

The Bishop and his Schools

by Debbie Hinman

If you have lived in Reno any length of time, you've no doubt heard the name Bishop Manogue, likely in the context of the attractive, sprawling high school south of town. Or maybe you attended one of its smaller, previous incarnations. But you may not realize there was a very noteworthy man behind that name, one who came to Nevada in the era of the Virginia City mining boom, and made a lasting imprint on our state and our city who continue to honor him. Prior to achieving the title, he was simply Patrick Manogue of County Kilkenny, Ireland.

The Bishop

Patrick was born May 28, 1831. Around the age of 16, he left Ireland for America, upon the death of his parents. He traveled to Chicago, enrolling at the St. Mary of the Lake school. He also found work evenings, to send money back to his siblings in Ireland. Leaving Chicago in 1853, Patrick arrived in Moore's Flat, California, some 17 miles northeast of Nevada City, attracted by tales of gold discoveries in the vicinity. He worked as a laborer in the mines there, and after purchasing a share of a mine, he became a partner, which allowed him to continue to send money home.

He arbitrated disputes in the mining community while continuing to study at night. Patrick stood 6'3" and was powerfully built, due to the physicality of mine work, but his mind was turning to more esoteric pursuits. He had developed a strong connection to the people of the area, especially the miners and Chinese immigrants. Archbishop Joseph Alemany of San Francisco recognized this ability to connect with all levels of humanity and arranged for Patrick to attend Saint-Sulpice Seminary in Paris, France.

There, Patrick Manogue became fluent in French, Latin, Greek and Hebrew, as well as Irish Gaelic, completing his studies in 3 ½ years. He was ordained as priest on December 21, 1861. Due to his mining experience, Archbishop Alemany assigned the new priest to Nevada, where the Comstock Lode had attracted thousands hoping to stake a claim and strike it rich. Arriving in Virginia City in 1862, it must have been startling for the newly-minted Father Manogue to find that his new assignment covered an immense area. He traveled extensively through his parish, usually by horseback, to bring the Eucharist, hear confessions, anoint the sick, bury the dead and marry the engaged. He also brought the Sisters of Charity to Virginia City to educate children, care for orphans and operate a hospital.



Left: An early photo of Father Manogue and
Right: As Bishop Manogue.

His predecessor Father Hugh Gallagher had built a wooden church, but it had been blown down within two years of construction by the vicious winds that whipped through the town. Father Manogue set about having a new church built, dedicated as St. Mary's in the Mountains Church, by Eugene O'Connell, Bishop of Grass Valley on July 17, 1864. It was also a wooden structure, located a block away from the current St. Mary's.

By 1867, the growing town needed a much larger church due to a massive influx of Irish immigrants, arriving to work the mines. This time a brick structure was erected across the street, dedicated again by O'Connell in 1870, bearing the same name. But just five years later, the event known as the Great Fire of 1875 seriously damaged this structure. It was rebuilt the following year and still stands today, considered by many to be the most majestic structure of Virginia City.

One of the most beneficial relationships the Father developed in his time in Virginia City was his friendship with John Mackay, one of the Bonanza Kings, who had also labored in the mines before becoming wealthy. Mackay contributed the funds to rebuild St. Mary's and was always generous with his gifts to the church.

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The Bishop

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Father Manogue was promoted to Bishop of the Diocese of Grass Valley in California in 1881. In 1886, upon his appointment as Sacramento's first bishop, Manogue worked to secure a half block in the city for a cathedral, which he intended to be "one of the grandest church buildings in America," similar to those he had seen while living in Paris.

John Mackay came through, presenting the bishop with a gift of \$100,000 toward the cathedral. Construction of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament began in 1887. Upon its completion, one report states that there was no cathedral equal in size west of the Mississippi River. It still stands today in Sacramento's downtown area within sight of the State Capitol building, a stunning example of Italian Renaissance architecture.

Toward the end of 1894, the *Carson News* reported the following: "A Well-known Man Dying. Bishop Manogue, one of the best men that ever lived in Nevada, is dying in Sacramento. His memory will ever be cherished by hundreds of people whom he befriended here in the pioneer days. Father Manogue (as he was then known) never paraded his good deeds, and was always averse to letting the world know the extent of his charities." On May 3, 1895, he was buried in Sacramento. It was reported that there were many mourners from Virginia City, Carson City, and Reno attending the funeral.

Bishop Manogue High School — The First

In 1948, 53 years following the death of Bishop Manogue, a new school appeared on the banks of the Truckee River, about three miles from Sparks and five miles east of Reno. The property had been known as the 15-acre Flick Ranch since 1937. The land and ranch house were purchased by the Reno Catholic Diocese to be used for a Catholic high school. At that time, there were only two high schools in the area: Reno High and Sparks High. Bishop Manogue High School became the third, named for the Nevada miner and priest, the first pastor of Virginia City; hence the athletic teams

became "Miners," and the colors, green and gold, are traditional Catholic colors. The school was ready for students that fall, with classrooms and a cafeteria. The grounds featured an orchard, several pastures and spacious lawns with numerous shade trees. More improvements were to come.

The following year, a prefabricated gymnasium and classroom building were added and work was progressing on the athletic field. According to a reminiscence by a former student, the boys in the school were called upon to work in the fields weekends, and the girls to prepare meals for them. That fall, an innovation was announced that likely thrilled parents: as of the 1949 school year, there would be free bus service from downtown Reno and Sparks to the school. Total registration that year was 118 students. By 1953, that number had jumped to 158.

As lovely as the rural setting of the school was, by 1956 it was felt that it had outgrown its current facilities. The church began looking around for a new Reno location and plans were being considered for a brand-new school. But the Reno Catholic Diocese would make good use of the property following the closing of the school. In early 1958 it became a monastery for thirty Dominican Brothers, until 1961 or 1962, at which time it became an independent community known as the Brothers of the Holy Rosary.

Bishop Manogue High School — The Second

At a meeting of the St. Thomas Mother's Club in May of 1956, an architect's painting of a new, much larger Bishop Manogue was presented. A plea went out to all campaign workers in each of the five



Top: Genevra Kimpton, R. J. Flick and Margaret Flick at the ranch entrance, 1944 and Bottom: an aerial view of the property and ranch house used as a school, and the prefabricated gym at the center of the photo.

Catholic parishes to call on parishioners to solicit pledges for the new school.

By August, a site was found near the university campus in north Reno, and Bishop Robert J. Dwyer of the Diocese of Reno turned the first spade to start construction of a new Bishop Manogue High School. A study began on traffic in the area which was caused by a continuous flow of traffic to and from the industrial area north of the school.

By June of 1957, the chapel and classroom sections of the "The School on the Hill," as it was known locally, were completed and it was hoped to welcome students in the fall. A newspaper article in late August announced "Manogue School Nears Completion," claiming that three hundred local high school students would commence their school year in a new school at a new site, the first week in September. The chapel was marked by a 117-foot copper-sheathed tower and cross. In addition to the classrooms being readied, the football team was beginning practice on the newly-turfed field.

Due to labor wage disputes, the gymnasium had taken more time than anticipated but was completed by early December. It was an impressive structure with its arching rafters and maple floor. The gym featured rollaway bleachers that could accommodate 1,000 spectators, but once more chairs were obtained, it could seat 4,000 for events such as plays and graduations. It also featured a stage and band and choral rooms. A breezeway connected the gym to the main structure.

As the school grew in students, by the 1990s it was in the same position as the first Manogue—lack of facilities to accommodate the growth. Even with six portable buildings added to the campus, it could not keep up with the growth and demands of technology.

By the early 2000s, the diocese once again began looking for a larger parcel of land on which to build a new school that would meet all its requirements. Even the current principal said, “It seems in recent years our campus has been held together with duct tape.” The plan for the existing 23 acres of the Manogue campus was for the University of Nevada, Reno to purchase the property and use it to expand its women’s athletic fields and for parking and offices. The proximity to the campus made this a good choice. The school was demolished and the property is now home to an athletic center.

Bishop Manogue High School – The Third

Originally, the new Manogue was slated to open in 1999 but funding issues delayed that plan. On March 21, 2003, ground was broken at the new site; construction was to begin in April. The school was slated to be ready for occupancy for the 2004 fall semester. The selected parcel was a 52-acre site near Zolezzi Lane in south Reno. Construction proceeded more quickly than anticipated; Q&D Construction had the contract for the school with an estimated cost of \$34 million dollars. This was a huge expenditure, but the school would have the latest technology, a lovely chapel and room to grow. To provide some continuity with the previous school, some of the most memorable artifacts were installed in the new school; the copper steeple that graced the former chapel was installed



A newly-completed Bishop Manogue High School with classrooms and chapel, c.1957. Courtesy of Patty Cafferata.

atop the new one and the familiar stained glass windows were carefully removed and installed in the new chapel.

Open houses were held during the latter part of 2003 continuing into 2004, with hard-hatted visitors. They viewed the Wiegand Science Center with state-of-the-art biology, chemistry, physics and technology labs, and the nearly 4,000-square-foot library. There would be fiber optics and smart board technology in every classroom. An elevator was centrally located for disabled students’ use. The whole school had an open feel with large, airy windows and 14 skylights. There was a large gymnasium, a smaller one, and a weight room. A thoughtful touch was a campus plaza with engraved bricks bearing the names of alumni.

One drawback of the relocation would be the impact on the nearby elementary

school on Valley Road. Traditionally, Manogue students would receive service hours for serving as reading assistants, working with the Sierra Vista children, many from lower-income neighborhoods. They also provided Easter egg hunts, Christmas parties and safe Halloween nights for the students. The distance of the new Manogue would make this difficult, if not impossible. The principal and Manogue students all expressed their regret at this. However, since that time, Sierra Vista has been remodeled and is now the Lemelson STEM Academy.

This newest Manogue High opened on August 30, 2004 and major local donors were thanked; their gifts and pledges totaled more than \$29 million dollars. Today, the school is well-respected and going strong, holding its place among Reno’s public high schools; its website claims a student population of 778. Certainly, Bishop Patrick Manogue would be very pleased that his name has been carried through three school campuses and his Nevada legacy has continued for 163 years. 



Today’s Bishop Manogue High School, 110 Bishop Manogue Drive. Photo by Debbie Hinman.

Debbie Hinman is a HRPS walking tour guide and serves on the FootPrints editorial board. Deb started writing for FootPrints in 2004, and she is still a prolific contributing writer two decades later. She says her passion, “is discovering heretofore unknown local history.”

THE MOUNT ST. MARY'S ACADEMY

By Debbie Hinman

In July of 1877, three Dominican sisters left their posting in Vallejo, California to catch a train in Sacramento. Their destination was their motherhouse in Springfield, Kentucky but perhaps by divine intervention, they only made it as far as Reno. One of the sisters became ill, so the trio, led by Mother Dolores, left the train to find medical help for her. They would remain in Reno for 15 years, with Mother Dolores creating a school for young women that would not only benefit them, but all of Reno's small community.

David Toll, in his book "The History of St. Mary's Hospital," describes this era in Reno as "a homely clutter of stores, stables and saloons between the Truckee River and the railroad tracks. Nine years before it had been a tent camp in the sagebrush, waiting for its name to be drawn out of a hat. By 1877, Reno had become a rough-sawed, raw-boned little burg, prospering as the principal shipping point for the mines of the Comstock Lode."

It's amazing to know that these three women, welcomed by Father Merrill, were urged to remain in Reno and create a school. And it didn't take them long; on September 3, 1877, the first classes were held in a rented building where the sisters hastily created a makeshift classroom. The *Reno Evening Gazette* reported the following: "We found 45 pupils cozily quartered and receiving, as far as we were able to learn, faithful instruction." Considering they had competition from a town school and the new Bishop Whitaker's School for Girls, this was quite an accomplishment. The sisters' school would be named Mount St. Mary's.

By January, Mother Dolores had raised \$3,800 to purchase eight vacant lots on Fourth Street between Center and Lake streets. According to Toll, she then conferred with architects and builders for the construction of a three-story \$30,000 school building.

On October of 1878, an official groundbreaking was held. The construction continued uneventfully until March of 1879 when a huge portion of Reno was devastated by an out-of-control fire. Quite miraculously, the building site was untouched, but some valuable materials needed for its completion had been destroyed. Never to be daunted, Mother Dolores and her sisters vowed to see the school through to completion and they did.

Though the academy had been created by Catholics, girls of all faiths were welcome. Tuition was \$200 a year. In addition to academics, it was also expected that they study mathematics, physiology, civil government, music, grammar, art, US history, ancient history and elocution. Those who graduated received teaching certificates accepted by Nevada and California schools.

In November of 1881, Bishop Manogue visited Reno for the first time since his consecration. In his honor, the sisters and



On November 9, 1892, Mount Saint Mary's Academy was sold at public auction for \$11,479.50.

pupils of Mt. St. Mary's put on an entertainment. The newspaper stated, "Bishop Manogue expressed his surprise and high appreciation of the motives which prompted the reception, and the merit and ability of those who took part therein." The Bishop also remarked that he had been in and around Reno when her buildings were small and few in number, had seen the town grow up, and noted her progress with pleasure.

Although it was an excellent school, other issues in the state, such as the decline of the prosperity of the Nevada mining camps, impacted enrollment and the school was soon in financial trouble. The property was sold at public auction in November of 1892 for much less than it cost to build. 



Mother Dolores, who brought the Dominicans to Reno in 1877. Both photos courtesy David Toll.

Debbie Hinman is a HRPS walking tour guide and serves on the FootPrints editorial board. Deb started writing for FootPrints in 2004, and she is still a prolific contributing writer two decades later. She says her passion, "is discovering heretofore unknown local history."

“Don’t be an Ash. Call Bill Black.”

What fire extinguishers, a historic bungalow, and the Emigrant Trail have in common

by Amy Burton

I used to walk my son’s dog, Miya, in the Country Club Acres neighborhood when my son was working 12-hour shifts. Leaving her home on Plumas Street, Miya would turn east on Mountain View Drive heading for the dog park and Virginia Lake. (Notice that the dog was obviously in charge on these walks.)

The bungalow on the corner of Plumas and Mountain View offered a “Puppy Pub” with fresh water for passing pets. Each time we meandered by I would wonder about the brick building in the bungalow’s backyard: a row of what looked like garages with a second-story section at the back corner. My guesses were that it had been a taxi service, divorce colony apartments or maybe artists’ studios.

It turns out it was the office and warehouses of the Nevada Fire Extinguisher Service (NFES) plant owned by William (Bill) R. Black and established in 1924.

The Business

“Don’t be an ash. Call Bill Black” was the witty slogan for the NFES. It featured on varied promotional materials including



The Nevada Fire Extinguisher buildings as they look today. Photo by Amy Burton.

thermometers, pens, wallets and calendars. Black’s great nephew, Bob Harmon, has preserved these antiques in his great uncle’s bungalow at 2600 Plumas Street where he now lives with his wife Barb. The NFES buildings are located behind the bungalow. Bob’s sister, Catherine, lives in an apartment converted from part of the NFES plant. The two families share the former NFES driveway.

Harmon’s father, Robert Grant Harmon, inherited the property from his uncle upon Black’s death in 1983. Robert and his wife Barbara donated 20 boxes of records from the NFES buildings to the Nevada Historical Society where Barbara was a docent president. These records and family oral history indicate that Black created the NFES to supplement his income.

Black and his brother Ben ran a brick contracting business. The idea for a sideline came from their sister, Viola, who showed Black a magazine advertisement for mail order fire extinguishers. While NFES classified ads in the *Reno Gazette Journal* (RGJ) state the business began in 1924, the earliest record of Black working with fire equipment was found in a 1932 receipt book he kept as a salesman for the

FYR-FYTER

Company. The NFES was first listed in the local telephone directory in 1938.

Black grew his side job into a thriving fire equipment business serving much of Nevada and northern California. At that time Reno was more developed than Las Vegas, so the NFES



Bill Black (left) poses in front of the Nevada Fire Extinguisher Service office with brother Ben Black. The brothers were partners in a brick contracting firm. Ben lived with Bill and his wife Adna for a time in their bungalow at 2600 Plumas. The bungalow was located in front of the NFES plant. Photo courtesy Bob Harmon and the Nevada Historical Society.

dominated both northern and southern Nevada. NFES records indicate Bill contracted with varied business and government agencies. Among these were Stead Air Force Base, the Washoe County Sheriff’s Office, Sierra Pacific Power Company, Washoe County School District, the Nevada Highway Department, the U.S. Forest Service and Harrah’s Club. Black’s business extended beyond fire extinguishers to include almost anything fire or emergency related including alarms, emergency lights, pumps, CO2 and even snake bite kits for the power company. Who knew snake bite was a potential risk for linemen.

The NFES featured a fleet of trucks, and one can still see the capped gas lines

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Don't be an Ash

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where drivers filled the tanks in what is now the Harmon's driveway. The business even had a huge radio antenna for transmitting to the fleet. Harmon said they eventually took it down because it was a hazard when the Nevada zephyrs blew. Some of the fire-related items taken from the plant were donated to the Nevada State Firemen's Museum in Virginia City.

The Bungalow

A trip to the Nevada Historical Society and both the Washoe County Recorder and Assessor's office did not reveal when the bungalow was built. But records did confirm Black owned it in 1936 and likely did an addition to the home in 1939. The location of the bungalow on Plumas Street (which was originally Plumas Road) is across from what is now the Reno Tennis Center and the Washoe Country Golf Course. That location has witnessed decades of Reno history.



Adna and Bill Black pose outside their vacation cabin, Tres Pinons, in south Tahoe. Harmon and Barb have this photo hanging near the front door to keep Adna and Bill forever present in their shared Plumas bungalow.
Photo courtesy Bob Harmon.

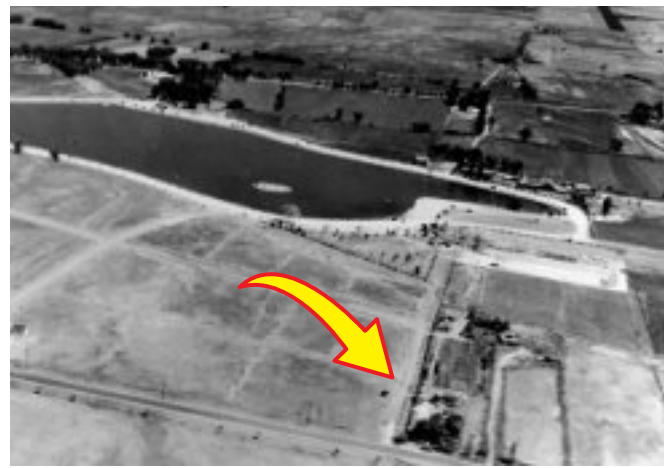
The lot sits across from a historic marker dedicated by Washoe County Commissioners that indicates the Emigrant Trail passed along the property. The route was part of a network of wagon trails used by pioneers heading west from 1846-1869.

Then, in 1917, Reno's first golf course was created across Plumas Street from where the bungalow now resides. The course design was overseen by Gourlay Dunn-Webb, the only American female golf instructor at that time.

In 1918, the Municipal Flying Field was in use just west of the NFES property. The Reno Air Mail Field was located there providing jobs for WWI flying veterans such as William Blanchfield. The field was named after him in 1920. Charles Lindbergh landed his plane, the Spirit of St. Louis, on that field in 1927.

In 1931, Nevada Developers, owned by W.E. Barnard, the developer of such Reno neighborhoods as Newlands Manor and University Terrace, began advertising lots for sale in the area. This location would become the Country Club Acres subdivision. It was advertised that one could buy an acre in this development for \$12.50 a month and subdivide it into six lots for big profits. Howard and T.N. Brown took over the development from Barnard in the mid-1930s. However, the area did not become part of the city of Reno until 1954.

The Plumas bungalow and its 409 Country Club Lane neighbor, three blocks to the north, were the only homes easily visible in an aerial photograph taken when Virginia Lake was created in 1939. The lake was sponsored by Washoe County and constructed by the Works Progress Administration with water from Cochran Ditch. In the photograph above, one can see from Plumas Street (which was then a dirt road) east to Hidden



In this 1939 photograph the Black bungalow and NFES buildings are shown bottom right with the newly created Virginia Lake in the background. The empty lot to the right of the bungalow was once part of the Black property and is now the location of the Plumas South Condominiums built in the late 1980s. The new Reno airport is visible in the top right.
Photo courtesy of Bob Harmon and the Nevada Historical Society.

Valley and the Virginia Range with little development in between. In addition, through its front plate glass window, the little brick house could have watched the streetcar that once traveled along Plumas taking folks to Moana Springs.

Black and his wife Adna married and moved into the bungalow in 1936. Harmon said his great uncle built an addition on the back of the home by enclosing the back porch. Black added the decorative brick boundary walls and an extensive outdoor kitchen in the southwest corner of the front yard. Harmon said Black used the outdoor kitchen to entertain his clients, workers, and members of the several organizations to which he belonged: the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Elks, Freemasons, Shriners and the First Congregational Church. Pancake breakfasts were Bill's specialty.

Black and Adna did not have children of their own. Harmon said his father, Robert, was like a son to them, and so he inherited the home upon their passing. Robert did not live in the home but used it as a rental. Renters of note included lead dancers from the long-running *Hello Hollywood Hello*, iconic stage show at the MGM Grand.

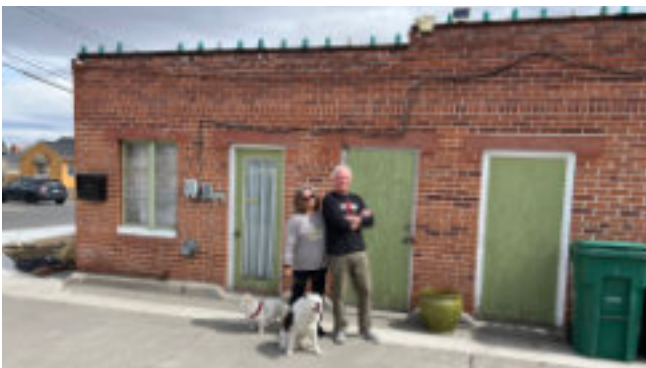
Robert offered the home to his son when Bob and his wife Barb decided to move to Reno from Los Angeles in 1995. The couple remodeled the kitchen by combining it with the breakfast nook to increase square footage and natural light. Harmon said when they demoed walls, they found that Black had used gunny sacks for insulation in his addition. Harmon's contractor told him that the sacks would have been good insulation during the Depression when Black did the remodel and materials were scarce. Harmon wishes he had kept a couple of the sacks for display.

Another improvement the Harmons made to the property is the addition of a side garden in memory of Black. Harmon said when he moved into the home the side yard was full of waist-high weeds. When he cleared them and started to dig, he was surprised to find rich, black soil. He learned the area had been Bill and Adna's Victory Garden during WWII.

The Blacks

Black was born in 1900 in Colorado and moved to Yerington, NV, where he completed seventh grade. He worked as an auto mechanic, in ranching and as a mason with his father, Benjamin F. Black, until he joined the U.S. Army in 1918. After the Army he was a truck driver. Then from 1922-29 Black was Superintendent of Maintenance at the Tallac Resort and the Anita M. Baldwin Estate in Tallac, CA, on Tahoe's south shore.

In the mid-1920s, Black moved to Reno where he also worked construction and started his own brick contracting firm



Barb and Bob Harmon re-enact the poses of Bill and Ben Black in front of what was once the Nevada Fire Extinguisher Service office with their dogs Cato and Bailey. Photo by Amy Burton.

with his brother Ben. Obviously, Black was not an idle man.

In the 1930s, Black was the State Emergency Conservation Administration engineer from 1933-1934, and the Assistant District Engineer for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), Mill Creek Camp (near Battle Mountain, NV) from 1935-1936. Harmon said while his great uncle was in the CCC, he worked on a project to control Mormon Crickets. Harmon also believes his great uncle was involved with the masonry work at Stewart Park in the Wells Addition of Reno. Black's obituary in the *Reno Gazette Journal* stated he was also a state surveyor.

Black's wife, Adna M. Brown, was the daughter of Cora May Ede Sellman (the daughter of a pioneer family in Sierra Valley, CA) and Charles Peleg Brown of the Brown Ranch located south of Reno. Adna preceded Bill in death in 1980.

The Boy

Harmon was a boy when his family would visit the Blacks. Harmon's father was in the Navy, and when relocating between duty stations they would visit Bill and Adna in Reno.

Family lore recalls Black being friends with Bill Harrah of Harrah's hotel and casinos. Harmon remembers going with his great uncle to see Harrah's automobile collection when it was stored in a huge warehouse. This was before the development of the National Automobile Museum in downtown Reno that now houses part of that collection. Harmon remembers the collection was immense. "It went on and on like a huge parking lot," Harmon said. "In addition to all makes and models of cars it included mobile homes and even airplanes," he said, still with the wonder of a young boy in his voice.

Harmon's favorite memory of his great uncle is the time they drove to Feather River to check on a mining interest. Harmon laughed as he



Front porch of the bungalow at 2600 Plumas today. Photo by Amy Burton.

remembered how nervous he was driving on the narrow dirt roads with sheer drop offs and no guard rails through the mountains in Black's bouncing truck.

Black was a rockhound. He collected all kinds of rocks and minerals and displayed them in old ore carts on his Plumas property. (One remains today in the backyard.) Harmon remembers sitting with Black on a large pile of rocks during that trip. His great uncle had a little pickax and would select rocks, break some open and tell him about them.

As a 14-year-old, Harmon wasn't as interested as he would be now. "What I wouldn't give to be able to sit with Bill again and ask him the questions I have now—all that family history. Unfortunately, we don't appreciate our elders when we're young. The more we live here, the more special Bill and Adna become to us. There was something very patriarchal about Bill." 

Information for this article was informed by interviews with Bob and Barb Harmon, research by Deb Hinman of HRPS, John Hoffa of the Nevada Historical Society, the Golf Historical Society, the Washoe County Recorder and Assessor's offices and Newspapers.com.

Amy Burton is a HRPS member, walking tour guide, former administrator, and FootPrints contributor and proofreader.



HRPS and Artown Present July 2025 Historic Walking Tours



Reservations required and space is limited. Free to HRPS members, \$20/pp for non-members.

Please go to www.historicreno.org for reservations. If tour is full, you will be placed on a wait list and notified by email if space opens. Call 775-747-4478 for information.

Please arrive 15 minutes early to check in and sign the required liability waiver. Wear comfortable shoes. A hat, sunglasses, and water bottle are advised in warm weather. **No dogs or baby strollers allowed.** Please note, some neighborhoods may have uneven walking surfaces and sidewalk barriers which may make it difficult for people with mobility issues.

Walks generally last 1 ½ to 2 hours.

**Tuesday
July 1
6:00PM**

MIDTOWN RESIDENTIAL — Join us for a walk along shady streets in the neighborhoods of several early additions: the Litch Addition, part of the original 72-acre Litch Ranch, the McCarthy Addition and the Sierra Vista Addition. 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 area could be considered yet another “Little Italy”! Meet at the northwest corner of Mary Street and South Virginia Street. **Guide: Debbie Hinman**



**Saturday
July 5
9:00AM**

TRUCKEE RIVER ALL THE TIME — Learn about Reno’s relationship with the Truckee River over time. Hear about the great floods and of Reno’s architectural heritage, listen to 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 Grille at the Riverside Artists’ Lofts, 17 South Virginia Street. **Guides: Jim & Sue Smith and Bradley Carlson**



**Sunday
July 6
9:00 AM**

UNR HISTORIC DISTRICT — Visit Morrill Hall, Mackay School of Mines and the Keck Museum to learn the history of this beautiful campus. Meet on campus at the Honor Court just off 9th and Center Streets. **Guide: Joy Orlich**



**Tuesday
July 8
6:00PM**

HISTORIC NEVADA STATE HOSPITAL — Visit Nevada’s first state hospital (originally the Nevada Insane Asylum) at Galetti Way and Glendale Avenue in Sparks, one of the state’s oldest institutions. The tour will include a look at the remaining Frederic DeLongchamps’ buildings, a walk by the 100-year-old Stone House, and a visit to the hospital cemeteries. Park in the circular driveway on the Galetti Way side. Meet at the Nevada historical marker. **Guide: Brett Banks**



**Saturday
July 12
9:00AM**

MOVIE FOOTPRINTS IN RENO — Walk in the footsteps of Marilyn Monroe, Clint Eastwood, Helen Mirren and more. Explore downtown’s film history inspired by divorce, gambling and the city’s distinct look in such movies as *The Misfits*, *Sister Act* and *Love Ranch*. Meet by the north-east lobby entrance of the National Automobile Museum, 10 South Lake Street. **Guide: Robin Holabird**





HRPS and Artown Present July 2025 Historic Walking Tours



**Tuesday
July 15
6:00PM**

POWNING ADDITION — Discover one of Reno's earliest and most delightful vernacular neighborhoods, predominantly settled by Northern Italian immigrants. This neighborhood is the first City of Reno Conservation District. Meet in front of the McKinley Arts & Culture Center, 925 Riverside Drive. **Guide: Stasia Mata**



**Saturday
July 19
9:00 AM**

EAST FOURTH STREET — From country road to railroad hub, the Lincoln Highway or U.S. 40, is a historic corridor where century-old brick hotels, warehouses, railways and manufacturing buildings are preserved and revitalized. Meet on the Evans St. side of Louis' Basque Corner, 301 E. Fourth Street. **Guide: Brett Banks**



**Tuesday
July 22
6:00PM**

MONROE STREET — Savor the history and architecture of this lovely residential area south of the Newlands Neighborhood. See the Sewell House, the Hart House, the Patrick Ranch House, Greystone Castle, the Jack Dempsey House and other interesting properties. Meet at the corner of Monroe and Manor Drives. **Guide: Debbie Hinman**



**Saturday
July 26
9:00AM**

DELONGCHAMPS RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE — Enjoy this tour of homes, 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 outside the Hardy House/Arte Italia, 442 Flint Street. **Guide: David Sholtz**



**Sunday
July 27
9:00AM**

RENO PARKS' HISTORIES BY BIKE — Enjoy a leisurely 7-mile (one way) bike ride on the Tahoe-Pyramid Trail, with frequent stops, to discover the rich history of Reno parks along the Truckee River. Hear about residents Mayberry, Dorostkar, Caughlin, Newland, and Wingfield, who are immortalized in Reno's history through their contributions to our city's parks. Meet at the California Building in Idlewild Park and end at Mayberry Park (ride back on your own). Bring your bike and helmet. **Guide: Jill Richardson**



Someone You Should Know: Arthur Chester Langan

by Sarah Patton

Arthur Chester Langan, described in his *Reno Evening Gazette* obituary as “a world vagabond of diversified interests,” was a mining man, filmmaker, polar explorer, and hotel-casino operator who came to call Reno home.

Born in Deadwood, South Dakota in the 1870s, Langan’s interests and career took him throughout the West, from the arctic to South America, from Africa to Europe, and ultimately to Reno. According to his telling, Langan “hit the road at the age of 12.” His first visit to Nevada was in 1890, acting as the advance man for the Nat C. Goodwin show that was playing the McKissick Opera House. At the beginning of the new century, he returned from Alaska after seeking gold there and made his way to Tonopah after learning of a gold strike in that area. Langan traveled with Frank Golden, namesake of the Golden Hotel, and was eventually responsible for the first public Christmas tree in the hotel, with an apple on top for John Sparks, future Nevada governor.

Langan mined at Rawhide and Wonder, Nevada, and was the director of several mining firms, including the Coalition Hooligan Mines and Leasing Company. He prospected for gold and iron in Siberia; for oil in European Russia and Rumania; for gold and iron in the Arctic regions, in

Baffin’s Land; for gold, silver, copper, iron and oil throughout the West; for gold in South Africa up the Rand river.

Langan invested in oil fields in Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma. In the early 1920s, he was involved with a real estate project in California, Lincoln Beach, which ultimately did not come to fruition but that was intended to be for people of color. He partnered with promoter Tex Rickard to stage boxing matches, was involved with horseracing, and was a member of the Reno Athletic Club.

During his lifetime, Langan was well known as a filmmaker. He was president of the Sun Photoplay Company, Inc., manager of the A.C.L. Feature Film Company, and creator of the Alco Motion Picture corporation. He produced numerous films and most notably was the filmmaker for the 1912 A. W. “Lucky” Scott polar expedition. His film of the expedition, *Top of the World*, produced great profits for the venture. Langan was noted as being the “originator of the mechanical and electrical display fronts in American picture theaters.”

Langan had a knack for being in places at historic moments. He went to San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake and sent back correspondence to Nevada newspapers about the aftermath. Langan was in Berlin when World War I began, made his way to Paris, and left shortly before it fell. His steamship back from South America, the *Heredia*, arrived shortly after the armistice was signed and was one of the first ships to come into New York Harbor with its lights on.

A local exploit in 1910 involved participating in setting a speed record driving from Carson City to Reno with Colonel Bert Lundy. The trip between the *Nevada State Journal* office in Reno and the Arlington Hotel in Carson took one hour, one minute, and thirty seconds; their highest speed was 54 miles per hour, with an average speed of 40 miles per hour.



The photo of the Deauville Club is part of the Arthur Chester Langan Papers, MSNC00415. Nevada Historical Society Deauville-003.

In the early 1930s, Langan opened the Deauville Club at 43 West First Street in Reno. An article in the *Nevada State Journal* from May 9, 1931, noted, “Designed to reproduce the attractions of French pleasure resorts, the luxuriously appointed Deauville cabaret and casino will open doors to the Reno public within 30 days...Of approximately 5000 feet of floor space, about 1000 feet will be dance floor...” From reviewing newspaper articles of the time, it seems that the Deauville Club opened around the end of July 1931, but by November of that same year there were news stories about it being bankrupt. However, ads continued to appear in the paper, and on June 30, 1933, there was a grand reopening under new management.

Langan died in Reno in his home at 100 Court Street on June 15, 1964, at the age of 92. He is buried in Mountain View Cemetery. His scrapbooks, photographs, and other memorabilia were donated to the Nevada Historical Society in 1984 and help ensure that his memory lives on for future generations. 



This photo of Langan appeared in an April 21, 1960 *Nevada State Journal* article by Art Long about Langan. NHS Nevada-011.

Sarah Patton is the archivist at the Nevada Historical Society, where she oversees the library, photograph, and manuscript collections; runs the Research Library; and responds to reference inquiries. Prior to her arrival at the NHS in 2022, she was the Research Services Manager at the Hoover Institution Library & Archives at Stanford University.

STAYING POWER

RECIPES FOR SUCCESS AT LONGTIME LOCAL RESTAURANTS

by Sharon Honig-Bear

Note: this article has been updated from its publication in *Edible Reno-Tahoe* magazine in Fall, 2021. I am proud to write a column called Edible Traditions, which identifies and explores the cultural traditions of the area, with an emphasis on dining and agriculture history. The magazine is available by subscription or you can pick up a free copy in many restaurants, stores and watering holes. Famed author Jonathan Safran Foer once said, "Stories about food are stories about us—our history and our values." I couldn't agree more!

This is a story about successful restaurants that have endured through changing tastes, changing economics, and even a pandemic. Our region is rich with restaurants that have persisted for generations. Call them landmark restaurants, iconic restaurants. Call this story the *Good News Express*.

These icons spread across our region, from Reno to Lake Tahoe to Genoa. Location doesn't seem to be the key to success but rather family, comfort, innovative cuisine, and memorable dining experiences create a winning formula. Their popularity has spanned decades, creating generations of repeat customers.

It's difficult to unravel claims about which is the oldest, complicated by questions such as "Is the restaurants still in the same location?" (which eliminates The Little Waldorf and Miguel's) Does the founding family still own it? (knocking Louis' and Walley's out of contention). Is the place in California or Nevada? This story avoids these distractions and simply celebrates their history and identifies factors that contributed to their success.

IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR

Most of the restaurants with staying power have strong family commitment behind them. Top contender is **Bacchi's Italian Dining**, open for 83 years — a feat even more remarkable given its location at Lake Tahoe and the challenges of reaching it before modern roads were built. The

restaurant represents four generations. When George and Josephine Bacchi opened the restaurant in 1932, you were served what Josephine was cooking that day. Drawing on her Sicilian roots, she produced the famed chicken and ravioli Sunday dinners, priced at just a buck. Her style of cooking passed on to three generations and the place is now run by the father and son team Bill and Everett Hunter. They continue to serve spaghetti topped with a gigantic meatball, veal scallopini ala Marsala, and chicken parmigiana, all on classic red and white-checked tablecloths.

The rich and famous came calling. Wealthy philanthropist Lora J. Knight, who commissioned Vikingsholm castle in Emerald Bay, encouraged Josephine to start the restaurant. The cast and crew of *Bonanza* would show up while filming at the Lake. When *The Godfather* was being produced in Tahoe, Al Pacino and Diane Keaton came in to eat. Still located in the original building, Everett has said the reason for the restaurant's longevity is simple: "It's all about family."



The original Bacchi's building in 1932.
Photo by Lou Manni.

Before we move on, let's tip our hat to two other long-running, family-run Italian spots, both located on the main east-west highway of earlier times—U.S. Highway 40, now more commonly referred to as Fourth St. On the east end, is **Casale's Halfway Club**. Casale's evolved from a produce stand in the 1930s to a restaurant by 1941. John and Elvira Casale founded the operation with daughter "Mama" Inez. Mama's husband Casimir "Steamboat" Stempeck, and brother Jerry became partners. Since 1969, Mama Inez has run the beloved local eatery with her children and, more recently, her grandchildren. In 2013, Casale's was recognized as the oldest continuously family-owned and operated restaurant in Reno (and possibly in Nevada) with a Lifetime Achievement Award from Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval. Mama passed away in late 2020 and her son Tony followed weeks later. Tony's sister Maria and his daughter Haley run Casale's today with the help of other family members. They have vowed to keep the tradition alive and have years of experience to help them accomplish this.

Johnny's Ristorante Italiano (known as Johnny's Little Italy in earlier days) is a Reno fine dining experience without a checked tablecloth in sight. In 1966, Johnny and Mary Cassinari brought traditional Italian cooking to the west end of U.S. 40. Son Louis carries on the tradition of hospitality and high-quality dishes such as parmesan-crusted petrale sole, linguine with shrimp and asparagus in a saffron cream sauce, and osso buco.

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Staying Power

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BRING SOMETHING NEW

Ethnic restaurants, beyond the ever-popular Italian, were scarce in our area fifty-plus years ago. Some wise restaurateurs stepped in—and some places are still with us today.

Although the Basques have been in Nevada since the Gold Rush and Basque hotels dot the Western landscape, it wasn't until after World War II that Basque establishments opened to the general public, allowing a restaurant such as **J.T. Basque Bar and Dining Room** to make its mark. The name of the restaurant derives from the initials of the previous owners, the Jaunsaras and the Troundays, who opened a restaurant in 1955.

The story picks up five years later when on April Fool's Day, 1960, two immigrant brothers purchased the restaurant. It's been a family affair since. Jean Lekumberry was 22 in 1947 when he left the French Basque Pyrenees. He arrived in Gardnerville with \$32 in his pocket and found work as a sheepherder. His brother Pete soon followed and together, with Jean's wife Shirley, they purchased the restaurant. The family roles were clear: Jean at the bar, Uncle Pete in the kitchen, and Shirley in the dining room.

Jean and Shirley raised their three children, Robert, Marie-Louise, and J.B. to

learn every aspect of the business. Jean died in 1993 and today, Marie-Louise runs the bar and the front of the house, and J.B. runs the kitchen. The J.T.'s success can be traced to its strong family involvement, its authentic traditions, and as Marie-Louise says, "We have the greatest staff ever."

There's another iconic Basque restaurant in our region: **Louis' Basque Corner**, a treasured Reno restaurant since 1967. This historic spot along Fourth Street was constructed in 1906-07. Louis Erreguible, also an emigrant from the French Pyrenees, and wife Lorraine opened Louis' as a testament to their Basque heritage. Upon retirement in 2011, the business was sold to current owners Chris Shanks and Brian Elcano who carry on Louis' family-style seating, traditional menu, and servers outfitted in Basque costumes. It seems no visit to Reno is complete without a picon punch at Louis'.

Known as a community leader, as well as the founder of his namesake **Miguel's**, Miguel Ribera bought a restaurant at 1415 South Virginia Street in 1959. He became something of an ambassador for Mexican food to an eager local community. He moved to another location for a brief time in the seventies,



Charles and Inez Stempeck prepare homemade pasta in the kitchen at Casale's Halfway Club.

Photo courtesy of Casale's.

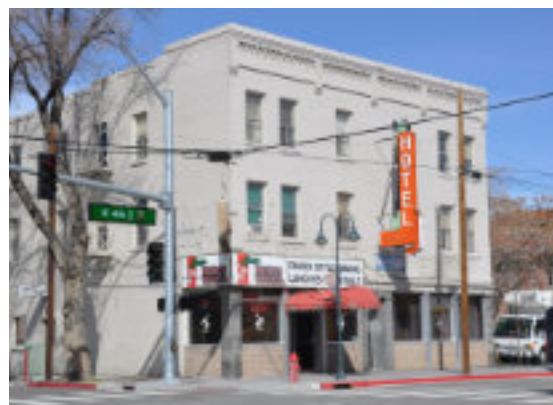
and the Virginia Street space became a succession of restaurants. By 1980, Miguel's was back on Virginia Street. Current owners Elmer and Addie Figueroa bought the business after Ribera died in 1998. The spot likes to describe itself as northern Nevada's first Mexican restaurant and now there is a second location at the Summit Sierra.

TRIED AND TRUE IS A WINNING FORMULA

A restaurant doesn't need novelty to succeed. The familiar always has a place. Reno's **Gold 'N Silver Inn** has been at the vanguard of the comfort food front for over 60 years, calling itself "Reno's Oldest Casual Dining Restaurant." The fact that it never closes sets it apart. This was also a family place: the restaurant was in Jeff Paine's family since 1962 when his father, Charles Paine, and his father's business partner, Floyd Nye, bought the restaurant from the founder Harry Bond,



A jovial crowd gathers at J.T. Basque Bar and Dining Room in Gardnerville in the early 1990s. Photo courtesy of J.T. Basque.



Louis Basque Corner has graced this Fourth Street location since 1967, but the building has been on this site c. 1906. Fourth Street was originally known as the Lincoln Highway mid-twenties and then became U.S. 40.

who first built the building. In 1989, Jeff stepped in to oversee the restaurant and in 1999 he became the sole owner. Publicity certainly contributed to its longevity. When Guy Fieri's popular television show *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives* featured the Gold 'N Silver in 2010, Jeff saw a 25% increase in business overnight. Over the years, Gold 'N Silver's menu has been tweaked to add items such as Asian salads and salmon fillets but American comfort food still reigns. Jacobs Entertainment recently bought the enterprise from Jeff and will close the restaurant for about six months, starting in the summer of 2025, for renovations. Jacobs' press release says they will retain its "unmistakable vintage charm" and I certainly hope the Googie-style sign at the corner of Fourth and Vine remains.

Proximity to the University of Nevada, Reno has helped a few restaurants achieve landmark status. **The Little Waldorf** (affectionately known as The Wal) might be a contender as the oldest Reno eatery-- with some clarification. Although founded in 1922 by Charles Meyers, it moved locations twice and the current building only hails to 1982. Ownership shifted in 2006 to the corporation SES Nevada. They created an instant urban legend saying the Little Waldorf was founded by Red A. The Wal has endured and remained popular for generations of UNR students and alumni.

Just a bit west of the University sits the ever-popular **Pub n' Sub**. Maybe it was foolish for Steve Mathers to begin his



Miguel Ribera cooks up Mexican food in the kitchen at the original Miguel's in Reno. Photo courtesy of Miguel's.

business on Friday the 13th (of December, 1974) but it has proven to be a tucked-away success story. The building was built about 1950 as a grocery store and Steve purchased it in the early 1980s, adding a full kitchen in 1983. It's been churning out pizzas, burgers, subs, and other crowd-pleasing foods ever since.

The **1862 Restaurant & Saloon** at David Walley's Resort can claim to be the oldest building, back to when Walley's Hot Springs was built in 1862. Famed for its baths, Walley's has welcomed such historic figures as Presidents Ulysses S. Grant, Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt, and Mark Twain. Many ownership shifts have occurred over the years and Walley's is currently the property of Holiday Inn Club Vacations. The restaurant offers fine-dining dishes along with salads, sandwiches, and burgers.

These are shining examples of local success stories-- but is not an exhaustive list. Failure rates for restaurants are legendary, with one of the most commonly cited statistic saying that 60 % of restaurants don't make it past their first year

and 80 percent go out of business within five years. Not for these restaurants. Despite name changes, ownership shifts, and shifting tastes, these landmarks of the Reno-Tahoe area live on, enticing new generations of dedicated diners. 

Sharon Honig-Bear was the long-time restaurant writer for the Reno Gazette Journal and now writes a regular column on food history for Edible Reno-Tahoe magazine. She is a past president of Historic Reno Preservation Society, founder of the annual Reno Harvest of Homes Tour and co-leads a Memoir Writing group for UNR's OLLI program. She can be reached at sharonbear@sbcglobal.net

Listing of names, addresses, and phone numbers of the restaurants mentioned in this story. Enjoy!

Bacchi's Italian Dining

2905 Lake Forest Rd, Tahoe City, CA
530-583-3324

Casale's Halfway Club

2501 E. Fourth St, Reno
775-323-3979

Johnny's Ristorante Italiano

4245 W. Fourth St, Reno
775-747-4511

J.T. Basque Bar and Dining Room

1426 Highway 395, Gardnerville
775-782-2074

Louis' Basque Corner

301 E. Fourth St, Reno
775-323-7203

Miguel's

1415 S. Virginia St., Reno
775-322-2722

Gold 'N Silver Inn

790 W. Fourth St., Reno
775-323-2696

Little Waldorf

1661 N. Virginia St., Reno
775-337-9255

Pub N' Sub

1000 Ralston St., Reno
775-322-8540

David Walley's Restaurant and Saloon

2001 Foothill Road, Genoa
775-782-8155



This historic photo of Gold 'N Silver hangs in the restaurant. Photo by Lou Manna.

A Message From Your HRPS President - Summer

Hello HRPS Members and Friends,

The month of May is designated as National Preservation Month, with the inaugural observance held in May 1973. First Lady, Patricia Nixon, read the presidential proclamation:

“As the pace of change accelerates in the world around us, Americans more than ever need a lively awareness of our roots and origins in the past on which to base our sense of identity in the present and our directions for the future.”

This year's theme is the Power of Place. Most of us have fond memories of a place we grew up in or visited as a child. Someplace that provided warmth or comfort, that felt inviting and special. Maybe it was the building or the people who lived there. Maybe you had your own special niche, a closet, a corner, a cupboard, or a playroom.

Can you think of it now? What memories come back to you?

The importance of saving historic structures goes beyond retaining the physical building. It's also about retaining the history of the people who lived or worked there. Our annual Historic Walking Tour program begins in May as a way to celebrate Historic Preservation Month. Our volunteer tour guides have researched the neighborhoods, homes, businesses, and the people who lived and worked there, to give you a sense of how our community grew and evolved into what you see today.

Our more prosperous and well-kept neighborhoods are the most likely to survive, but there are other, equally interesting but more modest neighborhoods that haven't had as much loving care that are also worth noting. Homes between Lake Street and Wells Ave., and Interstate 80 and E. Sixth Street, for instance. Many of these



HRPS' President Joy Orlich

homes date back to the era of the Gateway homes, i.e. late 1800s and early 1900s. They were walking distance to downtown, the E. Fourth Street commercial district, and of course, the University.

Immigrants and working class people were among the early residents, and though their names might not be notable, these families very much made up the fabric of our community from its earliest days.

Historian and author, Alicia Barber, has been working to document the histories of Reno's underrepresented communities. She recently gave a talk at the Nevada Museum of Art in conjunction with the exhibit, "When Langston Hughes Came to Town" (through February 15, 2026), sharing new research on the Black community in Reno in the 1930s.

If not for the work of those such as Alicia Barber, Debbie Hinman, Sharon Honig-Bear, Neal Cobb, Jerry Fenwick, Jim Smith, Brett Banks and others, much of Reno's history would remain unknown and ultimately forgotten. They make it possible for the rest of us carry an appreciation of that history forward.

New Lifetime Memberships

We welcome HRPS Secretary Deedee Pace as our newest Lifetime Member.

Deedee volunteers for our walking tours and the Home Tour, and continues serving as our Membership Chair. Thank you, Deedee for your commitment to HRPS!

We are pleased to welcome another Lifetime Membership – sisters Dawn Cassinelli Bunker and Julie Cassinelli Wiskerchen, a gift from Dawn's husband, Ken. The Cassinelli family were among the many Italian families who settled in northern Nevada in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Welcome Dawn and Julie!

Date set for 2025 Harvest of Homes Tour!

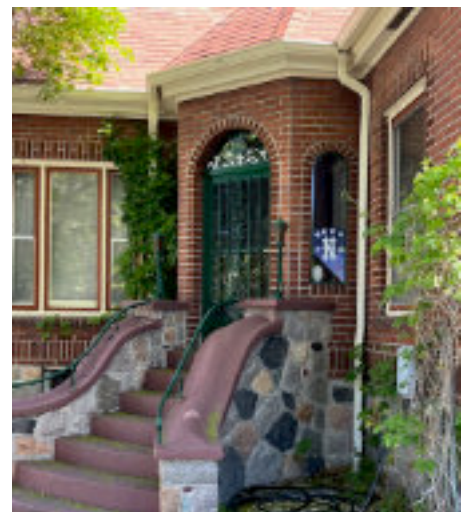
Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 20 for our 2025 Harvest of Homes Tour. We have six delightful homes to present, concentrated primarily in old Southwest Reno. We'll have full details in our next issue of *FootPrints*!

2025 Walking Tours

Our Walking Tours are in full swing from May to July. Enjoy a picture from our first day with the Newlands Walk, with a delightful home entrance, photographed by HRPS member Bill Kolton.

Joy Orlich

president@historicroeno.org
775-544-0686



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By joining **Historic Reno Preservation Society**, you become a member of a community group that celebrates Reno's history by sharing information and advocating for our endangered properties.

Members receive our monthly digital newsletter and our quarterly publication, *FootPrints*, with news of upcoming events, people and places of historical interest, as well as items of concern. Members receive free admission to our summer historic neighborhood walking tours, and a reduced rate to our annual historic homes tour. You also receive advance notice of our speaker programs which are free to attend.

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

Please return this form with your check made payable to **HRPS, P.O. Box 14003, Reno, NV 89507**. You may also join and pay online with a credit card on our website: <https://www.historicreno.org>.

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