



FootPrints

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

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The Virginia Street Bridge 1905 - 2015

by Carol Coleman

We are losing another piece of our history — our iconic and beloved Virginia Street Bridge is coming down after 110 years of connecting the north and south sides of Reno across the Truckee River. The four corners of the bridge have been through significant changes in this time. We commemorate the life of the bridge and its corners in this photo essay.

In the first decade of the 1900s, Reno and Nevada were benefitting financially from the mining booms in Tonopah and Goldfield, Nevada. Reno saw major construction happening in its downtown area during this time.



Carnegie Library (1904) to the left, the chateau-like Riverside Hotel (1906) to the right. Glimpse the 1873 two-story Washoe County Courthouse between the two buildings. The little frame single-story building to the left of the Riverside is Jones Grocery. Courtesy Mella Harmon.

The Carnegie Library was built at the southeast corner of the bridge in 1904, with land donated by the Lake family and funds from Andrew Carnegie.

Quoting Cindy Ainsworth, from *FootPrints* Vol. 10. No. 2 Spring 2007, "Built in 1905, the Virginia Street Bridge has withstood countless floods and the wear and tear of daily traffic of every description from buggies to street cars and bicycles to automobiles. At the center of Reno's early history, Nevada's oldest functioning bridge is a significant part of our city's heritage." The reinforced concrete building method for the bridge was new in 1905, and has certainly withstood the test of time. In 1980, the bridge was placed on the National Register of Historic Places because of its architectural, engineering and transportation significance.

By 1906, the rebuilding/building of the Riverside Hotel to be a chateau-like brick structure was completed. Fire will destroy the building in 1922 and a new Riverside will rise in 1927. Just south of the Riverside, Frederic DeLongchamps' design of a major front addition on the Washoe



The Virginia Street Bridge under construction (1905). The Thoma-Bigelow Building is in the background; it housed Gray, Reid, Wright Department Store; in 1928, it became the Mapes Building (not the hotel). Courtesy of the Neal Cobb Collection.

County Courthouse would be completed by 1911.

In 1906, the Masonic Building was built at the northwest corner of the bridge (see photo bottom page 7). The first Masonic Building was built at the southeast corner of Commercial and Sierra in 1872, where it still stands today as a storage facility — the oldest commercial building in Reno!

The Federal Building and Post Office was built at the northeast corner of the bridge in 1908. The elegant build-

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The Virginia Street Bridge 1905 - 2015 (continued)



Northwest corner of the bridge. Center building is the Federal Building and Post Office (1908) and to the right, the YMCA Building (1910). The Federal Building will be replaced by the Mapes Hotel in 1947 and by an ice rink after 2000. Postcard courtesy of Debbie Hinman.



A new, brick Riverside Hotel at the southwest corner of the bridge was completed in 1927. An island with trees and flowers graced the Truckee River at one point. Postcard courtesy Cindy Ainsworth.



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ing would come down sometime after 1934, when the new Downtown Post Office was built at the southeast corner, replacing Carnegie Library. (In 1930, the library would become the Washoe County Library and move into the new State Building, constructed south of Mill Street on South Virginia, where the Pioneer Theater stands today.) In 1947, the Mapes Hotel was at the northwest corner of the bridge, becoming the tallest building in the state of Nevada at that time. After a long legal battle, the Mapes was imploded on Super Bowl Sunday 2000, to be replaced by an ice rink.

A success story in repurposing a structure is currently happening with the Downtown Post Office. Built in 1934 and decommissioned in 2012, the private party *50 South Virginia, LLC* purchased the building from the City of Reno. They are nearing completion of turning the facility into a commercial building, with small shops and businesses throughout, and reworked the interior to resemble the structure as it was in 1934.

Sadly, the very characteristic that made the old bridge so lovely and architecturally significant, its graceful twin arches, has largely led to its demise. Debris, carried by the rapidly rising Truckee, became caught by the center post, impeding the flow. With the new bridge design, the city center may be more easily saved from future floodwaters, but we will lose 110 years of revered history. For those of us who have paused on our way across to gaze up or down river, leaning on the sun-warmed concrete, it has been *our* bridge. We will miss it. 



Above: Looking north on South Virginia, (l-r) the reconstructed Frederic DeLongchamps' Washoe County Courthouse (1911), the Frederic DeLongchamps' Riverside Hotel (1927) and the Mapes Hotel (1947). Postcard courtesy Cindy Ainsworth.

At Left: The new Frederic DeLongchamps' Downtown Post Office replaced the Carnegie Library at the southeast corner of the Virginia Street Bridge in 1934. Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.

A Medieval Gem in Reno

by Debbie Hinman

On a quiet street in an older, mid-century neighborhood sits a two-story brick home half hidden by a luxurious growth of mature trees, shrubs and flowers. The neighborhood is often thought of as the “Famous American streets,” with streets named for Alexander Hamilton, Benjamin Franklin, James Madison, Daniel Webster and our featured location, Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson forms the south boundary of the neighborhood, with many of its homes sitting high above street level, backing onto open land owned by the Carmelite Monastery. The home at 2590 Thomas Jefferson occupies one of these lots.

At first glance, you would notice nothing extraordinary about this home; it is typical for the neighborhood of solidly constructed, upscale 1950-60s houses. But if you look carefully across the rolling green lawn, through the greenery, you can catch a glimpse of a square, slate oriel window with mullioned glass, and a gothic-arched wooden garage door with iron hinges and latches. These enhancements and so many others occurred between 1977 and 2004 and were the work of owners Gary and Yvonne Gandolfo. But before we enter this incredible transformation of a 1960s-era home to a medieval fantasy, let’s go back some years.



Yvonne's leaded glass work in an oriel window in the master bedroom of the home.

Who are the Gandolfos?

Gary grew up in Austin, Nevada, where his family had lived since Austin's earliest days. He met Yvonne in Reno, though she was originally from California; Yvonne describes their meeting as love at first sight. The young couple married in 1955. Gary attended the University of Nevada, Reno, and then entered the teaching profession in Reno. Yvonne then earned her degree and secondary certification.

Gary taught first at Elmcrest Elementary and then when the sixth grade was moved to Clayton Junior High, he followed his class, remaining there even when the sixth grade returned to elementary school. He loved teaching Nevada history and also taught remedial math. Yvonne taught science, math, astrono-

my and physics at Hug High School and also worked part-time for a geological firm. Combined, the Gandolfos spent more than fifty years in the service of Reno schools.

Though the couple traveled in the United States, Gary had no interest in seeing other countries. Finally, Yvonne insisted and the Gandolfos traveled to Ireland with friends. Gary enjoyed it more than he expected and it was easier to convince him to take a second trip, this time to Barcelona, Spain. Gary was overwhelmed by the architecture he found there and discovered a real kinship with the medieval era churches, in particular. Always interested in woodworking though untrained, he arrived back in Reno endeavoring to recreate some of what he saw in Europe. Gary also began to amass a library of full-color books on medieval and gothic architecture.

The couple first lived in the northwest of the city. They had a son, Mark, and were both immersed in their careers. One day, Gary decided to build a wooden chest for Yvonne and from that day on, never stopped building. He began remodeling that home and adding his custom woodworking touches, a cathedral ceiling and a half second-story addition. When Gary announced he could tear down the walls of the house and gain another 5 feet all around, Yvonne said, “I’m going to get you another house.” Gary’s only stipulation was that it had to be in original condition; he said he didn’t want to undo another man’s work. The Thomas Jefferson house was perfect and quite original, with more than 1600 feet upstairs and another 1100 on the lower level. There would be room for a woodworking shop and the home featured an extensive backyard, which now contains patios, trees and vegetable and flower gardens. Gary even built a small art studio for Yvonne.



The Gandolfos' brick home at 2590 Thomas Jefferson Drive.

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A Medieval Gem in Reno (continued)

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Home's Troubled Early History

In 1974, the house on Thomas Jefferson was owned by the Len Harris family. Len Harris was a former Reno mayor and state senator as well as a local businessman, owner of Harris Meats. The home became notorious in December of that year when it became the site of a double homicide; Mrs. Dorothy Harris was shot and killed in her living room and the couple's son Len "Butch" Harris was shot in the head in a ground-level den where he kept his extensive gun collection. He died three hours after being transported to a Reno hospital. Following exemplary investigative work on the part of the Washoe County Sheriff's Office, the two young men perpetrating the crime were arrested on December 23 in San Leandro, California and were later convicted.

Undeterred by the house's grisly history (which favorably impacted the price), local teachers Gary and Yvonne Gandolfo purchased the home in 1977. It was their dream home and they proceeded, over the ensuing years, to create a new identity for the house, one that would be incomparable in exquisite detail and imagination.



Gary's hand-carved horns-of-plenty cabinet doors centered in gothic arches on each upper door in the kitchen.

The Gandolfos at Thomas Jefferson

Upon settling into their lovely new home in the southwest, Gary set up his shop in the downstairs level of the home. He first began with landscaping work, laying brick on the ground as well as constructing a retaining wall and planters. Because of Yvonne's love of plants, he added a sunroom to the rear of the house. He installed a part-tile, part-slate floor and built beautifully-carved wooden rafters from which to hang plants. The sunroom leads to the dining room through stained glass doors. Once Gary began his dream of transforming the house into a castle, Yvonne learned to create stained glass panels to complement his work. Already a painter and very artistic, Yvonne quickly picked up the art and created designs typical of the medieval age.

Gary's next project was the kitchen. When most people undertake a kitchen remodel, they generally purchase ready-

made cabinets; not so Gary. He removed the upper cabinet doors, replacing them with beautiful ones he carved himself, portraying grapes and wine and horns of plenty. The raised carvings are centered in gothic arches with small coats-of-arms in the upper corners of each.

Gary then decided to create a medieval entry and hallway. Not content to work



Gary's hand-carved living room ceiling and wall.

with the walls alone, Gary installed a vaulted brick-barrel ceiling. The walls are flat stone and a heavy, darkly stained front door creates an impressive entry; above the door is a half-circle rose window. Metal wall sconces and a breastplate from a suit of armor heighten the medieval feel as you enter the home. The hallway has the same ceiling but the walls are primarily of a glowing, carved wood. All the doors were handmade; the bathroom door is of beautifully-carved wood with a fabulous inset of a stained glass peacock created by Yvonne. Gary was obsessed with every detail; the doors all have beautiful brass hinges knobs and plates. The hallway even contains a small nook with short pews, where one can pause for quiet contemplation.

But possibly the most impressive and dramatic feature of the home was Gary's next project. Taking a little over a year, he carved an elaborate vaulted ceiling above the oversized living room. The ceiling is composed of carved wood squares intersected by intricately-carved beams. Overall, he constructed several carved ceilings throughout the home and his process was to first measure, then create the carvings, then place them to ensure fit, then remove them to stain and finish them, and then permanently install

A Medieval Gem in Reno (continued)



Beautifully-carved figure of a monk on an inside door to the garage.

them. In the living room, the end panels are adorned with carvings of jousting knights and other medieval elements. Both the living and dining rooms feature large, colorful stained glass windows.

Gary and Yvonne both visited lumber sales yards and collected lovely and unique wood. Often for Christmas, Gary would find his present from Yvonne was a large box containing some type of rare, exceptional wood that she had wrangled from some obscure source. Gary would ponder over it until he found the perfect project for its use. Some of the wood came from unexpected places. For instance, in his office, Gary finished and framed packing crates to form decorative wall panels.

The master bedroom is another medieval delight. The ceiling is adorned with an elegantly-carved spoke wheel, with trefoil cutouts on the tips. The walls have a carved wainscoting with vertical carvings on the wall above, depicting knights in various costumes through the ages. Two Romanesque oriel windows were added, one facing front and one to the east, both with leaded glass windows.

The one facing front is slate with four stepped lancet windows and the other contains three full-length diamond pane lancet windows. Because adding these windows impacted the exterior of the home, it was one occasion when Gary would laughingly ask Yvonne, “Why did you buy me a brick house?” But Gary didn’t stop with the room itself. He hand-carved a fabulous raised bed with a headboard featuring a centaur in front of a tree.

An addition to the home was a “Queen’s Bedroom.” The exterior is slate shingles, that Yvonne says came from an old school that was torn down (but that I have yet to track down). There is an outer room, which was an original bedroom. Here Yvonne had her way, choosing an Asian décor, but the sleeping quarters are pure Gary. The bed sits on a raised platform of tile. An altar stands at the foot of the bed, which may have come from a local church. Of course the ceiling is a work of art, with dark wooden slats reaching up to the vaulted ceiling where they meet a heavier beam. A display case stands near the bed, filled with Yvonne’s collection of fossils and geologic specimens.

The level of detail throughout the house is astounding; all doorways are framed with beautiful wood, most with a gothic arch. Carved figurines are everywhere, both created by Gary and also some purchased on the couple’s travels to Europe. There is a knight in full armor and another in chain mail keeping watch from quiet corners of the home. Baseboards are carved with minute detail. One of the most stunning doors in the home is the door to the

garage on the lower level. It is made from an exquisite honeyed wood with an ecclesiastical arch above and a raised figure of a monk in a lovingly-detailed robe, eyes lowered, holding an open book in both hands.

Gary passed away in 2005. His workshop sits unused, a drawing of a medieval figure still attached to the wall: a figure who will never be brought to life by Gary’s expert hands. Yvonne lives a quiet life, still painting — birds being some of her favorite subjects. She has begun incorporating natural elements such as bark and moss into her pictures for a more dimensional effect. She also enjoys spending time with her son’s family and visiting her mountain cabin on weekends. However, Gary’s spirit will forever remain with Yvonne through his legacy, the extraordinary world he created for his family inside the walls of this home. 

Information for this article came from interviews with Yvonne Gandolfo. Pictures for this article are by Debbie Hinman.

Debbie Hinman is a HRPS member, a HRPS Tour Guide and a member of the HRPS Editorial Board.



Master bedroom ceiling is adorned with an elegantly-carved spoke wheel with trefoil cutouts on the tips.



HRPS & Artown

July 2015

Historic Walking Tours



HRPS is proud to be a part of the month-long Artown celebration. We have a full roster of July walks including our Cemetery Tour and two new tours featuring Midtown neighborhoods. Put on your walking shoes – it's time for Historic Reno Preservation Society's summer tour season. Tour cost is \$10 per person, free to HRPS members. Walks generally last from 1½ to 2 hours. Please note the July 4 tour begins at **8:00 a.m.** and the July 26 Church Tour begins at **1:00 p.m.** No dogs please.

Reservations required and space is limited.

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

Saturday
July 4
8:00 a.m.

MANSIONS ON THE BLUFF – Please note special starting time at 8:00 a.m. – 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. The tour begins at the McCarran House, 401 Court Street. Sign-in is located just west of the McCarran House parking lot. Tour guides: Bill Isaef, Dave Vill and Joan Collins.

Sunday
July 5
9:00 a.m.

BIKE TOUR THROUGH OLD RENO – A leisurely ride through the most historic parts of Reno. Meet at the Lander Street side of My Favorite Muffin, 340 California Avenue. **HELMETS REQUIRED, NO EXCEPTIONS!** Tour guide: Phil Ulibarri.

Tuesday
July 7
6:00 p.m.

CEMETERY TOUR – Join HRPS for an early evening visit to four of Reno's most historic cemeteries: Pythians, Hillside, The Grand Army of the Republic and the Hebrew Cemetery and "become acquainted" with some of their most notable residents. Meet at the Knights of Pythias Hall, 980 Nevada Street. Please wear closed shoes suitable for rocky and uneven ground. Tour guides: Debbie Hinman, Mac Wieland, Sharon Honig-Bear and Bill Mardon.

Saturday
July 11
9:00 a.m.

MIDTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT – Take a walk through the emerging Midtown District and see how this area has changed over the past 100 years from a quiet country road lined with large homes to a bustling business district. The Midtown area has continually reinvented itself to adapt to the changing needs of our city. Learn about the exciting businesses and people that once occupied the familiar buildings you see today. Meet at the southwest corner of St. Lawrence and Virginia Street. Tour guide: Barrie Schuster.



The 1869 Lake House, remodeled and renamed the Riverside Hotel in 1888, and the iron-arched 1877 Virginia Street Bridge, removed in 1905, relocated to Rock Street (just east of today's National Auto Museum) and washed out in the 1950 flood, photo c.1895. Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.

HRPS & Artown July 2015 Historic Walking Tours

Tuesday
July 14
6:00 p.m.

POWNING'S 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 in front at the McKinley Arts & Culture Center, 925 Riverside Drive. Tour guides: Felvia Belaustegui and Jack Hursh.

Saturday
July 18
9:00 a.m.

PROHIBITION IN RENO – We have turned back the clocks to the 1920s and 1930s. We will walk streets and alleys and visit significant buildings, recalling Reno's saloons and reformers (the WCTU and Anti-Saloon League). You might even get to see a dignitary from Reno's past. Tour starts at Amtrak's Reno Station, 135 East Commercial Row. Sign-in is across the street from the historic section of the train station on Commercial Row. Tour guides: Debbie Hinman and Sharon Honig-Bear.

Tuesday
July 21
6:00 p.m.

MIDTOWN RESIDENTIAL – Join us for a walk along shady streets in a quiet neighborhood comprising several early additions: the Litch Addition, part of the original 72-acre Litch Ranch, the McCarthy Addition and the Sierra Vista Addition. All of these were established around the turn of the 20th century. The homes are an eclectic mix of styles, most dating from the 1920s through the 1940s. A portion of this neighborhood could be considered yet another "Little Italy!" Meet at the northwest corner of Mary Street and South Virginia Street. Tour guides: Debbie Hinman and Rosie Cevasco.

Saturday
July 25
9:00 a.m.

TRUCKEE RIVER ALL THE TIME – See Reno's relationship with the Truckee over time, learn of the great floods and of Reno's architectural heritage, hear the Voice of the City, observe how the HRPS Walks in July relate to the Truckee and the history of Reno. Meet at the Wild River Grill at the Riverside Hotel. Tour guides: Jim and Sue Smith.

Sunday
July 26
1:00 p.m.

DOWNTOWN CHURCH TOUR – Please note special starting time at 1:00 p.m. – Visit three of Reno's oldest and most architecturally significant downtown churches, Trinity Episcopal, First United Methodist Church and Saint Thomas Aquinas Cathedral. Tour guide: Mac Wieland.

Tuesday
July 28
6:00 p.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. The tour begins at the McCarran House, 401 Court Street. Sign-in is located just west of the McCarran House parking lot. Tour guides: Joan Collins and Dave Vill.



(l-r) 1906 Riverside Hotel, 1904 Streetcar, 1905 Virginia Street Bridge, 1906 Masonic Building, and the 1903 Thoma-Bigelow Building (name changed to Mapes Building in 1928), photo c.1906.
Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.

HRPS Awards Eight Neighborhood Fund 2015 Grants

by Cindy Ainsworth

The Neighborhood Preservation Fund (NPF) grant applications for 2015 were outstanding! The NPF grants allow property owners the opportunity to apply for grants to rehabilitate historical structures in a manner authentic with the original architectural style. Grants were awarded to homes and businesses located in the Midtown, Old Southwest, Wells Avenue and Powning Addition neighborhoods, and included an array of projects like new roofs, painting, windows, doors and even a complete restoration of a porch. With this year, the NPF has now funded thirty projects and continues to grow in popularity. There is no other preservation program of its kind in the city of Reno.

HRPS will also be working with the Nevada Museum of Art who owns the Levy House, location of Sundance Books and Music, by offering our expertise and assistance with some current maintenance issues needed for this significant Reno historic resource.

The awards included:

1. 534 Lander Street, John Barada:

The office is a 1911 Craftsman Bungalow that is included on HRPS'



One of the 2015 NPF grant winners at 421 Court Street, a 1910 Queen Anne. Photo courtesy Cindy Ainsworth.



2014 NPF Grant awarded funds to owners of 665 Monroe to repaint the porch bricks. Photo courtesy Cindy Ainsworth.

Bricks and Stones tour. The home was the original meeting place for Reno's Monday Club. The awarded grant is for a roof replacement.

2. 533 St. Lawrence, Roger & Laurey Batt:

The lovely 1917 Old Southwest home was built for a prominent Washington, D.C. attorney. While NPF grants normally do not fund replacement windows, the front windows were showing wear because of southern sun exposure and age. Many of the lower sashes were bowed and starting to deteriorate. The new windows will feature wood interior sashes with exterior aluminum cladding which was an excellent alternative to the original windows.

3. 146 W. Arroyo, Rosie Cevalco:

The 1927 home is a nice example of a craftsman style brick bungalow located in the Midtown section of town. The grant will fund a replacement of the existing front door with a period appropriate craftsman door.

4. 421 Court Street, Kathleen and Valerie Cooke:

The 1910 Queen Anne style house has been in the Cooke family since 1920. The house is now

the law office of David Reese and is included on our Mansions on the Bluff tour. The grant will go towards repointing the stair landing bricks, painting of the front and side porch, installation of new handrails, and repairing and painting the front and rear balcony.

5. 747 Humboldt Street, Robert Mueller:

The exterior of this attractive 1920 Craftsman style bungalow appears to be very original and well maintained. The grant will contribute to the painting of the home.

6. 576 Ridge Street, Damian Sinnott and Zeina Barkawi:

This unique 1920 brick home will be included on our 2015 home tour. The grant will help with the painting of the façade.

7. 161 Wonder Street, Barrie Schuster:

This 1925 bungalow is an excellent example of the type of homes located in the Wells Avenue neighborhood. The owner will be doing a complete restoration of the entrance to bring back the original craftsman porch. The matching grant will be used to remove the walls of the enclosed added front sun room, rebuild the brick stem walls and wooden pillars and restore the original porch and bead board ceiling.

8. 101 Keystone Avenue, George and Mary Len Wilson:

This highly visible 1926 home in the Powning Addition appears to be very original. With the help of the grant, a new roof will soon grace the home.

The next NPF grant period will begin in January 2016, with applications due on March 31, 2016. Funds for the program are generated primarily through the ticket sales from HRPS Harvest of Homes Tour. If you are interested in making an additional donation to this significant neighborhood HRPS program you can send your checks to P.O. Box 14003, Reno, NV 89507. 

Newlands Possible New Historic District

by ZoAnn Campana

At the request of the City of Reno, with funding from a Historic Preservation Grant from the National Parks Service, Project Coordinator ZoAnn Campana is currently conducting an architectural survey of the Newlands neighborhood on behalf of the City of Reno. The purpose of the survey is to understand the neighborhood's architectural makeup in anticipation of a district nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The survey portion of the Newlands project is in the second of three phases, which include historic context development, neighborhood survey, and National Register nomination.

Campana is a graduate of the Master of Preservation program at Tulane University and a longtime resident of Reno. The survey process entails a large amount of fieldwork, including taking photographs of properties and noting their architectural details, as well as conducting research for each residence. Volunteers from the neighborhood and from HRPS will be assisting with the research portion of the survey. Survey results will determine whether the Newlands district retains sufficient integrity to be considered for listing on the National Register.

The National Register is the federal list of properties that are considered historically significant. Listing on the Register is an

honorific recognition that carries great prestige, and the inclusion of the Newlands district on this list would be a triumph in Nevada preservation. There is a common misconception that the National Register limits the rights of property owners; however, this is entirely false: property owners within a recognized historic district are free to remodel, renovate, or otherwise modify their properties as they see fit.

Benefits of being listed on the National Register of Historic Places include eligibility for tax credits and preservation grants. A number of studies have proven that the designation of a neighborhood historic district increases property values and rates of appreciation, in addition to protecting the district from extreme market fluctuations.

As Reno gains national acclaim as a cultural destination, we also should be recognized for our beautiful and unique historic neighborhoods. Newlands' listing as a historic district is the first step in Reno joining the ranks of our country's great historic cities.

For information regarding this project, please contact Claudia Hanson at hansonc@reno.gov or ZoAnn Campana at zcampana@gmail.com.

Upcoming 6th Reno Harvest of Homes Tour Saturday, September 19, 2015 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

by Sharon Honig-Bear

We have all passed by many of Reno's distinguished homes wondering how old they are, what stories they could tell, and what they look like inside. For the sixth consecutive year, HRPS will provide the answers and an opportunity to step inside six of these Reno beauties at our **Reno Harvest of Homes Tour** on Saturday, September 19, 2015 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Our open homes are as follows:

- 25 Bret Harte Ave.
- 1325 Lander St.
- 572 Ridge St.
- 576 Ridge St.
- 275 Urban Rd.
- 201 Wonder St.

The first four homes are located in Reno's Old Southwest; the fifth in an area which was once the outskirts of town across from Blanchfield Airfield (now Washoe Golf Course), and the sixth home represents the Wells Avenue Conservation District.

The houses were selected for their beauty, significance and unique interiors. We want to showcase the most celebrated of Reno's older neighborhoods and we believe the homes we've

selected reflect an interesting mix of styles and locations. Details about this year's homes are available at Historic Reno Preservation Society's website, historicreno.org.

Tickets for the Home Tour will be available beginning in August and are \$30 in advance and \$35 on the day of the event. Ticket outlets include Sundance Bookstore, St. Ives Florist, Ryrie's Art and Home, Rail City Garden Center, Moana Nursery, Napa-Sonoma, Reno eNvy and Wedge Cheese. These locations accept checks and cash only and will sell tickets through Sept. 18. Tickets may also be ordered online (using a credit card) through our website, historicreno.org.

Proceeds from the **Reno Harvest of Homes Tour** are used for the Neighborhood Preservation Fund, offering grants for community improvement projects. We know that the public will enjoy this rare opportunity to get an inside peek of Reno's unique residential history.

Additional information is available on the HRPS website or by calling (775) 747-4478 or (775) 843-3823.



Message from Your HRPS President Byllie D'Amato Andrews

Nevada's sesquicentennial year ended in 2014, but that celebratory year has piqued people's interest: History is still hot! At the beginning of this year, HRPS began partnering with Washoe County Library System to expand the reach of our programs by asking presenters to repeat their programs at the Downtown Reno Library on the Sunday immediately following the regular Wednesday program. Attendance continues to be strong at both programs, and many of our long-time attendees have switched to Sunday afternoon. At the same time, the Sunday programs have increased our visibility to library patrons who were previously unaware of HRPS. Steve Davis, HRPS Program Chair, is working with the library to continue offering these additional programs in future years.

The first Saturday of May was the launch day for HRPS's 2015 Walking Tour Season, and Scott Gibson's tour of the Newlands Neighborhood drew a crowd of 47. We will be well into our June Historic walking tours by the time this edition lands in your mailbox, but we are anticipating similar attendance for the remaining May and June walks. We have already had to close registration for Robin Holabird's new walk on May 23, *Movie Footprints in Reno*.

May 2 was the University of Nevada's Day at the Museum where a consortium of 12 museums on and near the University of Nevada, Reno joined forces to allow residents and tourists to learn more about Reno and Nevada's rich resources of history, culture, natural history, science, and engineering. The HRPS walking tour guides were treated to a sample on Saturday, April 18, with an informative tour of Mackay School of Mines Building (which houses the W. M. Keck Museum) led by Garrett Barmore, curator and director of the Keck and a HRPS board member.

The \$10.9 million budget surplus announced by the City definitely had HRPS members imagining a plethora of ways that money could be put to good use for historic preservation. Among the ideas for using some of \$10.9 million is the suggestion that the City allocate funds for a City Historic Preservation Officer. The money must be spent by the end of the fiscal year (June 30), and both the City Council and the *Reno Gazette-Journal* have solicited ideas from the public. The majority of comments submitted online to the *RGJ* call for improving and upgrading the city's parks and cleaning up and improving conditions in the downtown area.

The news of the surplus is a positive sign that the City of Reno is starting to recover from the economic downturn. As we grow fiscally stronger it is time to let our City Council know that we care about Historic Preservation and it is time for Reno to explore the benefits of creating a City Historic Preservation Officer. Many cities similar in size to Reno have such a position to ensure that a city's future honors its past.

Responsibilities included in similar jobs include: advise the local government on matters of preservation to ensure that historic preservation is considered at all levels of decision making; supply information to the public on the criteria for National Register listing and information on how to complete National Register nominations; supply technical rehabilitation and restoration information to guide property owners in appropriate methods for maintaining the architectural integrity of historic properties; assist people in efforts to list their properties on the National Register; and have brochures available detailing preservation tax incentives for historic buildings and applications as well as historic preservation easement and tax abatement information.

HRPS received good responses to our call for buildings that need to be considered for addition to the Endangered Building Watch List, and we have now added the Lear Theater, the mid-century car dealership building on the southwest corner of South Virginia and Cadillac, and the 1889 NCO Engine House at 401 East Fourth Street. If you know anything about the last two properties, please let us know.

I close this message with a quote from the City of Tacoma Planning and Development Services:

"Preservation is not just about preserving the past: it is essential for creating a future ... that retains its identity and uniqueness. Preservation is a key strategy for economic development and urban revitalization Preservation is also key to sustainable development in the future: the greenest building is the one that is already built."

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
- Buildings in The University Gateway District
- Buildings in the University Neighborhood
- The El Cortez Hotel at 2nd and Arlington
- Hill/Redfield Mansion on Mt. Rose St.
- Lear Theater
- Mid-century car dealership building on the southwest corner of South Virginia and Cadillac
- 1889 NCO Engine House at 401 East Fourth Street

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Thank you for joining HRPS. There are many areas in our organization where your enthusiasm, skills and dedication will be invaluable to us. Please indicate your interest in serving on the following committees by marking the appropriate committees:

- ☐ **Communications Committee:** Media, public relations, newsletter, website.
- ☐ **Special Events Committee:** Fundraising, planning, organizing, soliciting in-kind donations.
- ☐ **Outreach Education Committee:** Walking tours, school curriculum, monthly programs, membership.
- ☐ **Preservation Issues Committee:** Preservation advocacy, public policy, grant writing, historical & architectural research.

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All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by the law.

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THANK YOU!

Annual Membership Includes:

Free participation in walking tours

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NHS Docent Training

Would you like to assist the Nevada Historical Society and its professionals by volunteering as a docent? To become a NHS Docent you 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 Saturday, September 19, 2015, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Nevada Historical Society, 1650 North Virginia Street, Reno, NV 89503. For information, please call 688-1190, and ask for Acting Director Shery Hayes-Zorn.

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Time to Renew Your HRPS Membership

We would like to thank all our members for your belief in and continued support of HRPS while we continue to define our growing role in determining Reno's historic legacy. July is the time to renew your membership, which supports the many HRPS programs and provides you with the quarterly publication *FootPrints*.

Please find enclosed a membership renewal envelope with this issue, for your convenience. Have you checked your mailing address on this issue of *FootPrints* to see when your membership expires? You can renew with the enclosed envelope, the membership form on page 11 or on the HRPS website <http://www.historicreno.org/> where you can use a credit card. Just a

reminder, our fiscal year runs from July through June of the following year. Those of you who have already renewed or joined between January and June of this year are paid members through June of 2016.

You will notice included on the envelope that we are asking our members whether they would like to continue to receive a mailed hardcopy of *FootPrints* or, in an effort to go green, an emailed electronic copy. In the future, we will be implementing an email option so please select your favorite method of delivery.

Your support of our organization has given us the credibility and courage for a preservation voice in our community.

Like Our New Look?

The ever-rising cost of the eggshell-colored paper for previous issues of *FootPrints* has driven us to look at other possibilities. New technologies for four-color printing now offer greatly reduced prices for color. So, we are trying out four-color on glossy white paper for this issue. The good news is that the cost is actually less than our previous brown ink (one color) on eggshell! We're testing this out — what do you think?

Carol Coleman, Editor, carol@galenaforest.net

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