



Angela Hutchinson Hammer: Arizona's Pioneer Newspaperwoman

Betty E. Hammer Joy

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In 1905, with her marriage dissolved and desperate to find a way to feed her children, Angela Hutchinson Hammer bought a handpress, some ink, and a few fonts of type, and began printing a little tabloid called the *Wickenburg Miner*. In her naïveté, Angela never dreamed this purchase would place her squarely in the forefront of power struggles during Arizona's early days of statehood.

A true daughter of the West, Angela, born in a tiny mining hamlet in Nevada, came to the Territory of Arizona at the age of twelve. Betty Hammer Joy weaves together the lively story of her grandmother's life by drawing upon Angela's own prodigious writing and correspondence, newspaper archives, and the recollections of family members. Her book recounts the stories Angela told of growing up in mining camps, teaching in territorial schools, courtship, marriage, and a twenty-eight-year career in publishing and printing. During this time, Angela managed to raise three sons, run for public office before women in the nation had the right to vote, serve as Immigration Commissioner in Pinal County, homestead, and mature into an activist for populist agendas and water conservation. As questionable deals took place both within and outside the halls of government, the crusading Angela encountered many duplicitous characters who believed that women belonged at home darning socks, not running a newspaper.

Although Angela's independent papers brought personal hardship and little if any financial reward, after her death in 1952 the newspaper industry paid tribute to this courageous woman by selecting her as the first woman to enter the Arizona Newspaper Hall of Fame. In 1983 she was honored posthumously with another award for women who contributed to Arizona's progress—induction into the Arizona Women's Hall of Fame.

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