



FootPrints

Dedicated to Preserving and Promoting Historic Resources in the Truckee Meadows through Education, Advocacy and Leadership.

vol. 19 no. 4 ♦ Fall 2016

2016 Reno Harvest of Homes Tour

Saturday, September 24, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

by Debbie Hinman – Photos by Steve Ellison

Reno Harvest of Homes Tour

- 3636 Mayberry Drive
- 507 West Sixth Street
- 373 Arroyo Street
- 373 ½ Arroyo Street
- 887 Marsh Avenue
- 175 Juniper Hill Road

Historic Reno Preservation Society's annual Harvest of Homes Tour is gearing up for its seventh consecutive year! Every year when we begin our planning process, we wonder if this will be the year when we will be unable to find suitable homes, but our wonderful, local, historic-home owners continue to provide us with exciting offerings. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude.

This year, HRPS has probably the most eclectic selection of homes ever offered, with styles representing nearly 100 years of home building and sizes ranging from a 900-square-foot cottage to a 5,000-square-foot showplace. The homes are listed in chronological order in this article. From wood frame to river rock to painted brick, these homes are unique in character and scattered throughout five diverse neighborhoods. We know they will fascinate and delight you.



3636 Mayberry Drive

Built in Virginia City in 1851, this grand old lady of Caughlin Ranch has occupied its current site since 1901, having been disassembled, transported via wagon and railroad, and reassembled on the outskirts of Reno. The land had belonged to the Andrews family since George Andrews (Crissie Andrews Caughlin's father) purchased it in 1874. George built a small, wood-frame house on what became the Andrews Ranch, near what is now the intersection of West Plumb Lane and McCarran Boulevard. George, wife Bettie, son Ben and daughter Crissie occupied this home. It was later moved elsewhere on the property. The Caughlin Ranch House was home to the Andrews and Caughlin families until Crissie's death in 1955. It underwent a year-long restoration in 1993 and in 1997 received the City of Reno's HRC preservation award for a residential structure. Descendants of Crissie Caughlin retained ownership of the house until 2006, when it was sold. Today the home shares its grounds with the Garden Shop Nursery, and is owned and occupied by the Bath family. Thoroughly modernized, the home retains much of its original charm. One can easily imagine Crissie and her family sitting on the large, wrap-around porch gazing out at her 3,100 acres of land, which at one time stretched from the Truckee River to today's Skyline Boulevard.

Continued on page 2

2016 Reno Harvest of Homes Tour (continued)



507 W. Sixth Street

This 1870s ranch home in one of Reno's oldest additions will take you back in time both with its solid construction and carefully selected furnishings which complement the era of the structure. Beginning as a very small house on land purchased from the Central Pacific Railroad, it was enlarged over a 40-year period which added a wing on the east side and a second story. In 1909, the home was purchased by Fred and Zena Walts. One of the Truckee Meadows' earliest ranching families, the Walts family owned the home until 1999. In its more recent history, the home was converted into a duplex, then remodeled back into a single-family home. Since 2014, the home has been owned by Michael and Dusty Mikel who have reestablished its link to its past. With their exquisite taste, the couple has added their own historical touches, such as a large, lovely curio case filled with artifacts of previous owners and Nevada memorabilia. The kitchen features a massive Cribben & Sexton stove, which has its own Reno history.



373 Arroyo Street

Tucked away in a quiet southwest neighborhood, our featured home and cottage to the rear are excellent examples of the iconic river rock structures found throughout Reno. The Sierra Vista addition is particularly rich in river rock; the Redfield Mansion and two other houses on Mt. Rose Street are larger examples of this craft of using natural materials. In 1932, auto mechanic and garage owner Herman Bonta and wife Frances were granted a \$4,000 permit to construct a home. The Bonta family with their two daughters occupied the residence until 1943, when it became the home of the Joseph family. Roger Joseph was a popular Reno High School teacher and newspaperman; wife Geri was an artist. Current owner Tim Braidy has owned the homes since 1993. The residence is clearly still the home of an artist; the appointments reflect his creative talent. The basic structure retains its early charm with original hardwood floors and wood casement windows. The interior is as charming as its exterior which made it an easy choice for our 2016 "poster home."



373 1/2 Arroyo Street

A charming complement to the main house is the cozy cottage to the rear. The cottage began life as a garage, as evidenced by the outline of an original large opening that was filled in prior to the current owner purchasing the property. The garage was probably built about the same time as the house, from leftover river rock. It is likely that the Josephs converted the garage to a cottage to gain income from a rental property. Records show it was rented out periodically throughout the years; in the early 1940s it was occupied by a psychic palmist. Today it is a totally charming "man cave." Vines creep up the exterior walls which are thicker at ground level and taper slightly toward the roof. There a rock chimney on the roof and a brick one on the front

2016 Reno Harvest of Homes Tour (continued)

near the door, but the structure is now warmed by a gas fireplace. Original exposed wooden beams and a wonderful open floor plan contribute to the charm of the dwelling.


887 Marsh Avenue

This lovely home was built in 1937 for Mr. and Mrs. Henning Berg, who relocated to Reno from the Bay Area. Mr. Berg was born in Sweden, but became a naturalized citizen. As he was older, retired and presumably well-to-do, Berg was likely one of the wealthy, out-of-state recruits attracted to Reno by the One Sound State initiative of the 1930s. This very successful initiative helped keep Nevada economically viable by touting the tax advantages and standard of living which brought wealthy investors to the state. The Bergs entertained frequently at their beautiful new home, and during the war Mrs. Berg was active in the efforts of the Red Cross. Berg passed away in 1950 and his wife sold the home in 1954. The next long-term owners were Dr. William and Lillian Arbonies. The Arbonies sold the property to current owners Kent and Christina Young in 2013. The home will take your breath away from the first moment you see it. It is set back on the lot surrounded by a lovely yard. The doorway is vine covered, and the rounded front door features a distinctive "peep hole." There is a wood and wrought iron stairway leading to the second story. The living room is spacious with dark wood beams and a half-moon fireplace.



175 Juniper Hill Road

The history of this home begins in 1969, with its connection to a neighboring estate. In that year, Reno was buzzing with the announcement of the divorce of Bill and Scherry Harrah, after nearly 20 years of marriage. Scherry purchased property at 155 Juniper Hill and built a large home. She also built a 900-square-foot guesthouse on the property. In 1977, the home and land were sold to Kenneth and Mary Dekker who then sold it to a corporation. The large parcel of land was divided into two parcels, separating the guesthouse and some surrounding property. The small house was enlarged and extensively remodeled several times, until it became the 5,000-square-foot home you will see on our tour. Today's home is a Styled Ranch house with Spanish Colonial details. The interior is spacious and understated, allowing the fabulous, exotic art throughout to take center stage. Large, open areas and walls of windows overlooking the pool and grounds give the home an airy, comfortable feel. Earlier residents include Dr. Gene Debardeleben, a local radiologist, and family. Current owner Jim House purchased the property in 2007 and has created an elegant, artistic showplace that won't easily be forgotten.

The Home Tour Committee is certain you will find our diverse collection of homes historically interesting and aesthetically pleasing. We hope you'll join us! 



The 2016 Harvest of Homes Tour

Saturday, September 24 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

\$30 per ticket in advance, \$35 the day of the event.

This year's ticket outlets include:

Sundance Bookstore	Napa-Sonoma Grocery Co.
St. Ives Florist	Moana Nursery
The Garden Shop	Label's Consignment
Ryrie and Me	Boutique
Rail City Garden Center	The Freckled Frog

These locations accept cash and checks only. The last day to purchase at one of the retail sites is Friday, September 23. Tickets should be available at these outlets by the time you receive this publication. Tickets may also be purchased online at historicreno.org.

A Public Waiting Place: A Brief History of Reno's Greyhound Bus Station

by ZoAnn Campana

From its inception as a river crossing connecting the California Trail with the Comstock, to its eventual establishment as a stop along the Transcontinental Railroad in 1868, Reno has maintained a reputation as a significant transportation hub. In 1927, Reno hosted the Transcontinental Highways Exposition in Idlewild Park, ushering in a new era of automobile travel to a city strategically located along The Lincoln and Victory highways (present day U.S. 50 and U.S. 40). As a result, the city has seen its share of transportation-related architecture, from garages and motels to train and bus depots.

On May 4, 1948, the *Nevada State Journal* reported that a new, modern bus depot would be constructed on the downtown site on Center Street located adjacent to the Southern Pacific Railroad depot. The announcement, made by Greyhound president F.W. Ackerman, emphasized "the importance of Reno in western travel," as the terminal would serve as a transfer point for Greyhound routes to the north (Klamath Falls, Alturas), east (Salt Lake City), south (Los Angeles), and west (Sacramento, San Francisco). Additionally, the proposed station would serve as the Reno depot for a number of regional transportation ventures, including the Las Vegas-Tonopah-Reno Stages, the Virginia Truckee Transit Company, the Reno Loyalton Calpine Stages, Hisky Stages, Nevada Scenic Tours, and the Mt. Lassen Transit Company.

At midnight on July 26, 1951, the new Greyhound Bus Station—located at 224 Center Street—sold its first tickets. The station was designed by local architectural firm Blanchard, Maher, and Lockard and had been constructed at a

cost of \$750,000. It boasted a cafeteria, dubbed the "Post House," as well as a bar known as the "Oak Room." The waiting room was anchored by a mural by famed Southwestern artist Oscar Strobel depicting emigrants traveling over the Chisholm Trail. Strobel created similar murals for the Greyhound depots in San Diego and Scottsdale.

More than 20 years had passed when, in May 1973, Harrah's Casino sought to acquire the Greyhound property on Center Street in order to construct a parking garage. The plan, put forth by Harrah's Real Estate Company, was

new depot on the corner of Sierra and Fourth Streets. Several city officials were also troubled by the proposed station's proximity to the Truckee River and Wingfield Park. Mayor Sam Dibitonto officially opposed the station, musing that Wingfield Park would become "a public waiting place for people waiting for bus connections."

A September 29, 1973 editorial in the *Reno Evening Gazette* also opposed the location of the depot, fearing that it would ruin the picturesque setting of the river and park. On October 3, 1973, the City of Reno Parks and Recreation

Commission voted in opposition of the project. Harrah's was astonished by the objections, yet unmoved on their position. Harrah's vice-president Lloyd Dyer made a public statement evaluating the protestations as "surprising and late," reinforcing the fact that the casino's plans were fixed.

Subsequently, a petition circulated among area residents, gathering 974 signatures in opposition to the project. In a sermon delivered at St. Thomas Aquinas

Cathedral on February 4, 1974, Father Charles Righini opposed the depot on moral grounds, insisting that the depot would endanger the children attending classes and social functions within the church complex, to which the depot would be adjacent. On Valentine's Day in 1974, a card was sent to William Harrah, beseeching the casino magnate to "have a heart" and build the depot in an alternate location. More than 5,000 citizens signed the card.

In spite of the community's vocal opposition to the depot and its proposed location, construction commenced in the spring of 1974. According to the *Reno Evening Gazette*, "As the building went up, the controversy died."



The Reno Greyhound building on Stevenson Street and West 1st Street, designed by architect William D. Pereira and completed in 1975. Courtesy of the author.

to purchase a half-block on Stevenson Street between First and Second from owners Dorothy and Howard McKissick Jr., and subsequently trade the seven lots for the Center Street property. Then Greyhound would be located on Stevenson, and Harrah's garage could be built on the Center Street property.

On September 22, 1973, Harrah's announced that it was exercising its option to purchase the Stevenson Street property for a Greyhound station, which was met with an avalanche of public protest. The City of Reno expressed concern over the proposed location, as it did not match its RENOvation plan, which provided for a

History of Reno's Greyhound Bus Station (continued)

Eschewing their original parking garage plan for Center Street, Harrah's opened a "Sports Casino" in the 14,000 square foot facility that formerly housed the 1951 bus terminal site in June of 1975. The building, once freestanding, is now enveloped within and indistinguishable from the surrounding Harrah's complex—which includes a massive parking garage on Center Street.

Opening ceremonies for the new bus station commenced on April 16, 1975, approximately seven months behind schedule. Gerald H. Trautman and James L. Kerrigan, chairman of the board and president of Greyhound Bus Lines, respectively, were present for the festivities. Both men made speeches intent on easing public anxieties regarding safety, insisting that "a bus terminal does not create problems, a neighborhood does," and that because the new depot was in a good neighborhood, there would be no problems. Upon the depot's opening, T.E. "Buddy" Wright served as terminal manager. By May of 1975, Charles Schopper Landscaping of Reno began

improving the new bus station site, planting pine, maple, and flowering crab trees.


The Greyhound depot appears much as it did when it was built in 1975. The firm of William D. Pereira, the famed architect who designed the Theme Building at LAX and the Transamerica

style, which characterized a number of Greyhound stations of the 1930s. The building is simple and understated, yet manages to be visually interesting. Despite the fact that it is not technically historic (architecture is considered historic at 50+ years of age), it is a unique resource in Reno.



*The Package Express side, on Stevenson Street, of the Greyhound Building.
Courtesy of the author.*

The bus station exists within the footprint of the proposed West Second District development footprint and may not exist within the built environment for much longer. For this reason, it is important to take a moment to document and appreciate the history of this building. Whether you love it, hate it, or couldn't care less about it, it tells a story about our development as a transportation city, as a city along the river, as a city with developers and citizens working—at various times—together or

at odds with one another to create a vision of the perfect place. 

Pyramid in San Francisco, designed the depot, and Walker Boudwin Construction Company served as the building contractor. The building is constructed of molded concrete, and its curved walls and blocky massing are nods to the Streamline Moderne

ZoAnn Campana is a local Historic Preservation Consultant who serves on the HRPS Board of Directors.

Be a Nevada Historical Society Volunteer

Would you like to assist the Nevada Historical Society by volunteering as a docent? You could work in tours, the research library, photography, the gift shop and other areas.

New docents complete a 4-hour training program, two shadow sessions and attend three lectures. You must become a member of the Nevada Historical Society and the Docent Council and work a minimum of 48 hours per year.

The next docent training will be **Tuesday, September 20, 2016, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** at the Nevada Historical Society, 1650 North Virginia Street, Reno, NV 89503. For information, email Carol Coleman at carol@galenaforest.net.

It's High Noon with Neal Cobb at NHS

High Noon is back at the Nevada Historical Society — at noon on the third Thursday of each month. This program features a variety of speakers, recorded television episodes and old movies about Nevada. Come enjoy this program and stay afterwards to "fire" questions at host Neal Cobb — learn about these topics and much more at the Nevada Historical Society.

High Noon: Shootout with Neal Cobb
Noon on the Third Thursday of Each Month
Nevada Historical Society
1650 N. Virginia Street • Reno, Nevada 89503
775-688-1190 x0

The Day Fate Stepped In and Saved the Riverside Hotel

By Jack Harpster

The 1990s would truly be a decade of reckoning for Reno's fabled Riverside Hotel. The original hotel—just a scruffy little inn and tavern with an attached corral—sat on the very first occupied site in what would one day become Reno. It was on the river at the southwestern edge of the Virginia Street Bridge, which occupied the second site in the city-to-be. The rustic inn and tavern and the log-and-timber bridge have shared those same neighboring spaces since 1860, when the Truckee Meadows was still part of Utah Territory.

The history of the Riverside Hotel—today the Riverside Artists Lofts—is a proud one indeed. It had originally housed and fed hungry and thirsty cowboys, drovers and miners on their way to the Comstock Lode, high in the Virginia Range to the southeast. It had prospered through the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth, and through the era of the 1920s and well into the 1950s when Reno was known as the “Divorce Capital of the Nation.” During that period the then-Grand Dame hotel had housed and pampered the very crème-de-la-crème of eastern and western society and the local elite.

But in the sixteen-year span between 1955, when proud owner George Wingfield sold the hotel, and 1971 when longtime Reno gaming maven Jessie Beck, a.k.a. “the Gambling Grandma,” valiantly tried to save it, the venerable institution had begun to fall on hard times. The 45-year-old, Frederic DeLongchamps-designed brick building was wearing its age badly, and it was no longer relevant in these new decades of social revolution in the U. S. The Riverside Hotel had simply become a relic of a bygone time.



By 1920, the Washoe County Courthouse, the Riverside Hotel (1906), and the concrete Virginia Street Bridge were becoming inexorably linked in fact and fable as the burgeoning divorce business changed the face of Reno. Courtesy Jerry Fenwick.

Following Wingfield's 1955 sale, the hotel suffered through fourteen different owners, each one full of hollow promises, but little else. The downward spiral would continue when Beck gave up the ghost after seven futile years. For the next two decades the revered landmark suffered through more ownership changes, attempted ownership changes, and forced closures for a variety of unsavory reasons, including cheating at the craps table and failure to pay employee taxes. By the late-1990s, the Reno City Council was on the verge of taking over the languishing bones of the old Grand Dame hotel under articles of eminent domain, and razing it. The Riverside's chief competitor since it had opened in 1947, and another relic of a bygone era, the twelve-story, art-deco Mapes Hotel, had already been purchased by the City, and was awaiting its own ignominious end by implosion.

Reno preservationists and historians, in the meantime, were undaunted. They were fighting on three fronts in the late 1990s: save the Riverside; save the Mapes; and save the 95-year-old Virginia Street Bridge that was also in danger of being razed. Fortunately, a good part of the history-conscious Reno citizenry had also jumped on one or more of those three bandwagons, so all three of the institutions had plenty of public support. But where would the money come from to save any one of them, much less all three? Nobody had a clue. Then an unlikely savior stepped into the picture: the Sierra Arts Foundation.

The all-volunteer, non-profit arts organization had been founded in 1971, but it had been languishing before an extraordinary woman, Patricia Smith, was hired as executive director in 1992 and put the organization back




This property was known as the Lake House when Myron Lake built it in 1869, until four years after his death, when in 1888 his son-in-law took over the property and renamed it the Riverside Hotel. Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.

Fate and the Riverside Hotel (continued)



miss the Artspace opportunity altogether, Smith quickly recommended they look at the Riverside Hotel across the river, despite its deplorable condition. To everyone's surprise, the Artspace team was quickly won over at the prospect of converting that historic property into artists' live/work apartments. Fate, it would seem, had somehow smiled on Reno's oldest landmark site.

On Super Bowl Sunday, January 30, 2000, the Mapes Hotel was imploded and perhaps it was fitting that the Riverside Hotel, the oldest occupied site in Reno, Nevada, and the site that first offered protection from the harsh elements and a bed for the night for weary travelers, was resurrected at the dawn of a new decade, a new century, and a new millennium. 

Tragedy occurred on March 15, 1922, when the beautiful Riverside Hotel burned to the ground. The fire that started in the basement quickly consumed the entire structure leaving only a smoldering brick skeleton, but thankfully no one was killed. Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.

This article was abstracted from Jack Harpster's ninth book, *The Genesis of Reno: The History of the Riverside Hotel and the Virginia Street Bridge*, to be released by the University of Nevada Press on September 13, 2016.

on its feet. One day when Smith and her Sierra Arts program director, Jill Berryman, were downtown working on an "Artists in the Street" show and sale event, Smith pointed to the Riverside and jokingly said, "I think that's where we ought to have live/work space. Gee, that'd be really neat."

The "live/work space" concept was relatively new, having been started by a group in Minneapolis. Just like it sounds, it is where artists have their living space and their working space altogether in one unit. Soon thereafter, Smith and Berryman attended an "Americans for the Arts" convention in Minneapolis, and they went on a tour of a live/work space building put up by a local non-profit company named, appropriately, Artspace. They loved the idea; and Smith invited Artspace's president to visit Reno in an attempt to save the Mapes Hotel by having it converted to a live/work apartment complex.

The fateful day of the visit arrived and Smith proudly showed the Artspace committee through the Mapes Hotel. However, her hopes were dashed when they told her the building was not conducive to conversion because the retrofit to make it earthquake proof would be far too expensive. Not wanting to



Buildings (and bridge) from left to right are the Carnegie Library (built 1904), the rebuilt Courthouse (1909-1910), the new Riverside (1927) built after fire destroyed the 1906 Riverside in 1922, and the Virginia Street Bridge (1905).

Postcard courtesy Debbie Hinman.

Reno's Oldest History Club: Nevada Westerners Corral

Dinner with history speakers and presentations, third Thursday of the month, 6:00 pm, Sands Regency Casino banquet room, 345 N. Arlington Avenue, Reno. For reservations, call the Sands at 348-1392 no later than two weeks before. www.nevadawesterners.org



HRPS September 2016 Historic Walking Tours

Tour cost is \$10 per person, free to HRPS members. Walks generally last from 1 ½ to 2 hours.

No dogs please. Reservations required and space is limited.

Please go to www.historicreno.org or 775-747-4478 for reservations and information.

Access to HRPS Walking Tours varies according to venue. Certain areas may not be fully accessible to individuals with disabilities due to architectural barriers inherent in the historic construction of the structures or uneven walking surfaces.

Saturday,
September 3
10:00 a.m.

LITERARY RENO — Take a Tour of Writing from the “Underbelly.” There’s more to Reno’s literary history than “City of Trembling Leaves!” Reno continues to be a mythical magnet for ‘outsider’ writers and characters..the misfits, outcasts and seekers. Let your imagination roam as we travel downtown streets encountered by traditional writers like Will James, Robert Laxalt and Joanne de Longchamps, then walk the haunts of contemporary writers such as Bernie Schopen, Willy Vlautin and Susan Palwick. Meet near the Riverside Artist Lofts, 17 S. Virginia Street. Tour guides: Charlotte Voitoff and Nancy Manfredi.



901 Humboldt Street



915 Lander Street, Mt. Rose Elementary



1050 Humboldt Street

Saturday,
September 10
10:00 a.m.

BRICKS AND STONES — A walk through the Humboldt and Lander Streets Neighborhood. Discover the architectural treasures of this area, a mix of bungalows, Tudor and mission revivals and cottage styles. Meet at the Lander Street side of My Favorite Muffin, 340 California Avenue. Tour guide: Dave Vill

Saturday,
September 24
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Reno Harvest of Homes Tour — Photos by Steve Ellison. See pages 1-3 for information.



1851



1870s

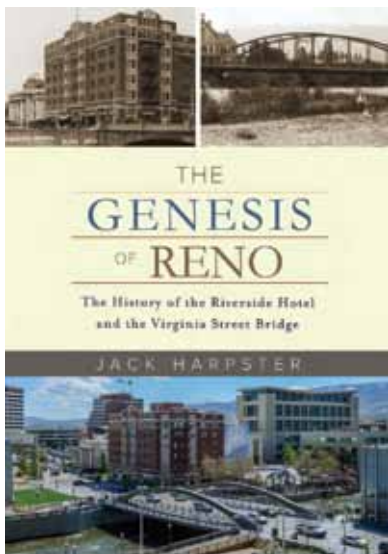


1932

HRPS 2016 Fall Programs

SherylN Hayes-Zorn & Kimberly Roberts, Program Chairs

Historic Reno Preservation Society's free programs offer an assortment of Reno historic topics. HRPS Sunday Program events are at 1:00 pm Washoe County Library (WCL), 301 S. Center St., Reno. More organization information can be found at www.historicreno.org or on Facebook.



HRPS: Sunday, October 23, 1:00 pm (fourth Sunday) — Jack Harpster, author of *The Genesis of Reno*, presents a history of the Virginia Street Bridge and the Riverside Hotel. Over 157 years ago— before there was a Reno, Nevada; before there was a state of Nevada; and even before there was a Nevada Territory— there was a bridge over the Truckee River at a narrow, deeply rutted cattle and wagon trail that would one day become Virginia Street. There was also a small rustic inn and tavern occupying a plot of ground at the southern end of the log-and-timber bridge, catering to thirsty cowboys, drovers, and miners. The inn and the bridge were the first two structures in what would one day be a bustling metropolitan area, and to this day they still form the nucleus of the city they gave rise to. Today, descendants of these two structures are known as the Virginia Street Bridge and the Riverside Artist Lofts. The 111-year-old concrete bridge that was replaced in 2015/16 by a magnificent new structure, was honored for its longevity and unique character by placement on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980; and the Riverside Hotel, the forerunner of the Riverside Artist Lofts, was similarly honored in 1986. This is the remarkable story of these two iconic landmarks around which a major western city has grown, and of the people, the events, and the community that played an important part in shaping their long history.

HRPS: Sunday, November 27, 1:00 pm (fourth Sunday) — Debbie Hinman: *The Endangered University Neighborhood*: For 120 years, a row of lovely, dignified Victorian homes has graced the neighborhood at the foot of the University of Nevada, Reno grounds just below Ninth Street. These homes, as well as other beautiful and significant ones on neighboring streets, are now threatened due to plans for a massive business building and a “gateway” consisting of other new structures which will irrevocably change the character of the district. Debbie will present the history of the area, from its early ownership by pioneers John Newton and Alvaro Evans to the interesting and important residents who created this vibrant neighborhood. The hope is that you will gain an understanding of why the neighborhood is worth saving.



Center Street, looking south towards town.
Photo courtesy Jack Hursh.



1932



1937



1969

Early Reno Chamber of Commerce, 1898-1920

by Joyce Cox

“What is good for Reno is good for Nevada. What is good for Nevada helps Reno”

The proverb “The more things change, the more they stay the same” certainly applies to the history of the Reno Chamber of Commerce. This civic organization known as Reno Improvement Society, Reno Chamber of Commerce, Nevada Chamber of Commerce, Reno Commercial Club, Greater Reno Chamber of Commerce, Greater Reno-Sparks Chamber of Commerce and finally The Chamber has always wanted to make Reno, Sparks, and the Truckee Meadows, along with all of Nevada, a better place to live. The mission or goals of each group throughout the decades are similar. Each organization wanted to support businesses and make Reno (northern Nevada) a good place to live. The Chamber grew out of two groups, the Reno Improvement Society of 1898 and the Reno Commercial Club of 1906.

Congressman Francis Newlands was asked to speak to Reno residents in November 1897 on “town improvements.” It makes sense that he would be concerned, as Newlands had relocated to Nevada in 1888. The fledgling 20-year-old town of Reno is where he chose to build his impressive mansion on a bluff overlooking the



*Senator Francis Newlands.
Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.*

Truckee River in 1889. He had no doubt spent time looking down on his town, formulating ideas for improvement. At this meeting, Newlands stated that “the prosperity of Reno would largely depend on its general attractions, marked advantages in its beautiful river and picturesque location...” He suggested that Reno citizens could do many things to make “a better Reno.” Two recommendations dealt with the railroad station. Newlands recommended landscaping the railroad station with trees, shrubs and grass to show railway passengers a better first impression of Reno. He thought the plaza north of the rail station and engine house was an eyesore and should

be replaced with something that would perpetually tell of the “thrift and good taste” of the citizens. Newlands strongly advocated for a park along the Truckee River from the Virginia Street Bridge to just west of Powning’s Addition (an early Reno River walk?) and said a post office with tasteful landscaping should be at the north end of the Virginia Street Bridge. Newlands also believed that Reno’s agricultural possibilities should be advertised, suggesting that local fruit, vegetables and other crops be on display in a park that would entice new residents. Newlands suggested that land between the bridge and Mr. Fulton’s house (a stretch along Front Street, now First, to West Street) could be purchased for a kindergarten school or library or other public building. He told the group that the water utility responsible for supplying clean water from the Truckee River should be owned and managed by the city. He went on to say that Reno could be a distribution center for all of northern Nevada because of the many trains passing through.

City fathers met to consider Newlands’ recommendations on March 1, 1898. Dr. Stubbs, President of the University of Nevada, Judges Cheney and Webster, R.L. Fulton, J.E. Bray, S.J. Hodgkinson along with Mrs. Elda A. Orr and Mrs. C.C. Powning were in attendance. They named this group the Reno Improvement Society. Committees were formed to work on “public charity, education, highways, municipal government, ornamentation or public taste, promotion, protection, sanitation and transportation.” Dues were set at \$1.00 per year. F.H. Norcross, Reno District Attorney and Superintendent of Schools, was elected as the first secretary. From the beginning, newspaper articles touted the expanding membership and the work done by the Improvement Society. Meetings were held to rally residents and prevail on businesses to join. However, it was difficult for the Reno Improvement



The Twentieth Century Club building on First Street, 2006, Courtesy Carol Coleman.

Reno Chamber of Commerce, 1898-1920 (continued)

Society to acquire and to keep their paying members.

The Twentieth Century Club, a women's civic organization, found that residents were not joining the Improvement Society, so in April 1899, they resolved to offer their support, attend its meetings and work on its committees. Members of the Club thought that the Improvement Society had not been able to accomplish its goals because of lack of cooperation by local citizens. Mrs. Orr, a member of both the Twentieth Century Club and the Improvement Society, spoke to the Club on the importance of the Improvement Society. This speech convinced some to donate to the highway committee to improve roads. Congressman Newlands donated \$50 and \$25 came from Patrick L. Flanigan. Nevada State Senator and "Sheep King" of Nevada, John Sparks' foreman, Mr. Sprague, offered five days labor with team, wagon, and men.

In 1902, membership was still lagging. Existing members thought a new "Reno Chamber of Commerce" was needed. Major Ingalls, Judge Edmund R. Dodge and others signed articles of incorporation for a new organization with the purpose of encouraging manufacturing, creating markets for the products of the State of Nevada, reclaiming arid lands, inducing people to move to Nevada, and promoting agriculture and mining. The 1902 Chamber really wanted to promote the entire state. Offices and exhibit rooms were set up in the Overland Hotel. Major Ingalls reported that membership fees and dues were being paid a year in advance and Francis Newlands and John Sparks had paid \$100 for lifetime memberships. They had 204 members by the end of October 1902, with each paying an initiation fee of \$5.00 and dues of \$1.00 per month. Standing committees

were formed to deal with Commerce, Manufactures, Immigration and Lands, Mines and Mining, Statistics, Publications and Library, Laws and Legislation, Membership and Grievances, Institutions and Public Improvements, Exhibits, Reception, Forestry and Planting, Irrigation and Water Storage, Game and Fish, County and Municipal Affairs, Transportation and Railroads, Stock and Wool Growing, Agriculture and Horticulture, and Education. In response to all of this organization,



*A crowd at the Overland Hotel, a favorite gathering spot.
Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.*

Harper's Magazine produced an entire issue with photos and stories about the state of Nevada. Unfortunately, the articles, described by many as "desultory and hackneyed," did little to promote the state or Reno. Later a booklet produced by *Sunset Magazine*, paid for by Southern Pacific Railroad and distributed by the Chamber of Commerce in 1903, better advertised Reno and the state. But before the latter booklet was published, the 1902 Chamber had run into financial difficulties, incurring a debt to Frank Golden and Maude M. Garwood, who then sued the Chamber for \$400. The Washoe County Sheriff locked the door to the offices and removed its displays.

Edmund Dodge, Richard Kirman, A. Nelson, Major Ingalls and Maude Garwood started another Chamber in 1904, known as the Nevada Chamber of Commerce. Kirman would go on to become Reno mayor in 1907, co-founder and president of the Farmers and Merchants Bank, and in 1935, the fifteenth governor of Nevada. The group hoped that a broader focus and better organization might result in better success. One of their first projects was the compilation of the booklet *Greater Nevada: Its Resources & Possibilities* as an economic development tool for the entire state. Some of the same people from the Reno Improvement Society and the 1902 Reno Chamber of Commerce were members of this 1904 group. All hoped to improve business, promote mining and agriculture, and encourage people to move to Nevada. The Nevada Chamber paid the "very considerable indebtedness" of the 1902 Chamber to become one organization in 1905. Washoe County Assemblyman Edmund Dodge introduced Assembly Bill 38 in the 1905 Nevada Legislative session, requesting State assistance to maintain "an exhibit of mineral, agricultural and other resources and distributing information and literature concerning the state of Nevada." This bill would make the Nevada Chamber of Commerce part of state government with the purpose of promoting the entire state. Governor Sparks stated that he would support A. B. 38 when it was first introduced, but in the end vetoed the bill and the 1904 organization was soon dissolved. Because of lack of funds and limited membership, the 1902 Chamber also disappeared.

Another civic organization in the history of the Chamber of Commerce was the Reno Commercial Club, organized in 1906. Its purpose was to acquire better

Continued on page 12

Reno Chamber of Commerce, 1898-1920 (continued)

Continued from page 11

railroad freight rates or tariffs for Reno and the State of Nevada. The executive committee included Capt. W.L. Cox, O.R. Morgan, Charles Calling, H.J. Darling, Waller Wright and C.T. Bender. Charles Bender was a very important and well-respected man, having founded the Washoe County Bank. D.S. Taggart, a Nevada freight and passenger agent, was named secretary. Taggart resigned his paid position as secretary in 1907 to work with Sam Davis of the Nevada Industrial and Publicity Commission. The Publicity Commission's goals were very similar to the goals of the Chamber of Commerce or Commercial Club in that they prepared agricultural and mineral exhibits to publicize the state and promote immigration to the state.

A June 1906 *Nevada State Journal* article stated that the purpose of the Commercial Club was "to promote trade, encourage immigration, to make Reno the distributing point between the Sierra Nevada and the Utah State line." Their motto was "What is good for Reno is good for Nevada. What is good for Nevada helps Reno." The Commercial Club worked to promote business and also worked with railroads for equitable freight rates and tariffs. The Commercial Club worked with the Nevada-California-Oregon railroad in 1913 to get them to reduce their rates to allow Reno businesses to compete with shipping companies in Portland and Sacramento. The Commercial Club filed a federal law suit against Southern Pacific Railroad to get its rates reduced to allow freight to be transported from Reno to Tonopah, Golconda and Goldfield.

Commercial Club leadership thought they could better serve the community if they joined the national U.S. Chamber

of Commerce, so began talks with them in 1912. Robert Newton Lynch, Manager of San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, spoke to the Nevada State Business Men's Convention in June 1916 saying that his organization would stand behind a new Reno Chamber of Commerce. He also stated "Proper advertising for Nevada is the essential thing in order to do away with some of these myths. And proper advertising of the state is one of the main things. Nevada has suffered, and suffered greatly from misrepresentation. For a number of years she has been misrepresented." The Commercial Club




*The IOOF Building, where the Commercial Club met.
Postcard courtesy Debbie Hinman.*

joined the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in 1913, but did not change its name to the Reno Chamber of Commerce until 1919.

A *Christian Science Monitor* article, reprinted in the *Nevada State Journal* on January 4, 1914, reported that the Commercial Club was incorporated on December 7, 1907, and its offices were in the west wing of the Odd Fellows hall (3rd Floor IOOF Building). "The membership is composed of public-spirited men in all walks of life, who are willing to devote time and money to the material and social upbuilding [sic] of the state." The article went on to say "To encourage educational and social intercourse, disseminate information, foster peace, har-

mony and fair dealing promote the interests of capital and labor, and aid in the civic, social civil and material upbuilding [sic] of the city of Reno and the state of Nevada." They had a 15-member board of directors and member committees that worked to build better schools, highways, promote the state to future residents and "induce the farmer to settle on the public lands of Nevada." This new group had paid staff hired to work with its members and its various committees to achieve its goals.

Many of the goals of the early Chambers were accomplished, though some took time. Newlands' vision of a more attractive plaza near the railroad station was fulfilled; a small park with a fountain featuring two small children was created, giving passengers a pleasant place to await a train. Reno did indeed build a beautiful Carnegie Library in 1904, and a stately brick post office at the north end of the bridge in 1908. And Wingfield Park on the river was deeded to Reno by George Wingfield in 1920. The population of the city grew from 4,500 in 1900 to 10,867 in 1910 so new residents were certainly attracted to the area.

These early men and women who made Reno their home and worked to improve it and its image paved the way for the Chambers of the future to continue their work. 

Sources included articles of incorporation, annual reports, Chamber newsletters, numerous local newspaper articles.

Joyce Cox is a member of HRPS and the author of the book *Images of America: Washoe County*. She is currently working on a new book, *Images of America: Sparks*. She is a retired reference librarian and a researcher of Nevada history.

Terry Cynar Remembered

by Debbie Hinman and Jack Hursh

HRPS has lost a dear friend and devoted volunteer. On June 13, 2016, Terry Cynar passed away. You may not recognize his name, as Terry just quietly went about doing whatever he could for the benefit of our organization, without needing recognition. Back in the days when our monthly programs took place at the Mt. Rose School auditorium, Terry could always be found there early on meeting nights, performing the laborious task of setting up chairs. He was also one of the last ones out, ensuring the chairs were put away and the auditorium cleared of any materials left by our membership. Terry was a frequent volunteer assisting with walking tour sign-ins, the home tours, and any other tasks that needed doing.

For the past several years, Terry has been a vital member of the team organizing and delivering the Fourth Grade History programs to local school children. Says Felvia Belaustegui, program co-lead: "Terry will be missed both by me and all the students who participate in the 4th grade program. He was very quiet and gentle and made the students very interested in our program. I still can't believe he is gone."

Terry was born in Cleveland, Ohio, July 3, 1946. He graduated from Temple City High School and then attended



Terry Cynar.

Photo courtesy Jack Hursh.

monastery school, then served in the U.S. Navy for 23 years as Yeoman First Class. Among many duty locations, Terry served in Ireland and was very fond of the Irish countryside, people, and culture.

Terry moved to Reno in 1992 to be near his parents, John and Caroline Cynar who lived in Carson City. Terry was a devoted parishioner of the Saint Thomas Aquinas Cathedral of Reno and a member of the Knights of Columbus. Terry co-authored the

booklet, "Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Cathedral Remembered: 1908-2008." His photography is featured in this booklet.

Terry was passionate about Nevada history and historic preservation. In addition to his HRPS contributions, Terry was an active volunteer with the Nevada Westerners Corral for many years and a devoted volunteer docent in the summertime at Bower's Mansion. Terry was also a member of Truckee Meadows Remembered, the small non-profit that built the historic ranch outbuilding display at Bartley Ranch Park in Reno.

Terry's greatest passion was exploring, camping, and photographing rural Nevada. Terry shared his photography as an active member of the Artists Co-op Gallery for several years.

Terry is survived by his brother Ray Cynar and sister-in-law Sandy Cynar and niece Tammy and nephew Mark of Westminster, California and by several cousins in the Reno area and Oregon.

Terry is also survived by an army of close friends in Reno that adored him and will miss him very much.

Terry will join his parents at the family plot at Lone Mountain Cemetery in Carson City. 

HRPS Endangered Building Watch List

- Freight House on Evans St.
- Nevada Brewing Works on 4th St.
- Regina Apartments on Island Ave.
- First Masonic Building (Reno Mercantile) at Sierra and Commercial
- Historic Homes in The University Gateway District
- Buildings in the University Neighborhood
- The Hotel El Cortez at 2nd and Arlington
- Hill/Redfield Mansion on Mt. Rose St.
- Lear Theater
- Flick Ranch House
- Two El Reno Apartments at 1461 Lander St.
- Hillside Cemetery
- WPA Projects at Plumas, Stewart and Virginia Lake Parks
- Mid-century Motels
- Burke's, Belli and Mountain View Additions



Greetings to HRPS members and friends,

I'm the new kid on the block, just having been voted in as HRPS President at the June Board meeting. While I've been a HRPS member since 2000, involved with the production of HRPS quarterly publication *FootPrints* since 2002, and Editor since around 2004, the Board and its activities are new to me. So I'm experiencing a steep learning curve. I wasn't asked to be President, I volunteered. It seems nobody was stepping up to the plate, so I thought I should say I'll help. I hope that if I ask you to contribute time and effort, you too will support HRPS.

We're going through a transition of sorts in HRPS. A number of people have put in a huge amount of time over the years, and now they are retiring. Besides the President's job which Byllie Andrews held for three years, there is HRPS long-time Administrator and Publicity Coordinator, Cindy Ainsworth, who after almost 20 amazing years is going to take a break. It's going to require several different positions to replace Cindy. Then there are the jobs of Walking Tour Director and Educational Program Director that are now empty. There are two departing Board members so we have openings on the Board for two Directors.

Message from Your HRPS President Carol Coleman

I'm going to start with Cindy's job as Administrator. JoAnn Newbury, our Membership Director, is taking over several tasks including getting the mail, and I'm taking over tasks related to the computer. HRPS receives a lot of phone calls/messages and Cindy tries to answer calls each day. HRPS Directors Laurie Leonard and Garrett Barmore are going to share that task. Thanks to Laurie and Garrett for volunteering for this important task. I also want to give credit to Sandi Bitler for handling the Walking Tour calls.

We're creating the position of Publicity Coordinator, which requires someone who distributes the information about Programs, Walking Tours and the Neighborhood Preservation Fund to all types of media. Does that sound like a task you have skills for and would like to do? Please call me or email me if you are interested.


We're making a big change in our Educational Programs for the future. We expect that the Nelson Building, (where we have held Wednesday evening programs the last two years) owned by the University of Nevada, Reno, will be sold soon to the West 2nd Street project. We've seen a decline in attendance on Wednesday evenings and a larger percentage of members attend on Sunday afternoons. Given this information, we don't have plans to hold Wednesday evening programs this year. We will continue to offer our programs on 4th Sundays at 1:00 p.m. at the Downtown Library in the months of October, November, and January through April. Our new Program Director(s) will be HRPS Directors Sheryl Hayes-Zorn and Kimberly Roberts. Thanks to these two for volunteering.

Our Walking Tours are a vital component of carrying out HRPS mission — educating our members and the public about the history of Reno. HRPS is fortunate to offer 30 unique walks

and to have 26 talented and dedicated Tour Guides who offer these Tours. Thanks to these wonderful people who offer their expertise and talent to give these walking tours. I often see them doing even more research at the Nevada Historical Society.

Our Walking Tour Director resigned in April — right before the May, June and July walking tours were to begin — so then President Byllie Andrews figured out a way to proceed through the summer. She asked for three Co-Captains to take a month apiece taking care of reservations, memberships, bringing tables, microphones and walking with the Tour to take care of any issues. Many, many thanks to Constance Hanson, Byllie Andrews and JoAnn Newbury who each managed a month of HRPS Tours. Charlotte Voitoff worked with JoAnn the month of July. Thanks to all four of these women who completed a difficult task very well.

This method of managing the Walking Tours seems like an excellent way to proceed and to divide up the tasks of a difficult and important job. Now we are looking for a Walking Tour Director and at least three Co-Captains to volunteer for the year 2016 through 2017. If you are interested, please give me a call or email me and we'll chat and I'll give you a job description.

July was membership renewal time. Did you complete your renewal for the 2016 to 2017 time window? HRPS offers you something every month — walking tours or an educational program. In addition, you have the September Home Tour, the HRPS website and blog always available, and *FootPrints* arriving quarterly. Be sure to renew your membership and put in a little extra for the Neighborhood Preservation Fund. 

Carol Coleman, 775-849-3380
carol@galenaforest.net

HRPS Lifetime Members

Darleen Azizisefat
 Jacqueline Black
 Laurie & Greg Boyer
 Lynn Bremer
 Florence Ann Burgess
 Phyllis & Tom Cates
 Jan Chik
 Becky Czarnik
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 Tom & Leanne Stone
 Terry & Fran Terras
 Mike & Karen Traynor
 Charlotte Voitoff
 Sharon Walbridge
 Betty Watts
 Kathy Williams

HRPS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The **Historic Reno Preservation Society (HRPS)** is “dedicated to preserving and promoting historic resources in the Truckee Meadows through education, advocacy and leadership.” In 1997, a small group of people interested in Reno’s history created HRPS as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. We have been an all-volunteer group ever since! As a HRPS member, you can learn about Reno’s history and make a difference in its future.

All Membership levels include the HRPS quarterly historical publication *FootPrints*; HRPS walking tours during the summer months; and education programs in the fall and winter.

You may pay by check, cash or credit card. When paying by credit card, please visit our website, www.historicreno.org. We use PayPal™ to process your payment. Don’t worry if you don’t have a PayPal™ account. They will accept your credit card on our behalf; we will send you a confirmation email with the information you provide.

Membership Levels:

- ☐ \$15.00 Student
- ☐ \$25.00 Individual
- ☐ \$45.00 Family
- ☐ \$100.00 Supporting
- ☐ \$200.00 Business
- ☐ \$250.00 Preservation Patron
- ☐ \$500.00 Benefactor
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☐ New Member ☐ Renewing

My Additional Donation:

\$ _____ Pat Klos Annual Volunteer Award Fund
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HRPS Quarterly *FootPrints* Preference (Please check one):

☐ Hard Copy ☐ Email Only

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HRPS respects your right to privacy. We will **NOT** share your email address.

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 Reno, NV 89507

☐ **YES, I want to get involved.**
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HRPS Fall and Winter Programs are on Page 9.

HRPS offers great speakers at the HRPS meetings in October, November, January, February, March and April. Beginning with the October 2016 meeting, meetings will be held on the 4th Sunday of the month at 1:00 pm at the Downtown Reno Library.



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