

A Brief History of Airway Heights As Taken From Personal Letters From Original Residents

Airway Heights celebrated its 50-year history June 14, 2005 and has Carl M. and Flora K. Lundstrom to thank for early city-building. The Lundstroms were the first to plat the land, donate parcels for initial city building and worked towards incorporation in 1955. Carl M. and Flora K. Lundstrom had worked in real estate in Seattle and Electric City in the early 1940s and owned Rocket Investment Company. Discussions with officials at Galena Air Depot (which later became Fairchild Air Force Base) showed the need for local housing.

In the spring of 1942 they started installation of the electric and water systems in Airway Heights and sold some parcels of land to build houses. The Lundstroms built the first home at the corner of Lundstrom and 13th.

In 1942 Fritz Ziegler and his wife became the first residents. Their son, Les was the first baby born in Airway Heights. Development was slow because availability of building materials and financing was low, and occasional opposition was high.

In August of 1946 the Lundstroms filed their plats for the Airway Heights first and second addition and streets were named for town residents. In 1957 they filed the plat for the third addition.

The first post office opened and Mollie Mitchell was postmistress from 1948 to 1969 when the new post office was dedicated. In 1946 the Lofflers built the Airway Heights Motel - the first in town.

The Lundstroms donated parcels of land over time to help build the community – land for the first Sunset School in 1951, the Airway Community Church in 1954, town hall in 1957 and the fire department in 1963. The first Sunset School was east of town and is now an apartment building. Church, community gatherings and dances were all held at the old school. The volunteer fire department was organized in 1963 and the building housed the fire truck.

On April 15, 1955 after paying a \$5 incorporation fee, and receiving a positive 50-8 vote, one square mile was incorporated as the City of Airway Heights, with 412 residents. The intersection of Lundstrom and 14th was the original town center for house numbering which was laid out by the Spokane County Planning Commission who issued all building permits until incorporation.

Carl Lundstrom ran unopposed as the first mayor and held office for 7 years. Flora Lundstrom served on city council for 7 years and helped at town hall. Council meetings were held at the Sunset School and later a house on Lundstrom Street. In 1956, local residents voted to purchase the water system from August Timm to operate the town utility. In 1973 the 135 foot water tower was built, and in 1991 the state department of corrections chose Airway Heights for a minimum and medium security prison.

The City celebrated its 50 year history June 14, 2005 and placed a flag pole monument and time capsule at Sunset Park.

Fast Facts:

- What is the oldest building in Airway Heights?
 - **The Liquor Store**
- What was the town's population in 1955?
 - **412**
- What is the current population?
 - **5,190 estimated for 2006, including about 2,100 in Department of Corrections**
- Where does the numbering system start in this town?
 - **Originally at Lundstrom and 14th but now at Division and Sprague in Spokane to be consistent with surrounding county roads**
- Who was the first baby born in this town?
 - **Les Ziegler**
- Who were the first streets named after?
 - **Original town residents – Frank, Ziegler, Lundstrom, Beeman, King, Horton, Albert, Lawson, Campbell and Russell.**