

Sedona FINAL MIXDOWN 2.mp3

Kaely Monahan [00:00:05] 1901. The Dawn of a New Century. America was in the midst of the modern period, and the world was rapidly changing. Electricity was sparking in big cities, powering trolleys, lights and even factories. In Britain, Queen Victoria dies at the age of 81, ending the Victorian era. Walgreens pharmacy is founded in Chicago in New Jersey. The Edison Storage Battery Company is founded as well. This is also the year that the 25th president, William McKinley, was assassinated by an anarchist, and Theodore Roosevelt stepped in as commander in chief and out west, a woman moved to central Arizona, a U.S. territory at the time that is known for its stunning red rocks.

Man from ad [00:00:59] And here man has built the most beautiful town in America. Sedona claims that title because of the scenery that surrounds it. Such spectacular beauty that countless motion picture.

Kaely Monahan [00:01:14] That woman was Sedona Schnebly. Yes, you heard that right. Sedona and her husband, T.C. Schnebly, moved from Gorin Missouri to the then unnamed region where there were only a handful of families in the area. The Schnebly family ran a farm and built a house that would later become a hotel for guests in town. Throughout the family's ups and downs. Sedona proved to be a selfless woman who catered to others first, despite being reserved and rather introspective. The love between T.C. and Sedona laid the foundation for immortalizing her name as the city of Sedona.

Katrina Michalak [00:02:02] Welcome to Valley 101, a podcast by The Arizona Republic and azcentral.com. About Metro, Phoenix and beyond. I'm producer Katrina Michalak.

Kaely Monahan [00:02:13] And I'm producer Kaely Monahan. As Women's History Month comes to a close, so too does this season of Arizona. Her story. Over the last several weeks, we've learned about changemakers, fierce leaders and advocates. Sedona may not have been a woman out in front, but she was beloved by everyone who knew her. And it only makes sense to hear how the city of Sedona adopted her name.

Lisa Schnebly Heidinger [00:02:54] She played the piano. She wore a lot of blue. She was never idle. She embroidered prodigiously, but always white on white. No colors. So her monogrammed napkins and handkerchiefs and nightgowns and everything else are white on white. My name is Lisa Schnebly Heidinger and I am the great granddaughter of Sedona and T.C. Schnebly.

Katrina Michalak [00:03:22] Lisa is a local journalist and author who released the Journal of Sedona Schnebly in 2017. The book walks through the lives of her great grandparents while in Arizona and contains 30 family photographs, spending half her time in the Valley and half her time in Flagstaff. We connected with her remotely.

Lisa Schnebly Heidinger [00:03:46] But she was not a flamboyant woman, loved literature, memorized Bible verses, put on the Christmas programs and spring performances that the children gave.

Kaely Monahan [00:03:55] The Schnebly family's journey to Arizona actually starts with their lives back in Missouri. Sedona, who grew up as Sedona Miller, was a well-educated lady who was raised in a rich family. Born in Gorin in 1877, she was one of 12 children born in her family. Only eight grew to adulthood, and they had relatively common names except for Sedona.

Lisa Schnebly Heidinger [00:04:24] And so I always have to be very, very clear that this is Lisa Schnebly Heidinger's theory, not what is known to be true. But her mother, when asked, I always said, there's a first time for every word or name. And I just like the sound of it. So that's the official story. Now, I have read some wonderful books by an author named Barbara Hambly about a free man of color in New Orleans in the 1840s, and in her telling of this French Creole culture, the name S-E-D-O-N-I-E comes up. My speculation if they lived in Missouri would have been perhaps as river traffic passed on the Mississippi that Amanda Miller would have heard in passing Sedonie, and maybe even subconsciously tucked it away and amended it then to be Sedona.

Kaely Monahan [00:05:22] Theodore Carleton Schnebly, or T.C. as he went by, courted Sedona, much to her family's dismay.

Singer [00:05:31] I come riding along. Got that girl on my mind. That I lift me high under that shining doesn't move. He's got us.

Kaely Monahan [00:05:44] According to Lisa, T.C. was not well-regarded because he was a Presbyterian in a predominantly Methodist community.

Lisa Schnebly Heidinger [00:05:52] It was clearly not going to go well in Gorin and she was written out of her folks will for marrying T.C., and they came with kind of at the behest of T.C.'s Brother D.E., Dorsey Ellsworth.

Katrina Michalak [00:06:06] Despite this, the two fell in love, got married, and eventually packed their bags to head out west. I.

Singer [00:06:17] So I'm gonna ride till I'm by your side. And we can sing love to. As we're riding along singing a song under that shining desert moon.

Lisa Schnebly Heidinger [00:06:36] Sedona, told daughter Clara, who told me that the word on the street in Gorin was that Philip Miller was going to get 100 sons in law. Loring Johnson was one, T.C. was double, zero was 100. And I believe, although Clara didn't get this firsthand, that that would have greatly contributed to their decision to come west.

Katrina Michalak [00:07:09] The couple connected with D.E. in Arizona in the fall of 1901 and helped develop the community. They had a couple children, tended to a farm and built the house that would become a hotel. Sedona was a great baker and cook who would interact with guests daily, even if she was more reserved.

Lisa Schnebly Heidinger [00:07:38] Everybody who knew her said she was reserved. She was shy. She didn't laugh loudly. She was very contained, very private. And my great, great grandpa T.C. was much more outgoing, social, gregarious, you know, comfortable.

Katrina Michalak [00:07:54] They had not been there for even five years before the first bump in the road occurred.

Lisa Schnebly Heidinger [00:08:05] They moved rather unexpectedly because my grandpa Ellsworth, who they called Tad, was 7 in 1905 and little sister Pearl was five, and she was killed riding her horse, rounding up the cattle with Sedona and her older brother. And I think Sedona was probably bordering on some kind of breakdown anyway, because she was entertaining all the guests cooking, cleaning, serving, interacting, had three

children and then two. My grandpa has written extensively in speeches and things, and remembers being out on the porch and hearing the doctor bring T.C. to the side and say, move her or lose her. So T.C. sold out to his brother, took her back east to Gorin. They mended fences with the families.

Kaely Monahan [00:08:55] The family left Arizona in 1905, but despite being back east, they had an itch to return west. What's more, they were met with additional tragedy after T.C. got swindled in Gorin. The family didn't have enough money or the land to start over where they used to be in Arizona. Also at this time, Sedona and T.C. welcomed another son, Hank, into the family while they were back in Gorin. And with the new addition, they moved to Boyero, Colorado to mark their return back to the west.

Katrina Michalak [00:09:36] The family welcomed two more daughters while in Colorado and ended up staying there for 20 years. However, T.C.'s quality of life was declining due to a case of malaria he had earlier in his life. He struggled to maintain the family's farm in Colorado. It came down to Sedona to make a decision for the family's future.

Lisa Schnebly Heidinger [00:10:05] T.C. had had the weak lungs and their farm in Boyero. The cattle got anthrax, and I had to learn more about anthrax than I had known. And apparently it can lie dormant in the soil forever. And then when it comes up and it infects one cattle and then the rest, if you don't burn every scrap of the carcasses, people and more cattle can get it. So he was then on his own. His sons had grown and gone, and he was up all day trying to keep the farm together and up all night burning cattle carcasses and got really sick. And so this time it was Sedona's turn to move him or lose him. And they tried Phoenix at first because he had a brother there, but he was miserable being so close to Oak Creek. And she finally thought, you know, it's not that much colder. And he would be happy.

Katrina Michalak [00:10:54] The family moved back to Sedona in 1930, where Sedona and T.C. would spend the rest of their lives until their respective deaths in 1950 and 1953. The couple had journeyed back and forth across the country, facing many obstacles along the way, but were still drawn back to Arizona and the people around them.

Lisa Schnebly Heidinger [00:11:19] The town had not only not forgotten them, but kept the name which T.C. had conferred upon it by applying for the first postal license in the area, and he wanted Oak Creek Crossing or Schnebly Station. And I've seen in the Cline Library NAU archives. The postmaster general returned application in the margin where he scrawled too long, and the brother D.E. said, why not name it after Dona? And I'm betting that she found that a little overwhelming because she was so shy. But she loved it. And of course, now it's kind of made the place famous.

Kaely Monahan [00:12:08] Sedona has left her mark on the city, an impact that can still be seen today. Besides, of course, from the name.

Lisa Schnebly Heidinger [00:12:17] If you're going toward Flagstaff up 89 A, on your left is the Matterhorn Hotel that has been there for ever, and the Wayside Chapel is right next to it. And when she was going to die, it was cancer. And she knew it was coming. She said to T.C., I don't want flowers. Flowers are of the earth, I want bells, I want the bell because music is of the heavens. And he helped take them across the line to raise the rest of the money to obtain a bell. Hank was working for Union Pacific in Denver and got a bell and sent it down. Every time I pass, I still look up to see that bell in the bell tower. It's yellow and they bring it on Mother's Day. And I think that was that was for Sedona.

Katrina Michalak [00:13:06] Sedona's work in the city as a baker, cook, Bible school teacher, and more weren't unusual tasks for a woman during this time. In fact, they were pretty commonplace roles. As Lisa points out, what makes her special was her adventuring spirit. Despite her reserved attitude and her unwavering love for T.C. and her family. Throughout their hardships.

Kaely Monahan [00:13:34] Lisa also says that Sedona has become something of a patron for mothers.

Lisa Schnebly Heidinger [00:13:40] But one nice thing is that I've met several women who have lost children and gravitated to the area, and only then found out that she had been a bereaved mother as well, and gotten some solace in that. And so she has become an inadvertent consolation to mothers who have lost children. And, you know, that's a lovely thing to have left.

Katrina Michalak [00:14:04] Before we go, Lisa ended our conversation with one of her favorite stories about Sedona, one that embodies her personality.

Lisa Schnebly Heidinger [00:14:14] Being a farmer is an uncertain business, and the crops were leveled. And it was a hail storm that Clara remembers when they put a bucket on Clara's head and sent her out to save the chickens. She came in with bruises on her arms. The hail was so bad and it ruined the crops, and she remembers seeing her dad come in and look at Sedona and shake his head ever so slightly to say, yeah, we're ruined. And yet then looked around the table and said, why the long faces? Get some buckets, let's collect the hail and make ice cream. Which they did. And I think that that's a lovely legacy to give to your children. And.

Kaely Monahan [00:14:55] Thank you for listening to this episode of Arizona Her Story, our special series on Valley 101. Next week.

Ben Kaufman [00:15:05] We were on every local news broadcast. That night we were on NPR and that was a big crown jewel. We on an NPR national segment that week that was really awesome. U of A tried to prank us back, and it was really terrible. That was really funny.

Katrina Michalak [00:15:18] A story about a massive prank between two rival schools went viral back in 2015. It's a perfect story for April Fools from right here in the Valley that you don't want to miss. Valley 101 is a podcast by The Arizona Republic and azcentral.com. If you enjoyed this episode, share it with your friends and if you haven't already, make sure you're subscribed.

Kaely Monahan [00:15:50] Don't forget to rate and review us and go ahead, give us five stars. Remember to submit your questions about Metro, Phoenix and the state at large to Valley101.azcentral.com. Your question might be in our next episode. Follow us on Twitter and Instagram @azcpodcasts.

Katrina Michalak [00:16:15] This episode was written and produced by me. Katrina Michalak.

Kaely Monahan [00:16:20] With help by me Kaely Monahan. Amanda Luberto also provided additional production support. Production oversight is by Kara Edgerson.

Katrina Michalak [00:16:31] Music for this and all our shows comes from Universal Production Music Valley. 101 is An Arizona Republic and azcentral.com production. Thanks for listening to our special herstory series. We'll see you next week with a brand new Valley 101 story.