picacho Peak between 1907 and 1919.

The Bojórquez Ranch site, near what is now Silverbell and Cortaro Roads, is one of the areas last remaining examples of Territorial period Mexican ranches. The ranch was founded in 1878 by Juan and Mariz Bojórquez, sold to Leandro Ruiz and Feliberto Aguirre in 1895, and abandoned about 1900. A stone house foundation, an adobe house foundation, and a stone-masonry water tank constructed during the Ruiz and Aguirre occupation still remain.

The railroad arrived in 1880 and the name Marana first appeared on Southern Pacific Railroad maps in 1890. “Maraña” is a Mexican word meaning dense brush, a tangle or a thicket and was given by the railroad workers as they hacked their way through dense mesquite trees along the Santa Cruz River.

Beginning after the 1880s, a new Native American people settled in the Santa Cruz Valley. These are the Yoem (Yaqui) from the Yaqui River area in northwestern Mexico. Many fled north to escape persecution by the Mexican government or to find work. One settlement is the Yoem Pueblo in Marana established in 1936, which today consists of 4.2 acres and about 40 tribal members. Prior to 1980, the Yoem in Marana lived in a cluster of about 20 homes that was known as “Yaqui Camp.” This Marana settlement of Yoem is not recognized by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, while the settlement of New Pascua southwest of Tucson gained official recognition as a United States Indian Tribe in 1978. The people in Yoem Pueblo do, however, receive financial assistance from the tribal government of New Pascua.



A Yaqui ceremony

Statehood (1912 – Present)

Arizona became the 48th state on February 14, 1912.



Arizona State Capitol, 1910

World War I brought new prosperity to what was left of the once thriving Silverbell Copper Mine, which operated from the 1860s to the 1920s, and again from 1948 into the 1980s. The population grew to over a thousand and the mining town had both a school and a hospital.



Branding the cattle on a ranch

Ranching formed the backbone of this community along the Southern Pacific Railroad. Ranching has a 300-year history in the Santa Cruz Valley, including the oldest cattle ranch in what is now the United States at Guevavi near Nogales. The Marana Stockyards (1996 to present) is the only stock auction house in the Santa Cruz Valley. The Lazy K Bar Guest Ranch and White Horse Guest Ranch continue to celebrate ranching traditions.

It was not until after WW I that Marana became primarily an agricultural center. There arose a need for cotton to manufacture tire cord, airplane fabric, and other war-related materials. In



Farmers involved in the Edwin Post Irrigation Project

1917 the community was called Postvale after the Michigan immigrant Edwin R. Post. In 1920 Post drilled a number of wells, installed a pumping plant, and constructed an extensive irrigation system. Many families migrated to the area to grow cotton between 1920 and 1924. Wheat, barley, alfalfa, and pecans have also been cultivated since the 1940s, although the majority of Marana farmland has always been devoted to cotton.

A substantial and influential Chinese community began to develop in the Marana area in the 1930s. Many Chinese arrived to the Tucson area with the Southern Pacific railroad in 1880. Of the 1,300 workers hired to construct the railroad 1,100 were Chinese. Some began farming vegetables in large numbers on what became known as truck farms; others opened grocery stores, laundries and restaurants. In the 1930s they sold vegetables to miners and ranchers in the Marana area. Eventually they bought land and became some of the areas most profitable farmers.



Chinese immigrant in traditional dress



Cotton has been Marana's main cash crop

The Producer Cotton Gin was built with dried adobe in 1938 and comprises two buildings, an office and a warehouse. These buildings are now treasured historic features and represent the cotton growing industry, historically a driving force in the settlement of Marana.

During World War II, the impact of the rising importance of air power came quickly to Marana. In 1942, the U.S Government bought about 3.5 square miles of the old Aguirre Ranch southwest of Red Rock for construction of an air base. The Marana airfield (1942-1945) was the largest pilot-training center in the world during WWII, training some 10,000 flyers. To serve the nearby military facility, the highway from Tucson to Casa Grande was improved and soon became the major road through the Marana area. A German and Italian prisoner-of-war camp was built northwest of Marana, and the prisoners helped harvest crops. These developments, along with the arrival of electricity in 1945, moved Marana into the 20th Century.



Instruction time at Marana Airbase

The Arizona Portland Cement Company's Twin Peaks limestone mine was opened in 1949 and is today the largest limestone mine in the Santa Cruz Valley.



A Titan II missile

The migrant work camps that dotted the Marana area up until the late 1950s were replaced by a new structure born of the cold war and space age. Between 1959 and 1984, five Titan missile sites were located in the Marana area as part of a complex of ballistic missile installations built around Tucson. Many rural roads in the area were paved, making parts of Marana more accessible.

In 1961, the Arizona Highway Department and Federal Government removed most of the historic northern Marana business district known as the Mercantile to widen Interstate 10. The high school and most businesses relocated throughout the area. With no "Main Street" in northern Marana, the business district in southern Marana became the main shopping region.



The Pima Mercantile in Marana

In March of 1977, the Town of Marana incorporated about 10 square miles and in August the 1,500 townspeople elected their first town council. In early 1979 the town began to grow through an aggressive annexation policy and is now nearly 120 square miles with an estimated population of 21,000.

Since the 1980s the amount of farmland has declined as farms have been converted to housing developments. But, the area still has six large farms, which primarily grow short staple cotton. Durum wheat is exported to Italy for making pasta and is increasing in importance.

In 1992, Marana began receiving Colorado River water from the Central Arizona Project (CAP), a federal project authorized by Congress in 1968. Along the 336-mile-long route, CAP water is delivered from Lake Havasu along a series of canals and lift stations. Marana is entitled to nearly 23 million gallons of water each year.



CAP Canal Aerial View

Today

Today, Marana is a thriving community on the banks of the Santa Cruz River, which historically has been important to the cultures that have settled there. This river’s riparian habitat supports a variety of wildlife, and presently is kept alive by effluent released by Pima County sewage treatment facilities at Roger and Ina roads. Effluent is a valuable water source for recharging the groundwater along this reach of the river.



The Santa Cruz River

Marana is the boundary between the Middle and Lower Santa Cruz River where the river loses its channel and spreads over a large flood plain on its way to the Gila River. Marana is also located at the confluence of three significant tributaries of the Santa Cruz River: the Rillito River, Canada del Oro, and Altar-Brawley Wash. Point of the Mountain near the Portland Cement Plant was historically the last perennial water source for early travelers before crossing the “90 mile desert” to the Gila River.

The Town of Marana now has a population of 26,725 people, covers an area of 118 sq. miles, has seven Town parks, and is surrounded by large tracks of protected open space, including Ironwood National Monument to the west, Saguaro National Park to the south, and Tortolita Mountain Park to the east. Within the town limits is the 2,500-acre Tortolita Preserve. The 110,000 square foot Marana Municipal Complex—housing Administrative Services, Customer Services, Development Services, the Marana Police Department and the Municipal Courts—was dedicated 2005.



Marana Municipal Complex, 2005

A Timeline of Marana History

Prehistory Period

- 2000 B.C. Arrival of maize (corn) from Mexico
- 1200 B.C. Appearance of first irrigation canals in North America: grow maize, squash, beans, cotton and tobacco
- 800 B.C. Appearance of first ceremonial buildings and bow-and-arrow
- 400 Pithouses shift from round to rectangular
- 800 First ballcourts and village plazas appear in Southwest
- 1050 Ballcourts no longer built
- 1275 Platform mounds appear as public ceremonial structures within large walled compounds
- 1450 Hohokam culture vanishes

Turning Point

- 1690 Spanish arrive from south and Apache arrive from north

Spanish Period

- 1694 Father Eusebio Francisco Kino: First European to visit area
- 1775 Juan Bautista de Anza Expedition to found City of San Francisco
- 1810 War breaks out between New Spain and Mexico

Mexican Period

- 1821 Mexico takes control of New Spain
- 1846 War between Mexico and US begins
- 1846 Mormon Battalion passes through on way to California
- 1849 Some 10,000 individuals pass through on way to California: part of trail later becomes a mail/stagecoach route, railroad route, and corridor for Interstate 10

Territorial Period

- 1854 Gadsden Purchase ratified: area becomes part of the United States
- 1856 American troops replace Mexican troops at El Presidio de Tucson
- 1858 Arrival of Butterfield Overland Mail Company
- 1860s Beginning of mining booms: Silverbell Copper Mine opens

- 1862 Westernmost fatal battle of the Civil War at Picacho Pass
- 1863 Arizona Territory established
- 1878 Bojórquez Ranch established
- 1880 Arrival of Southern Pacific Railroad
- 1890 Name Marana first appears on Southern Pacific Railroad maps
- 1907 Sasco: smelter town for mines at Silverbell and Picacho opens (closes in 1919)

Statehood/Modern

- 1912 Arizona becomes 48th state on February 14, 1912
- 1917 Community called Postvale
- 1920 Shift from ranching to agricultural: Edwin Post drilled wells, opened pumping plant and installed irrigation system
- 1930s Chinese farming community begins to develop
- 1936 Yoem (Yaqui) Pueblo established
- 1938 Producer Cotton Gin built
- 1942 Marana airfield established: largest pilot-training center in world during WW II
- 1948 Silver Bell mine reopens
- 1949 Arizona Portland Cement Company's Twin Peaks mine opens
- 1959 Five Titan missile sites installed in Marana vicinity (disassembled in 1984)
- 1961 Historic business district known as Mercantile removed during Interstate 10 widening
- 1968 Congress authorizes CAP project: Marana entitled to 70-acre feet/year
- 1977 Town of Marana incorporated
- 1979 Beginning of aggressive annexation and grow of Marana
- 1996 Marana Stockyards opens: only stock auction house in Santa Cruz Valley
- 1999 Completion of Santa Cruz River Flood Control Project
- 2003 Town of Marana named one of America's "Best Managed Small Cities"; concept to develop a Heritage Park; design for Town Seal adopted
- 2005 Municipal Complex completed; request to Congress for proposed Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area

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