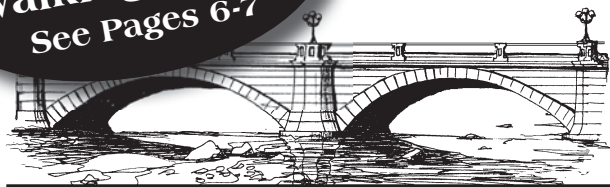


May/June
Walking Tours!
See Pages 6-7



Historic Reno PRESERVATION SOCIETY

FootPrints

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

vol. 15 no. 2 ❖ Spring 2012

From Missouri to Reno, and Back Again, 102 Years Later

by Barrie Schuster

In November 2011, I found myself flipping through a box of old photographs in a booth in the Virginia Street Antique Mall. I gazed at the faces of people, long gone, whose stories had been lost and whose identities would remain a mystery to everyone who saw them. A studio portrait of a peculiar looking woman wearing a big hat and a fox stole caught my eye. I turned the photo over and found the name Gertrude Crowell written on the back. As I sorted through the rest of the box, I continued to see this same woman in other snapshots taken inside a very beautiful home.

I turned over one of these photos and found "Gertrude Crowell Allen, 6 S. High Street Butler, Missouri, 1909" written on the back. Then I found more photos of the same house, both inside and out, with the same address and date written on the back of every single one. Many of the photos were just images of the rooms with no people, but others contained Gertrude Crowell Allen and a little girl, about ten years old.

The house was an enormous Queen Anne with a beautifully carved newell post and wood panels lining the stairway. The paintings on the walls, the rugs, the draperies, the wallpaper and



Above, the library of 6 High Street in Butler, Missouri. To the right is Gertrude Crowell Allen who lived in the house.

Courtesy Barrie Schuster.

the wicker furniture were all perfectly captured and frozen in time. The photos of the outside of the house showed the detail of the carved porch rails and decorative architectural elements. One photograph showed a Ford Model T parked beside the house. I wondered if the house was still standing, and I thought about how fun it would be to return the photos to the home's current owner, 102 years later.

I went home and looked up the address on Google Maps and found that there was still a home at that address. The street view feature was unavailable, however, so I could not confirm whether it was the same house. I called the county assessor in Butler, Missouri for more information. The woman at the assessor's office told me there was a 3,200 square foot house built in 1910 located at that address and that the current owner was named Christopher Miller and he received his mail there. I know that assessor's office data relating to the year built is often incorrect on older homes, so I was not concerned that my photos had the date 1909 on the back. A 100-year old, 3,200-square foot house was no doubt the same house as the one in my photos.



I returned to the Antique Mall and bought the best of the group of photographs, but not all of them. I placed them in an envelope and addressed them to Christopher Miller, 6 S. High Street, Butler, Missouri. I mailed them on the Monday before Thanksgiving with a note containing my phone number and to let Mr. Miller know there were additional photographs available. Then I waited in anticipation to see if I would receive a phone call from Missouri.

Continued on page 2

From Missouri to Reno, and Back Again (continued)

Continued from page 1

I was so excited for this stranger in Missouri who had no idea what was coming his way! My friends told me not to get too excited, he may not call or even care about the photos, but I knew he would.

On Black Friday at noon, my phone rang, displaying an area code I did not recognize. I answered and began speaking to Chris Miller. He sounded utterly shocked, in disbelief. He had just moments before opened the letter. He wanted the rest of the photos. He explained that before he had bought the house fifteen years ago, all of the wood railings on the porch had been replaced with iron ones, the hand-carved woodwork along the stairway had been painted white, drop ceilings had been installed and the exterior had been covered in asbestos tiles. His next project was to replace the iron porch railings with original-looking wood railing, but he never guessed that he would see the original railings for inspiration.

I sent Chris the rest of the photographs, and he emailed me photos of what the house looked like when he bought it. I realized, after seeing how much work he had done to try to bring the house back to its original state, how rewarding it must have been to receive the photos I sent. Chris told me he believed that he did not really own this house, that he was just taking care of it for the next owner. He said the photographs would remain with the house and be passed along when he sold it.

Editor's Note: Recently the *news-Xpress*, a local newspaper in Butler, Missouri ran an article "Views from the past ...Recently the Christopher Miller family at 6 South High Street in Butler

received a note from Barrie Schuster of Reno, Nevada advising he [sic] found a number of photos in an antique store in Reno that definitely have a Butler connection. Two or three of the photos were the exterior of a home (taken about 1909) where the Millers now reside. Other photos showed various rooms in the house with elaborate woodwork, fixtures and furniture—plus photos of a young girl named Gertrude Crowell, one of which added the name 'Allen' who lived in that house, and other related pictures."

Editor's Note: Our Barrie is definitely not a *lie*. 

Barrie Schuster is a HRPS Board member, a HRPS Walking Tour guide, and an organizer of the West of Wells neighborhood.



*Is this a young Gertrude Crowell or her daughter? Can we find out?
Courtesy Barrie Schuster.*



The intricately carved stairway and newell post in the Butler house. Courtesy Barrie Schuster.

Views from the past...



Yesterday and today

Recently the Christopher Miller family at 6 South High Street in Butler received a note from Barrie Schuster of Reno, Nev., advising he found a number of photos in an antique store in Reno that definitely have a Butler connection. Two or three of the photos were the exterior of a home (taken about 1909) where the Millers now reside. Other photos showed various rooms in the house with elaborate woodwork, fixtures and furniture—plus photos of a young girl named Gertrude Crowell, one of which added the name "Allen," who lived in that house, and other related pictures. Accompanying photo obviously is as the house appears today.



■ EDITOR'S NOTE: Feedback from our readers indicates the "Views From the Past" is one of the most popular features in the news-Xpress. Again let us emphasize that we solicit photos of events and places in the Bates County area from years gone by. If you have photos of this type from the Bates County area from years gone by that are in reasonably good quality for reproduction, please let us know. Thank you.

Wanted: More old time photographs for this feature

Above newspaper photos of the 1909 house and the house in 1912. Courtesy of Barrie Schuster.

Save These Dates

Saturday, September 29, 2012. The 3rd Reno Harvest of Homes Tour. Save the date for the most exciting Tour yet, featuring six of Southwest Reno's most distinguished homes.

Saturday, November 10, 2012. Neon and Other Roadside Attractions Bus Tour. This tour is in celebration of Will Durham's fall neon exhibit at the Nevada Museum of Art. Stay tuned for details.

Crystal Springs Ice House — A Gem in the Heart of Midtown

by Cindy Ainsworth

I am sure all of you are familiar with the cheery, bright, white with blue trim Crystal Springs Water Building at 901 Center Street. The eclectic Mission Style industrial building stands out as a landmark along this busy street. I personally filled many a five-gallon bottle with their fine artesian water.

This year a new owner is transforming the building into the Brasserie St. James Brewery and Restaurant, bringing a new addition to the popular Reno Midtown Neighborhood. Imagine a unique building with its own artesian well, whose water was used to make beer! A match “brewed” in heaven could not have been better.

The building’s story begins in 1929, when local entrepreneurs George Kornmayer and Earl Compton hired Reno builder and contractor Steve Rastelli to dig a well and build the Crystal Springs Ice plant in the Southside Addition. Rastelli drilled through 100 feet of granite and discovered water at the 285-foot level. The creation of the artesian well made this the perfect location for the ice plant.



“It’s as pure as possible and just tastes good.”

Tony Rastelli should know — he’s spent his lifetime at the Crystal Springs plant his father built in 1929.

According to Tony, we need two things to survive: “...water and air — they should be as pure as possible. At Crystal Springs, our water is as pure as possible and just tastes good. It’s pumped from our artesian wells right under our plant on Center Street.”

Tony’s got the water part down cold. Give him a chance and he’ll work on the air, too.

CRYSTAL SPRINGS

901 CENTER, RENO • 323-4710

The 1986 advertisement with Tony Rastelli promoting the goodness of Crystal Springs Water. Courtesy Melissa Baker.

The *Nevada State Journal* (NSJ) reported that the building, completed in June 1930, “is the first commercial enterprise to start operation on Center Street south of the Truckee River since the City Council made South Center Street into a business zone.” Optimism abounded as the paper reported that it would be the forerunner of many other business ventures in the new district.

According to Steve Rastelli’s son Tony, in an interview in the 1980s, his dad found himself unexpectedly in the ice business. The original owners, Kornmayer and Compton, ran into financial problems soon after they awarded Rastelli the contract to construct the building. They could not pay so they had to sell stock to complete the building. It was not long before Rastelli soon found himself the primary stock holder and eventually the owner of an ice plant.

The ice-making business in the 1930s was still a prosperous industry. Technological advances closed many of the old ice houses along the Truckee River. Ice production shifted from ice harvesting along the river and Boca Dam to that of mechanical ice production companies located within the city in the mid-1920s.

Businesses and Reno homes still relied on outside ice producers to supply their refrigeration needs. Home delivery was still a common sight in the 1930s and one could see the “ice today” signs in many Reno windows notifying the iceman to leave a block in the ice box.

At the time of the opening of the Crystal Springs business, ice was the business’s only product. Manufacturing 20,000 pounds of ice daily, 80,000 pounds of

surplus ice could be stored in the ice house. The company boasted that the most modern ice-making machinery was installed and was able to produce ice from pure, clean artesian-well water.

By 1931, the company announced two changes: they would deliver bottled water, plus they were installing what could be considered Reno’s first “crude” water vending machine at the plant.



Abandoned Virginia & Truckee Railway tracks looking north beside Holcomb Avenue at Burns. The Crystal Springs building can be seen to the left at the end of Center Street, 1951. Courtesy Special Collection Department, University of Nevada, Reno Library.

The company installed a simple hose in front of the building where customers could fill up their bottles for free. That ended in 1935 when the health department made them install a sanitary vending machine.

Business was good as Washoe County commissioners voted to use the new company’s ice for the courthouse, hospitals and jail for six months. The company also provided ice for the new downtown casinos and for the Virginia & Truckee Railroad, whose tracks were located directly across the street from the business.

Ice delivery was not without its incidents in the Truckee Meadows. According to a 1932 *NSJ* column called “Loose Leaf,”

Continued on page 4

Crystal Springs Ice House (continued)

Continued from page 3

a Crystal Springs delivery iceman had a close encounter with a barnyard animal. The paper reported, "George Hoagland who delivers ice to housewives in Sparks (sheik that he is), was all worked up over somebody's goat...George was in a house delivering Crystal Springs ice, when a goat jumped in the ice-wagon and ate up all the bills and delivery orders in the truck."

Operating an ice plant also came with some hazards. Ammonia was a common refrigerant used at ice houses throughout the country. Crystal Springs had a close call in 1937 when a car backed into a shed holding many large tanks of ammonia gas and broke a pipeline that leaked the toxic gas into the neighborhood. The fire department was summoned and the combination of a rainy day and the gas made for a nasty situation for the firemen.

The gas caused painful burns and blisters on the wet skin and temporarily blinded some of the men who got too close to the escaping gas. Gas clouds

remained in the surrounding neighborhood for hours because of the rain. Firemen commented that this was the first time they had not been bothered with spectators crowding too close.

A second section front page article in a March 1938 issue of the *NSJ* announced the increase of 5-percent in the cost of ice in the Reno area because of production costs and higher wages. It is hard to say if this increase was due to the anticipated enactment of the Fair Labor Standard Act, the federal law that set the minimum wage, which in 1938 was 25 cents an hour, but placing this on the front page reminds us how important ice production was. The increase set the domestic ice prices at 20 cents for 25 pounds, 35 cents for 50 pounds and 65 cents for 100 pounds.

Crystal Springs responded to the increase by reminding all that "ice preserves and keeps fresh all perishable foods and delicacies...by preventing the growth of bacteria whose presence might cause illness of a serious nature... Crystal ice is a pure product and the safety, savings and convenience...more than compensates for its cost."

The ice company also had a side business of storing hunters's venison in the cold storage room. During World War II, when home-front food was rationed, Crystal Springs volunteered the use of the storage room to hold the hunters' war-rationed deer meat. The hanging and storage of game meat continued until a 1964 government regulation forbade the practice.

Contractor and owner Steve Rastelli continued to modify the plant by adding garages and remodeling the buildings until the complex grew to what it is

today. Rastelli drilled another artesian well in 1945 because of increased business. According to his son, Tony, this was the period when ice delivery was at its height. Three shifts around the clock could pull 30 tons of ice a day. But the eventual demise of ice delivery came with the mass production of refrigerators after World War II.



Early 1980s photo of the Crystal Springs building with delivery trucks. Courtesy Melissa Baker.

The ice business came to an end in 1965 when the Rastellis sold the ice division to Union Ice and shifted to the delivery and dispensing of water. A new business opportunity came with the distribution of coffee, hot cups, and soups. A 1974 ad mentioned "low calorie specials too" and reminded all that "good coffee — it's the water" along with "the sweetness of our water will be remembered long after the price is forgotten." The coffee distribution business came and went throughout the life of the company.

The Rastelli family name was a mainstay of the business for many years. Steve's son Tony spent most of his lifetime in the water business. He was there almost from the beginning, when at the age of 12, he helped his father wash bottles. The only time he left the business was during World War II. Tony and his brother Joe helped with the continued operation of the business.

With the death of their father in 1971, the family had to make a decision. The Crystal Springs' equipment needed to be



A surprise visit from one of the balloons during the 1986 Reno Balloon Races. Courtesy Melissa Baker.

Crystal Springs Ice House (continued)

modernized, something the family did not want to tackle. In 1979, they decided to sell the bottled water business to Doug Hird, who upgraded the facility to comply with all the modern sanitary requirements for bottled water.

Tony Rastelli retired in 1979, but he just could not stay away from the water business. In an interview he stated, "I can't retire — I've worked all my life. When I get up in the morning, I have to have somewhere to go." He fell into a normal eight-hour routine. During the 1980s, one could easily spot Tony sporting a white, bushy beard, blue baseball cap and overalls held up by flashy red suspenders. Tony's daughters, Pam and Sandra, also worked for the Hirds for many years.

There must be something "in the water" that makes family members want to be a part of the water business. Heidi and Doug Hird formed a partnership with Doug's daughter Melissa and son-in-law Todd Baker in 1984. The Bakers eventually bought their father's share in 1999.

The Baker family remodeled the plant, drilled another artesian well, and added the familiar white paint with blue trim. One of the highlights, to the delight of the staff at the plant, was the addition of his and her bathrooms. A celebratory cake decorated with his and her toilets accompanied a party at the office upon the completion of the project.

When asked about the artesian wells, Melissa Baker revealed some interesting geological facts about the Southside Addition area. The Crystal Springs building is located very near a fault line. There is a visible earthquake fault that runs parallel to Holcomb and Center Streets and the elevation separation and bank between the two streets is known as a fault scarp. For the geologically challenged, the U. S. Geological Survey defines

that as "the feature on the surface of the earth that looks like a step caused by a slip or movement on the fault."

This higher elevation level could actually contribute to recharging the water table that helps with the flow of the artesian well. Melissa mentioned that many surrounding neighbors report water in their basements. Recently, Washoe County



*Photo taken in the 1980s of the Crystal Springs Water building.
Courtesy Melissa Baker.*

tested the water level in the area of the Crystal Springs building by pumping water through a 4-inch line continuously from 5:00 p.m. Friday until 6:00 a.m. Monday. The water table replenished almost immediately.

The Bakers sold the bottled water distribution business in 2008 and the building in 2010, but they added a new water-vending business across the street called The Spring Water Depot. The Bakers still take pride in offering "pure, clean spring and distilled water."

To the delight of preservationists, historians, and beer lovers, the Crystal Springs Ice and Water building is being adaptively reused as a new brewery-restaurant. The new owner, Arthur Farley, who also owns St. James Infirmary on California Avenue, is bullish on the Midtown Neighborhood. He once lived four doors down from the water business and always admired the building. Little did he know one day he would be the owner.

Arthur remarked that he hates to see developers coming in and knocking things down and he feels it is time to acknowledge the history of the neighborhoods and adaptively reuse the older buildings. The Midtown Neighborhood is the "in" place in Reno and Arthur sees a positive movement with businesses opening and people coming back and rehabilitating the area.

He expects Brasserie St. James Brewery & Restaurant to open by late spring 2012. The building will have a mixed-use designation and it will also include two artist's lofts. Arthur loves Belgium and northern French culture so you can bet the food and beer will have an Old-World Euro influence. And then there is the delicious artesian well water located beneath the building. From ice to water to beer. I don't know about you, but I can't wait to raise a glass in tribute to the owners who have maintained this unique building. 

Information for this article came from: Recent interviews with Melissa Baker and Arthur Farley; 1980's written interview with Tony Rastelli; information from various *Reno Evening Gazette* and *Nevada State Journal* articles from the 1930s through the 1980s; the article "Crystal Springs Water Co.: A profile," from *Bottle Water Reporter*, 1981; Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology Environmental Series-Reno Area maps, E. C. Bingler, 1973. A special thank you goes to Melissa Baker for loaning me information and photos from the Crystal Springs Water Company archives. Thank you to Jack Hursh for locating the earthquake maps.

Cindy Ainsworth is the HRPS Administrator, a HRPS Tour Guide, and a past president of HRPS.



Historic Preservation Month

May 2012

HRPS Historic Walking Tours

Tour cost is \$10 per person, free to HRPS members with a 2011-12 membership. Walks generally last from 1½ to 2 hours. No dogs please. **Reservations are required and space is limited.** Please call 747-4478 or go to www.historicreno.org or for information and reservations.

Tuesday
May 1
6:00 p.m.

WEST OF WELLS — Discover an often overlooked treasure trove of fascinating Reno history. Join us as we walk the neighborhood West of Wells Avenue, along the former path of the V&T railroad. Experience unusual architecture unique to this neighborhood and learn the history of the colorful characters who gave birth to Reno's neighborhood on the other side of the tracks. Meet beside Silver Peak at 140 Wonder Street. Tour guide: Barrie Schuster.

Saturday
May 5
10:00 a.m.

MONROE STREET — Stroll along Monroe and Joaquin Miller Streets, savoring the history and architecture of this lovely residential area south of the Newlands Neighborhood. You will see the Hart House, the Patrick Ranch House, Greystone Castle, and other homes. Meet at the corner of Monroe and Manor Drives. Tour guides: Elsie Newman and April Kempler.

Tuesday
May 8
6:00 p.m.

DELONGCHAMPS RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE — This walk takes you on a neighborhood tour of many noteworthy homes, both large and small, designed by Reno's notable architect, Frederic Delongchamps. Hear about his life and what made him so unique to this area. Meet at the *arte italia*, 442 Flint Street. Tour guide: Sharon Honig-Bear.

Saturday
May 12
10:00 a.m.

PROHIBITION IN RENO — We've turned back the clocks to the 1920s and 30s. We'll walk streets and alleys and visit significant buildings, recalling Reno's saloons and reformers (the WCTU and Anti-Saloon League) and feature a guest appearance by a local dignitary of the area. Tour starts at Amtrak's Reno Station, 135 East Commercial Row. Tour guides: Debbie Hinman and Sharon Honig-Bear.

Tuesday
May 15
6:00 p.m.

UNIVERSITY HISTORIC DISTRICT (CAMPUS) — Visit Morrill Hall, Mackay School of Mines and the Keck Museum to learn the history of this beautiful campus. Meet at Honor Court, 9th and Center Street. Tour guide: Jack Hursh.

Saturday
May 19
10:00 a.m.

ROADS AND RAILS, HISTORIC FOURTH STREET CORRIDOR — Discover the historic origins of the Lincoln Highway and the Nevada, California and Oregon Railroad, stopping to appreciate the Barengo/NCO building, Flanagan warehouse, and other vestiges of the corridor's heyday. Meet at Louis Basque Corner, 301 E. 4th Street. Tour guide: Cindy Ainsworth.

Tuesday
May 22
6:00 p.m.

UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD — A walk through an historic and endangered neighborhood at the foot of the campus—with vintage Queen Anne homes and charming bungalows. Meet at the base of the 9th Street university steps. Tour guide: Debbie Hinman.

Saturday
May 26
10:00 a.m.

ETHNIC RENO, EAST SIDE — Some call Lake Street "Paradise Lost" but we will recreate the vibrant neighborhoods of Chinatown, Little Italy, and Basque life. Meet at the National Automobile Museum, 10 Lake Street. Tour guides: Sharon Honig-Bear and Drew Gerthoffer.

Tuesday
May 29
6:00 p.m.

BRICKS AND STONES — A walk in 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 My Favorite Muffin, 340 California Avenue. Tour guide: Bill Isaef.



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June 2012

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Saturday
June 2
10:00 a.m.

HISTORIC NEVADA STATE HOSPITAL TOUR — Visit the site of Nevada's first state hospital (originally the Nevada Insane Asylum) at Galletti Way and Glendale Avenue in Sparks, one of the state's oldest institutions. The tour includes a look at the remaining Frederic DeLongchamps' buildings, a walk through the approximately 106-year-old "Stone House," and a visit to the hospital cemeteries. Park in the circular driveway on the Galletti Way side. Tour guides: Rosie Cevasco and Kim Henrick.

Tuesday
June 5
6:00 p.m.

WELLS AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD — Take a stroll through a working-class neighborhood along the path of the Wells Avenue streetcar, across the V&T tracks, and past the homes of the "Thoma Street Gang." Meet at Southside School Annex, Sinclair and Liberty Streets. Tour guide: Mark Taxer.

Saturday
June 9
10:00 a.m.

WEST OF WELLS — Discover an often overlooked treasure trove of fascinating Reno history. Join us as we walk the neighborhood West of Wells Avenue, along the former path of the V&T railroad. Experience unusual architecture unique to this neighborhood and learn the history of the colorful characters who gave birth to Reno's neighborhood on the other side of the tracks. Meet beside Silver Peak at 140 Wonder Street. Tour guide: Barrie Schuster.

Tuesday
June 12
6:00 p.m.

HISTORIC TRUCKEE RIVER WALK — A relaxing stroll along the Truckee River reveals eclectic architecture grounded by rich political histories and spiced with colorful anecdotes. Meet at McKinley Arts and Cultural Center, 925 Riverside Drive. Tour guide: Joan Collins.

Saturday
June 16
10:00 a.m.

WESTERN ADDITION — Visit vestiges of one of Reno's earliest residential neighborhoods, dating from the mid-1870s. Hear the stories of its early "movers and shakers," such as Fire Chief George Twaddle, businessman Frank Humphrey and banker Charles Bender. View the varying architectural styles, from the Carpenter Gothic Clifford House to the modest brick bungalows of the Smith-Petersen subdivision. Meet at the northeast corner of 5th and Bell Street by JJ's Pie Co. Tour guides: Cindy Ainsworth and Debbie Hinman.

Tuesday
June 19
6:00 p.m.

UPPER RALSTON/NORTHERN LITTLE ITALY — Enjoy a walk in a residential neighborhood with a mix of architectural styles. Proximity to the University has traditionally determined the mix of residents, professors and students alike. Meet at the intersection of Washington Street, The Strand, and College Avenue. Tour guides: Jim and Sue Smith.

Saturday
June 23
10:00 a.m.

MANSIONS ON THE BLUFF — A historic walk that looks at some of the most notable homes in Reno: Court, Ridge and upper California streets, home to three senators and the merchants that made early Reno "The Biggest Little City." Meet at the McCarran House, 401 Court Street. Tour guides: Ed Wishart and Bill Isaef.

Tuesday
June 26
6:00 p.m.

POWNING ADDITION AND LITTLE ITALY — Discover one of Reno's earliest and most delightful vernacular neighborhoods, predominantly settled by Northern Italian immigrants. This neighborhood is now the first City of Reno Conservation District. Meet at McKinley Arts & Culture Center, 925 Riverside Drive. Tour guide: Felvia Belaustegui.

Saturday
June 30
10:00 a.m.

PARSONS/MILLS ARCHITECTURE — Stroll one of Reno's most unique neighborhoods to view designs of Reno architects Edward Parsons and Russell Mills, who sometimes collaborated on designs. Hear about the families who first lived in these homes. Meet at the corner of Marsh Avenue and LaRue. Tour guides: Anne Simone and Elsie Newman.

Mapping Early Reno ... T. K. Stewart

by Kim Henrick

"The mythic light in which we have bathed our frontier times...does not shine on the surveyor as it does the trapper, trader, scout, cowboy, or Indian fighter."

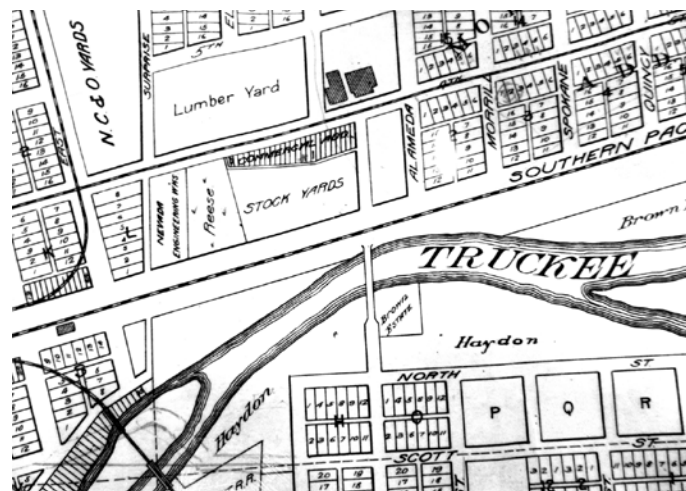
by Wallace Stegner, *Wolf Willow*

In *Surveying the Interior*, author Rick Van Noy says, "Surveyors interest Stegner because they are the ones responsible for imposing order, limitations, or even fictions upon landscape." Van Noy believes surveyors Clarence King, John Wesley Powell and Henry David Thoreau "not only fixed boundaries, but also set places in motion. They provide an initial conceptual framework for place." Although not as famous as these men, early Reno surveyors were competent and they set Reno in motion with their unique language and medley of tools and skills. They effectively reduced a large landscape of ranges and townships, sections and quarter-sections to city blocks and lots — then more blocks and lots in subdivisions and additions, creating a framework in which Reno citizens could live and work. They imposed order and allowed the concept of Reno as a place to become the "Biggest Little City in the World."

The Nevada Historical Society has a fine collection of old Reno city maps, all different in size, shape and information provided. Some of the most pleasing maps in this collection bear the name T. K. Stewart, a virtual unknown yet an important surveyor of early Reno. His large 1905 Reno and Sparks map is interesting for the detail of the cities' downtown areas, but for a glimpse of the people behind Reno's growth, check out the surrounding subdivisions and additions bearing names such as Powning, Burke, Newlands and Prater. Outside of the cities, large private tracts are clearly marked with family names such as Leete, Gould, Rice and

Sessions. Industry is well-represented by Reno's old cattle bridge (west of present-day Wells overpass, see map on this page) as it crosses the Truckee River just south of the stockyards, the massive railroad yard in Sparks, and the prominent track lines of the Southern Pacific and Virginia & Truckee railroads. The university campus and the Asylum Grounds remind us of the cities' social progress in the early years.

In 1921, Stewart drew the "Map of the



T. K. Stewart's 1905 Reno and Sparks Map.
Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.

Truckee Meadows." This map shows a higher level and less-detailed view of the cities, but becomes a rural snapshot. By this time, private properties were purchased, surveyed and mapped throughout the Truckee Meadows by folks like D. C. Wheeler, A. Kietzke, John Kleppe, Charles Mapes, the Peckham Brothers, and M. L. Yori. By 1921, Reno's early settlers had claimed their land, dug their ditches and set down roots, many determined to stay for good. What is not represented in Stewart's earlier 1905 map, but is so obvious in this 1921 map, is that the Italian immigrants had arrived: M. E. Cafferata, J. Pincolini, P. Casinelli [sic], E. Dianda and Bullentini, G. Donati, and Al Baroti, to name a few. According to local historian Dennis Cassinelli, his great-grandparents Pietro and Theresa Cassinelli's property, which was north of the railroad tracks and

southeast of the state fairgrounds, was right where our two major highways meet today at the "Spaghetti Bowl." Is it coincidence that in the same area on the 1921 map you will also find the names Carlo Rosasco, D. Dondero and M. Ramelli?

Thomas Kyler Stewart was born and raised in Barree Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania around 1850, one of eight children. It appears he came to Reno in the early 1870s and somehow acquired the training as a civil engineer. Early in his career he pursued the elected position of Washoe County Surveyor, although the going was rough. He ran unsuccessfully against E. L. Bridges three times starting in 1882. Then his luck changed in 1888 when he was appointed county surveyor (to replace the dismissed Bridges). Perhaps he shined during this appointment, for he began a winning streak, holding the surveyor office (with the exception of 1895 and 1896) from 1893 through 1906. In 1890 and 1898, Stewart also ran for state surveyor general, but lost both times. During his political career, it appears that Stewart remained steadfast to his ideals, but political parties were changing frequently. Counting all of the surveyor races, state and county, Stewart ran as a Democrat five times, a Peoples Party candidate once, a Fusion Party candidate once, and a Silver Democrat candidate four times.

T. K. Stewart was a successful business man. The *Nevada State Journal* (NSJ) on July 13, 1923, reported that Stewart "purchased an interest in the drug business of which Samuel J. Hodginson was the owner." An 1892 newspaper advertisement reads, "T. K. Stewart, Surveyor and Civil Engineer, U.S. Mineral Deputy, Office: Virginia Street, Reno, NV." Several more advertisements in the next two decades would change this only slightly, some adding "county surveyor," or "Phone 758," or "218 N. Virginia," his work address from 1900 to 1921.

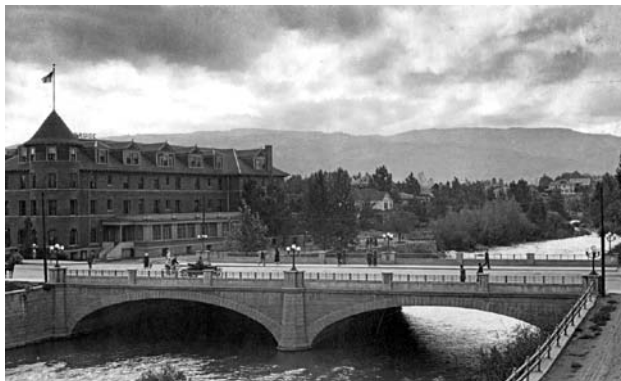
Mapping Early Reno ... T. K. Stewart (continued)

In January of 1903, Stewart was paid \$50 for his work as “Supt. Subway,” according to *The Reno Ledger* (a Washoe County publication). This probably means *superintendent* of the recently completed “Virginia Street Underground Railway Crossing,” as it was called in a *Daily Nevada State Journal* article on November 7, 1902. An interesting story on this pedestrian subway was reported in the recently-published book, *The River and the Railroad*, by Mary Ringhoff and Edward Stoner. Reno and the Southern Pacific Railroad worked jointly to provide a safe passage through a tunnel under the dangerous rail road tracks along Commercial Row, but for years it was an unsafe alternative for citizens. The subway was an ideal place for crime, it leaked water terribly over the years, and was downright frightening to one little girl who was overheard howling, “Yah-hoo-wow! Ma-ma, I’s skared o’ bug-a-boos.”

In 1905, Stewart became the engineer-in-charge of building the Virginia Street Bridge. An article in the *NSJ* in 1923 on his death mentions “a plate on the structure bears his name, with that of T. K. Hymers as chairman of the board of county commissioners and D. W. O’Connor as mayor of Reno.” There is no such plate on the bridge today. The beautiful concrete bridge was designed by San Francisco architect John Leonard and the contract to build was given to the Cotton Brothers and Company of Oakland, California. According to Mella Harmon, local historic preservation expert, it was not unusual for out-of-state contractors to hire someone local to supervise a project — T. K. was selected. The bridge was completed in November of 1905 and the Board of County Commissioners accepted the completed bridge officially in January of 1906. The *NSJ* on January 28, 1906, reported the Cotton Brothers were paid \$2,045 (the final amount owed them) from the “Washoe

County bridge fund,” and for his part, T. K. Stewart was paid \$100 out of the county’s general fund.

Between 1905 and 1921, Stewart busied himself with surveying and he recorded



T. K. Stewart was the engineer-in-charge of building the 1905 Virginia Street Bridge. The 1906 chateausque Riverside is on the left. Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.



The Virginia Street Bridge at age 107, the 1934 Art Deco Post Office on the left and the 1926 Riverside on the right. Courtesy Kim Henrick.

several “subdivision” and “addition” surveys with the Washoe County Recorder’s Office. These surveys included: Plat of Humphrey Tract (1905), Map of Rio Vista Heights/Grimmons Addition to City of Reno (1906), Amended Map of Burke’s Addition, Reno, (1917), and with F. L. Gould he filed Map of Newlands Heights, (1920) and Newlands Terrace Subdivision, Blocks A,B,C,D,E,& F (1920).

Stewart nurtured a family while building on his civil engineering career. He married Hattie L. Lewis sometime around the mid-1880s, and they had seven children, four sons and three daughters. One son, Royal M., the second oldest boy, became a civil engineer and surveyed the “Newlands Terrace Subdivision” in 1922 (but different blocks than his father had surveyed in 1920). Royal was also listed in the 1923 Reno City Directory at his father’s long-time place of business, 218 N. Virginia Street.

Thomas and Royal could not have worked together long though, since T. K. Stewart died on July 12, 1923 at the age of 74. According to the *NSJ* article on July 13, 1923: Stewart died unexpectedly the day before while surveying the state’s fish hatchery operation near Verdi. Another article by the *Reno Evening Gazette* on the same day said: “He was reputed to be one of the most competent surveyors and engineers in the state and even in his advancing years could ‘spot the flag’ where young men failed to see anything.” In 1960, his eldest son D. B. Stewart, vice president and cashier of the Security National Bank of Reno, was interviewed by the *NSJ*. He recalled that his father “was honored for his contributions to the growth of the city by having Stewart street named for him.” [Note: The connection between T. K. and Stewart Street has not been verified.]

Information for this article came from: Reno newspapers of the day; Nevada Historical Society’s “Directory of Elected Offices” and city maps; Washoe County Recorder’s Office subdivision and addition maps.

Kim Henrick is on the HRPS Editorial Board.

Message from HRPS President Sharon Honig-Bear



It's spring and I'm happy to report that your HRPS Board met recently for its annual Strategic Planning session. Happy...and weary too, because there is so

much intelligence, caring and insight at these sessions that it's hard to keep up with all the enthusiasm!

Our Strategic Planning meeting began with a review of our 2011-12 goals and we were pleased to see how many of our plans were realized: the successful launch of the Neighborhood Preservation Fund, a careful revision of our Bylaws, the creation of the Advocacy Advisory Board, record-breaking numbers at our monthly programs and tours and a strengthened relationship with historic preservation interns. All of these are good, but that isn't all.

It was a year ago that we announced the Lifetime Membership levels and here we are a year later and it thrills me to say we have six people/couples who have stepped forward at this level of commitment. We showcase those members in a separate box in this publication. We thank them for their contribution and belief in HRPS's work.

It's never too late to join this exclusive club! We are dedicating Lifetime Memberships towards our



Neighborhood Preservation Fund grants. The Lifetime Membership level has now been fixed at \$500 for a membership. Beyond your support of HRPS's work, your membership means:

- Never having to remember whether your membership is current
- Annual receipt of walking tour guest passes
- Special recognition in *FootPrints*, meetings and at other HRPS events
- We are looking into a special activity exclusively for our Lifetime Members and we look forward to this group growing and making this occasion even jollier

To enroll as a Lifetime Member, please use the membership application in the newsletter or visit us at historicreno.org to complete your Lifetime Membership.

Another thought about spring...the good weather is here and it's time to get out of the house and enjoy our fair

city. I especially want to encourage you to come Downtown and to the newly named Midtown neighborhood (just south of Downtown).

Both Downtown and Midtown are filled with interesting shops, great restaurants and lively watering holes. Many are new operations, still working to establish themselves and their clientele. Many of these businesses are located in historic and older buildings, giving you the chance not only to admire the merchandise or enjoy the comestibles—but the vintage setting as well.

Frequenting these establishments is a sneaky and easy way to support historic preservation. Support these businesses and the historic structures stay in use. When businesses close, the buildings are at risk. Who ever thought that shopping could have such a noble purpose?

We are excited that the Midtown area is getting new attention by the City of Reno and by business owners and customers (see related article in this issue about the Brasserie opening at the Crystal Springs Ice House in Midtown). Expect to hear more about this in future *FootPrints*. Go out and explore!

*Sharon Honig-Bear
President*

SPRING 2012 PROGRAMS

Jack Hursh Jr., – Program Chair; Jack.Hursh@gmail.com

All program events are on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 7 pm at Mt. Rose School (Lander Street between Taylor and LaRue, just off Arlington), unless otherwise noted.

Wednesday, April 25 – Reno History and the “Heyday” of Moana Hot Springs. Native Nevadan Bill Berrum will reminisce about the growth of Reno from the Moana Lane and family perspective from the early 1900s up to the 1950s. He is uniquely qualified to inform us on this subject as he and his father, Louis W. Berrum, grew up and worked at the three swimming pools that have occupied the same location for more than 100 years.

Wednesday, May 23, Neal Cobb, Reno in the 1950s-1960s. Neal will lead us on a virtual tour of Reno of the 1950s and 1960s with photographs of the outside of the Crest Theater then inside to the candy counter, the Majestic Theatre, Lawton's Hot Springs, the Christmas Tree Lodge with Clancy the St. Bernard, the Prima Donna girls, Welsh's bakery, the Little Waldorf, and many more.

HRPS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Join HRPS or renew your membership and help HRPS preserve historic Reno!

Please make checks payable to **Historic Reno Preservation Society**, and mail along with this application to:
P.O. Box 14003, Reno, NV 89507

Name(s) _____
Mailing Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
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NEW! Pay online at www.historicreno.org

Annual Membership Includes:

HRPS Quarterly (Footprints) • Free participation in walking tours

- | | |
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| ☐ New Member | ☐ Renewal |
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| ☐ Individual | \$25.00 |
| ☐ Family (Children 18 yrs & younger) | \$40.00 |
| ☐ Business Contribution | \$50.00 |
| ☐ Supporting | \$100.00 |
| ☐ HRPS Angel | \$250.00 |
| ☐ Lifetime Member | \$500.00 |
| ☐ Additional donation to help our
Neighborhood Preservation Fund | \$ _____ |

Thank you for joining HRPS.

As a supporter, you have the opportunity to learn more about the history of this community and make a difference in its future. There are many areas in our organization where your enthusiasm, skills and dedication will be invaluable to us. We currently need help in the following committees. Can you help?

- ☐ Communications
- ☐ Special Events
- ☐ Outreach/Education
- ☐ Preservation Issues

**FOR OFFICE
USE ONLY**

PAID: ☐ Check ☐ Cash Amount: _____
Membership # _____ Renewal Date: _____

RV 12.09.2011/FO-DCD

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High Noon at Nevada Historical Society

The Society invites you to a free documentary series in the Reno History gallery at noon on the fourth Wednesday of each month. High Noon will feature a selection of Nevada videos from *Exploring Nevada* by Gwen Clancy, *SunProductions* by Sunny Minedew and from *Tales of Nevada*, with a special guest speaker on hand to present and discuss each film.

There is free parking — you can pick up a temporary parking permit in the NHS building to place in your vehicle.

Wednesday, April 25, noon
Reno-Sparks Paiute Shoshone Hopi—
Teaching—*Tales of Nevada*
Television Series

Wednesday, May 23
Building History in Genoa and
Mesquite—*Exploring Nevada* Video

Wednesday, June 27, 2012
Roadside Reflections
—*Sun Productions* Video

Solar Eclipse Lecture Series 2012

3rd Saturdays, 2:00—3:00 p.m.
Nevada Historical Society
1650 North Virginia St., Reno

April 21, 2012
Why Easter Changes Each Year
Mike Hooper

May 19, 2012
Today the Sun —
Tomorrow the Eclipse
Jim Fahey

May 20, 2012
5:00 p.m.—7:00 p.m.
Fleischmann Planetarium —
Viewing Party at MacLean
Observatory on the
Redfield Campus, Southwest Reno

For more information, visit:
<http://eclipsereino.com>.

HRPS Life Members 2012

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Lynn Bremer
Melinda & Dan Gustin
Sharon Honig-Bear
Charlotte Voitoff
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Patty Cooke
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Where in Reno?

We thought that the answer to the Winter, 2012 *Where in Reno* feature was going to be easy...but we guessed wrong! We only had six entries, five of them correct. The answer is that the unusual tufa "fountain complex" is located on the east shore of Virginia Lake.

Thanks to those who participated: Marilyn Marston, Ruth Hilts, Juil Dandini, JoAnne Sbragia Waters, Judith Stewart and OUR WINNER (selected at random) Gloria Gavazzi. Men, your responses are noticeably missing!

An interesting comment about the location from our entries:

This was one of the WPA projects in the 1930s. The tufa fountain has been a landmark for these many years. The tufa was probably gathered at Pyramid Lake. — (Ruth Hilts)



So join in on the fun and tell us the answer to this issue's location. All correct entries will be placed in a ballot box and the winner will be drawn May 15, 2012. **To make it easier, you can mail in your response or go to historicreno.org and post your answer.**

See this building-
Oh, you gotta!
Such a lot of terra cotta.

The structure then
Had such renown
It could be seen all over town.

It's older now
But still a sight-
Go try a slice of pie some night!

*Poem by
Debbie Hinman.*

*Photo courtesy
Cindy Ainsworth.*

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