

# **Henderson Memories:**

**City of  
Henderson  
Living Histories**

**CITY OF HENDERSON**  
**LIVING HISTORY INTERVIEW**  
**JOHN RINALDI, PROPERTY MANAGER**  
**MARCH 20, 2003**

1 INTERVIEWER: Can you start by telling me your name and what you  
2 do?

3 MR. RINALDI: Certainly. I'm John Rinaldi, Jr. I'm the property  
4 manager for the city of Henderson. I've been working here for 13 years.

5 INTERVIEWER: What does it mean that you're the property manager?

6 MR. RINALDI: My job is to manage the city's real estate. Buy real  
7 estate for the city for public projects or even for a self-initiative as initiated  
8 enterprise projects. To sell real estate because the city was endowed with a  
9 lot of real estate when it was incorporated, do leases, exchanges of property.  
10 A lot of issues with real property.

11 INTERVIEWER: Going back, I guess, to the original incorporation, can  
12 you tell us, like, about the city, the boundaries, how big it was, you know,  
13 back in 1953?

14 MR. RINALDI: The original town of Henderson was incorporated in, I  
15 think, April 1953 and the description included in the court decree for that was,  
16 roughly, 10 square miles of this downtown older part of Henderson that  
17 everybody's familiar with.

18 INTERVIEWER: How big is the city today?

19 MR. RINALDI: The city is, roughly, 96 square miles today. There's  
20 been a lot of annexations between then and a lot of explosive growth that the  
21 city has experienced.

22 INTERVIEWER: So, how did the city pay for some of the original  
23 services needed to grow?

1                   MR. RINALDI: Well, the original townsite of Henderson, the original  
2                   incorporated boundary of roughly ten square miles included land that the city  
3                   was able to sell and take the proceeds of which and buy the services or pay  
4                   for the services and facilities that were needed in order to become a city.

5                   INTERVIEWER: Were those resources expanded when the federal  
6                   government actually provided the city additional land?

7                   MR. RINALDI: Correct. In 1963, the federal government provided  
8                   another 16,000 acres for the city to use as - - that it could acquire and then  
9                   sell for, again, to foster additional development and help the city to grow.

10                  INTERVIEWER: How does the city go about acquiring land from the  
11                  federal government; is there a process?

12                  MR. RINALDI: Well, today - - today it's a whole different process than  
13                  it was in 1963.

14                  INTERVIEWER: What was it like in 1963?

15                  MR. RINALDI: In 1963, there was a congressional act that provided  
16                  for the city to receive, in tracks that it chose, up to 16,000 acres. And this  
17                  area is generally the area that is south of St. Rose or Lake Mead Drive and  
18                  runs through Green Valley Ranch and all that whole southern part of the city.  
19                  That was the original - - that was that 16,000 acres.

20                  INTERVIEWER: So does it start with lobbying from local businessman  
21                  to their senators?

22                  MR. RINALDI: You know, I couldn't find any legislative history on that.  
23                  I worked really hard to try and come up with that, but we really couldn't do

1           that. It is important to note, I think, that the land that was included in the  
2           16,000 acres, when the city would buy it, again in these tracks, and then sell it  
3           for development, the cost of that property to the city was roughly \$50 an acre.

4                   INTERVIEWER: And what was the city able to sell it for?

5                   MR. RINALDI: I know the city sold it for considerably more than that,  
6           but still a lot less than what we know to be the values of today.

7                   INTERVIEWER: You mentioned the 16,000 acres in '63. Was that the  
8           first major annexation after '53?

9                   MR. RINALDI: That's correct. In 1967, because the city then had the  
10          opportunity to acquire this land from the federal government, Senators Gibson  
11          and Smith championed a bill through our state legislature to annex that land  
12          into the city.

13                   INTERVIEWER: So it wasn't annexed into the city originally?

14                   MR. RINALDI: Correct. We just got the ability to buy it.

15                   INTERVIEWER: Can you tell us about the growth of the city after  
16          1963?

17                   MR. RINALDI: After 1963 and through the next 20 years the city  
18          continued to annex parcels, no significantly large parcels, but continued to  
19          grow and culminating in 1990 when the city -- with all the development  
20          pressure that Southern Nevada was experiencing -- we annexed roughly  
21          12,800 additional acres that was then incorporated into the city and made us  
22          roughly 71 square miles by that time.

1 INTERVIEWER: And then after 1990 we did another [inaudible] acres,  
2 didn't we?

3 MR. RINALDI: After 1990, right around 1998 through 2000 the city  
4 annexed another 10,000 to 12,000 acres of land that includes the Del Webb  
5 Anthem area and parts of Seven Hills as well as the federal parcels that are  
6 further west of Anthem taking the city limits all the way out to, as far as Las  
7 Vegas Boulevard.

8 INTERVIEWER: It seems like there's a process where developers  
9 might buy land and then they will seek, or the city will seek to have it  
10 annexed. Why does the city want to annex this land, and why does  
11 developers want to be annexed?

12 MR. RINALDI: Since 1998 and the passage of the Southern Nevada  
13 Public Lands Management Act, the BLM will sell property through public  
14 auction after the local government nominates the property for sale. We have  
15 found a lot of pressure from a lot of interest from the development community  
16 to release parcels that are within Henderson or in proximity of Henderson  
17 so that they can utilize the city's services, come to be known as part of the  
18 city of Henderson and enjoy the quality of life that the city has been known to  
19 give all of its residents.

20 INTERVIEWER: Not wanting you to disclose anything that's not  
21 public, but can you tell us about some of the future plans of annexation?

22 MR. RINALDI: Since 2000, the city has continued to grow and desires  
23 to continue to grow. There's a lot of continued momentum and development

1           pressure. The city continues to look for opportunities in and around the valley  
2           for those opportunities.

3                   INTERVIEWER: In terms of being a property manager for the city,  
4           that's not something that most people relate to as the, you know, as a city  
5           buying and selling land. Can you just tell us, if I'm a resident in Henderson,  
6           why is it important that the city manage their [inaudible] so carefully?

7                   MR. RINALDI: It's important that the city manage its property very  
8           carefully for several reasons. Number one, it is basically owning the property  
9           in trust for the public and it needs to make sure that it's deriving the best  
10          benefit it can for that property. We put several, or a lot of our properties to  
11          parks, and we provide sites for public schools as well.

12                   The city also sells property to developers so that it can fund projects  
13          that are of importance to the city.

14                   INTERVIEWER: Kind of like switching perspective, you know, we've  
15          kind of talked to you, you know, about some of this current, you know,  
16          development. Prior to 1953, I mean, the original settlement of what is now the  
17          city of Henderson, was actually James Miller in an area that was called  
18          Jericho Ranch. How does that Jericho Ranch fit in to the current city of  
19          Henderson?

20                   MR. RINALDI: The original development that was to become  
21          Henderson was Jericho. Jericho was, initially, a ranch that had a good supply  
22          of water and the owners developed that property into 25-foot wide lots. It

1           really became tent sites for dam workers. That area is located in what we now  
2           know as Pittman, generally, in the area of Moser and Merlayne.

3                     The original Jericho Ranch that was subdivided in 1929 was renamed  
4           two years later as Midway City to better reflect its location being midway  
5           between Las Vegas and Boulder City.

6                     INTERVIEWER: How long have you lived in the city of Henderson?

7                     MR. RINALDI: Two years.

8                     INTERVIEWER: Where did you move from?

9                     MR. RINALDI: Las Vegas. I've been in the valley for around 20 years.

10                    INTERVIEWER: So, living in the valley for 20 years, you know,  
11           speaking as someone who now lives in Henderson, but also speaking as  
12           someone who did not live in Henderson for 20 years. How is your vision of  
13           Henderson as an outsider and how did it change?

14                    MR. RINALDI: My introduction to Henderson was through  
15           employment. I came to know Henderson from the inside and came to learn  
16           that Henderson has a unique style, a real value on the services it provides,  
17           and really, really cares about its people. We lived here in the valley for,  
18           roughly 20 years before we moved to Henderson just two and a half, three  
19           years ago.

20                    INTERVIEWER: Was your view of Henderson before you moved here  
21           this, you know, backwards little town on the south side of the valley or did you  
22           always look at as - -



1                   MR. RINALDI: We're allowed to be honest, huh? Certainly, the city of  
2                   Henderson, when I got here was a - - when I first came to work at the city of  
3                   Henderson, the city of Henderson was just beginning to grow. It was known  
4                   as a sleepy hamlet next to Las Vegas and wasn't on a community that was,  
5                   you know, that was on the cutting edge or whatever.

6                   INTERVIEWER: Did that view change when you actually came and  
7                   lived here?

8                   MR. RINALDI: By the time I came and lived - - by the time I came to  
9                   know Henderson, by working here and coming to live here, I came to really  
10                  appreciate Henderson's values and the services it provides to its citizens.

11                  INTERVIEWER: You know, one of the things, you know, that we say  
12                  about Henderson as a slogan is "a place we call home." Why is Henderson a  
13                  place you call home?

14                  MR. RINALDI: Henderson is a place that I call home because of the  
15                  family values of this community. The opportunities the city provides are  
16                  fantastic recreational opportunities and the way the government cares about  
17                  what the people and the citizens think.

18                  INTERVIEWER: In terms of the Pavilion building, which opened while  
19                  you were here, for someone who doesn't live in Henderson, how would you  
20                  describe the Pavilion?

21                  MR. RINALDI: The Pavilion is a unique opportunity for a wide variety  
22                  of recreational and entertainment opportunities for the city. It represents a

1 new entrée for the city into public performances and the performing arts like  
2 no other city in this community has ever seen.

3 INTERVIEWER: Did you have anything to do with helping to acquire  
4 that land for America Nevada?

5 MR. RINALDI: Yes.

6 INTERVIEWER: Can you tell us a little bit about that process?

7 MR. RINALDI: The property for the multigenerational facility and the  
8 pavilion was acquired from ANC, American Nevada Corporation, through  
9 development processing of their Green Valley Ranch South.

10 INTERVIEWER: And it's kind of interesting, I guess, that Green Valley  
11 Ranch development, which I think was significant for the city also created  
12 some benefits for the community. Can you talk to us a little bit about that  
13 whole process?

14 MR. RINALDI: Developments in Henderson have been known to  
15 provide the city with significant amounts of public spaces, trails, parks, open  
16 areas as well as, in Green Valley Ranch, the pavilion and the  
17 multigenerational facility. Those are very important facilities not only for the  
18 city and the kind of the services that we want to provide the citizens. This  
19 also represents a public-private partnership where the development also gets  
20 to tout that as an amenity for their development and helps - - helps them in  
21 their mission as well.

1 INTERVIEWER: That's good, just on the, you know, a personal note,  
2 anything that you feel that you want to touch on in terms of important events  
3 that you remember or significant things that have happened in the city?

4 MR. RINALDI: For my tenure here? For my terms or whatever?

5 INTERVIEWER: Or just in general. I mean that could be any kind of a  
6 - - any way you want to answer that.

7 MR. RINALDI: I can say that, for me, being in Henderson and working  
8 for Henderson is guided, in large part, by the management of Phil Speight,  
9 Shauna Hughes, Monica Simmons, as well as all the Council members that  
10 have come through their offices while I've been here. They are exemplary  
11 leaders who make Henderson the great place it is to live.

12 INTERVIEWER: A lot of people think the 1990s were the most  
13 dynamic period for Henderson's growth. I mean, simply, you know, in early  
14 1990s, like, around '93 the city reached a critical mass, so to speak, of a  
15 100,000 people, which kind of launched the next wave of development.  
16 What's your remembrance of the 1990s in terms of significant things in  
17 Henderson?

18 MR. RINALDI: My remembrance for Henderson through the '90s was  
19 it was a city that came of age. It reached that milestone of 100,000 plus  
20 people. We arrived on the radar screen of major developers and major  
21 commercial businesses who now sought Henderson as a place to expand  
22 and to grow their businesses.

1                   INTERVIEWER: What were some of the things that were  
2                   accomplished in the '90s?

3                   MR. RINALDI: The city - - the city management through the '90s was  
4                   able to focus on amenity-driven development and provide lots of open space,  
5                   parks, and other amenities to help the quality of life for our citizens.

6                   INTERVIEWER: Were there any significant large developments like  
7                   Sunset Station, Galleria Mall, Stephanie Street, new kinds of commercial  
8                   strips that had never been seen in Henderson before?

9                   MR. RINALDI: The city experienced significant growth through the  
10                  '90s, including an incredible amount of commercial development along the  
11                  Sunset Corridor with the Galleria Mall and the Stephanie Corridor with all of  
12                  its commercial opportunities.