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Historic Reno PRESERVATION SOCIETY

FootPrints

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

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Reno and the Chinese Experience

by Debbie Hinman

Throughout its brief past, Reno has had an unfortunate history of intolerance toward other races and cultures. Even Caucasian immigrants, such as the Irish and Italians, were looked down on and often persecuted by those born in the United States. But the attitudes toward and the treatment of the Chinese immigrants were particularly harsh.

What drove the Chinese to leave China and come to such a decidedly different environment? As with many other groups, it was the promise of wealth offered by the California gold discovery in 1849. Chinese immigrants flocked to the West hoping to make their fortunes and return to China as wealthy men.

The Chinese worked many jobs. In 1856, well before Charles Fuller built a rickety bridge over the Truckee, Chinese were brought into Nevada to Gold Canyon to dig a ditch. They established the first Chinatown in the state, which was renamed Dayton in 1861 by surveyor John Day.

Some of these immigrants found their way to Virginia City, where they were not welcomed in the mining industry. The Chinese population was predominantly male, but many turned to "women's work," such as cooking and laundering, as a means of support.

The largest groups finding their way to Nevada did so following their employment with the Central Pacific Railroad. When little progress was made on the railroad track from Sacramento eastward between 1863 and 1865, during which only 50 miles of track was laid across relatively flat land, the Central Pacific began hiring Chinese. For little pay, these workers risked their lives blasting through rock and laying track across mountainous terrain in freezing winter conditions. Without their efforts, the construction of the railroad through the Sierra Nevada

would have taken much longer—delaying the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad and seriously impeding the economic development of Reno.

The Chinese presence in Reno dates from June 19, 1868, when the Sacramento-to-Reno sector of the Central Pacific was officially placed in use. Not having accrued the wealth they had envisioned, they could not afford to return to China; instead, they gathered any scraps of building materials they could find and established a ramshackle shantytown on the north bank of the Truckee River, along Front (First) Street between Virginia and Center streets.



A Chinese gambling house in Reno around 1900, opposite Cash's store.
Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.

Work was scarce for the Chinese in the fledgling town, and made even more elusive because of the resentment against the Chinese who were willing to work for low wages. Chinatown continued to grow—much to the consternation of many townsfolk. The 1879 census reported 81 Chinese in Reno compared with 340 other foreign-born and 695 U.S.-born residents. Local newspapers were scathing in their remarks about the Chinese, who they referred to as Orientals, Celestials and

Chinks. An 1871 *Nevada State Journal* editorial stated: "For sanitary and other reasons, this class of our population should always be removed from the center of towns, where they are a source of annoyance both by day and by night. Their unearthly noises and heathenish habits ill accord with the quiet that obtains among a civilized people and in Reno, especially, they are an unmitigated nuisance." In 1869, the Anti-Asian Circle was formed in Nevada, followed in 1873 by the Order of Caucasians. The *Reno Evening Gazette* even offered free advertising to any business willing to fire Chinese and hire white workers.

As they had in Virginia City, the Chinese in Reno provided services, such as laundering, to whites; the first wash house

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appeared on Commercial Row in 1873. Within three years, there were six Chinese laundries in town. Some Chinese found employment as cooks and domestic help in private homes. In *Tough Little Town on the Truckee*, John M. Townley states, "Probably the first uniquely Chinese business" was small-plot intensive gardening. He names three major fruit and vegetable gardens in the city: one north of the river, a plot northwest of the V&T bridge and one at Riverside Drive and Ralston Street.

In August 1878, after a Chinese firm won the contract to build the Truckee-Steamboat Springs irrigation canal, resentment erupted against "the Celestials" and a fire destroyed more than half of the Chinese section of the city. In the space of an hour, 50 buildings were destroyed. Firefighters just barely saved the white sector of the city. A newly-formed organization called the Workingmen's Club had been vocal about the contract, and their involvement in the fire was rumored. The Workingmen had been meeting in a downtown hall and had called for a prohibition on the use of Chinese laborers in the city when the fire began. The official story about the fire was that it was caused by a one-armed gambler named Canty Salisbury. Involved in a tryst with a Chinese prostitute, Canty was said to have gotten into a fight with her pimp, shot him in the head, and in the scuffle dashed a lamp to the ground, igniting the building.

The following day's *Reno Evening Gazette* story entitled "Aliens in Ashes" revealed the prevalent and unsympathetic attitude toward the Chinese: "The Chinamen early commenced to pack their worldly goods and flee from the burning buildings. They rushed about in all directions, thoroughly confused and agitated, each with an armful of rubbish. They reminded one of ants whose nest had been torn open, each

rushing away with a load, no two going in the same direction, and every inch of ground swarming with life." Following the fire, city leaders decided that the displaced Orientals could move farther down on First Street, between Lake and East Streets (now Evans Avenue). Those Chinese who were reluctant to leave their area east of Virginia Street were run off by gangs who burned the remainder of their buildings—with no legal repercussions.



*Cash's store in Chinatown in 1900. Cash's began advertising "Hot Chop Suey" served day and night in 1904.
Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.*

The hiring ban put forth by the Workingmen did not prevent the Nevada-California-Oregon (N-C-O) Railway from hiring 80 Chinese out of a total workforce of 240 men to help connect Nevada and California with the Pacific Northwest, beginning in 1881. Once the railroad was built, the Chinese continued to be employed by the N-C-O to work on track crews, clearing winter snow off the tracks with shovels.

Anti-Chinese sentiments, aggravated by the economic depression of the 1870s, flared until Congress responded in 1882 with a Chinese Exclusion Act. This law excluded Chinese laborers, both skilled and unskilled, from entering the United States for ten years. The Act also declared the immigrants ineligible for citizenship and forbade them to marry outside their race. Following the passage of this

act, there was a period known as "The Driving Out." Communities in Colorado, Washington, Arizona, Wyoming and California forcibly drove the Chinese out, using whatever level of violence they deemed necessary.

In addition to the previously-mentioned anti-Chinese organizations in the local area, there were the Reno Anti-Coolie Society and the ominously named "601," a vigilante group with chapters throughout the West. One source explained the name as standing for "six feet under, zero trial, one bullet" and another as "600 good citizens, plus 1 who identified and 'got the goods on' the victim." In the year following the fire, a group of men believed to be associated with "601" searched through Chinatown for white youth who were known to frequent opium dens. Accounts in out-of-town newspapers spoke of murderous mobs breaking down doors, but the *Reno Evening Gazette* staunchly defended the group, categorizing them as "respectable white citizens, sober, God-fearing fathers of families, who risk the dangers of a raid upon Chinatown to rescue young boys from the vice of opium smoking." However, Reno never got to the point of a "Driving Out."

On the Fourth of July 1899, Chinatown was again ravaged by fire, losing several buildings along 200 feet of frontage property. Arson was suspected but never proved. One Chinese merchant who left his store open in a panic, lost \$200 in silk goods. In an unusual show of justice for the Chinese, a townsman possessing a new silk handkerchief obtained that same evening was convicted of theft and sentenced to 21 days in jail.

By 1900, Washoe County had the largest Chinese population in the state. One reason Reno's Chinese population survived was because it was an extension of San Francisco's Chinatown, supplying all of the Chinese residents in Nevada's rural areas with

Reno and the Chinese Experience (continued)

ethnic goods and services. The “town” was self-contained; Chinese doctors and herbalists attended to their own, food was grown for their use and they supplied their own clothing.

As with the disreputable parts of many towns, Chinatown was an exciting, forbidden adventure for local teenagers and young adults. Besides the attraction of opium, there were Chinese prostitutes, gambling and exotic foods. In the 1904 local newspapers, an establishment known as Cash’s brick store in Chinatown began advertising “Hot Chop Suey” served every night and day. A Chinese lottery game translated as “White Pigeon Ticket” was popular even among whites and survives to this day in Nevada casinos under the name Keno.

Although Chinatown was relocated farther from the city center following the 1878 fire, in the early part of the 20th century the anti-Chinese organizations, who still despised the Celestials, became more vocal about what they saw as the health hazard presented by Chinatown. They found a champion in Dr. Robinson, the chairman of the newly-formed Board of Health. In the fall of 1908, Dr. Robinson cited a 30-year accumulation of human waste in the “hovels of the Chinese,” open cesspools, and the presence of large, yellow rats overrunning the alleyways. He described dugouts beneath the hovels, where “opium-raddled wraiths” rarely saw the light of day. Robinson declared an imminent threat of a serious outbreak of disease. He took his findings to the Reno Grand Jury; they made their own inspection led by Foreman Charles Gulling and they apparently agreed with Dr. Robinson’s conclusions, ordering the entire area to be razed. What is not clear is whether the Chinese were informed of this plan. Reportedly this was communicated by rumor and word-of-mouth, fearing that an official statement might encourage organized efforts to prevent the action. Whatever notification might have

occurred, one cold and snowy evening late in October, Reno’s police, fire chiefs and city engineer supervised a group composed of prisoners and itinerant Negroes and Mexicans armed with axes, sledgehammers, crowbars, and torches as they destroyed Chinatown—with the exception of the buildings housing the Chinese prostitutes, often enjoyed by white townsmen. The attack began at a shack occupied by an elderly Oriental and a Negro prostitute named Bertha, then continued until the entire area



*The ruins of Reno's Chinatown after the fire of July 4, 1899.
Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.*

was in smoking ruins, leaving about 150 Chinese homeless and standing in the snow-lined street with only what they could carry.

This was the last Chinatown in Reno, although that sector of the city was the location for later Chinese clubs, restaurants and a Joss House. The Chinese who remained in Reno dispersed throughout the city. Between 1910 and 1950, the local Chinese population remained below 200. In the 1970s, the last vestiges of the Chinese experience, the New China Club building and the adjacent Hop Sing Tong building, both at Lake Street and Commercial Row, were torn down to accommodate more parking for Harrah’s. There were Chinese businesses on West Street as well as the office of the National Chinese Party.

In time, attitudes began to change and local residents became more appreciative of the Chinese, and the skill and work ethic it took to accomplish the feat of bringing the railroad across the Sierra Nevada. These attitudes reached a complete reversal in 1964, the year of Nevada’s Centennial. Nevada Historical Marker No. 29, “Chinese in Nevada,” stands in Sparks, bearing the inscription, “This honors the heroism and hardihood of the thousands of Chinese who played a major role in the history of Nevada. From across the Pacific the Chinese came to California during the gold rush of ‘49 and on to the mountains and deserts of this state where they built railroads, cut timber and performed countless humble tasks. Sizeable Chinese communities grew up here, in Virginia City and other towns. Their contributions to the progress of the state in its first century will be forever remembered by all Nevadans.”

The irony of these words will no doubt be remembered by all who know the history of the Chinese experience in Nevada. 

Thank you to NHS Docent and tireless researcher, Arline Laferry. Information came from various *Nevada State Journal* and *Reno Evening Gazette* stories, 1870s through 1910; *Chinese in 19th Century Nevada*, Ron James; *History of the Chinese in Nevada, 1855-1904*, Gary BeDunnah; *Chinese-American Contribution to Transcontinental Railroad*, John T. Doolittle; *The Legends and Lore of Dayton’s History*, Historical Society of Dayton Valley, Inc.; *The Chinese in Nevada: An Historical Survey, 1856-1970*, Loren B. Chan; and *They Stayed Chinese*, Lillian N. Ninnis, *Nevada Magazine*, Winter 1967.

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

Serendipity Strikes Again: A Nevada Architectural Treasure is Rediscovered

by Mella Rothwell Harmon

It may sound like a contradiction, but throughout my historic preservation career, I have relied on serendipity. Not that I can set my clock to it, but valuable bits of information seem to find their way to me from unexpected places. The latest serendipitous event has brought to light a heretofore unrecognized Nevada treasure. The bearer of these glad tidings was Deborah Brackstone, a librarian with the Art Museum of the University of Memphis. Deborah serves as the primary researcher for the Paul Revere Williams Project, an educational initiative developed by the University of Memphis with funding from a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Deborah's remarkable work can be viewed on the project's website www.paulreverewilliamsproject.org. Be sure to see her treatment of Paul R. Williams's Reno properties in the Gallery.

Paul Revere Williams (PRW) was a remarkable man—an architect who fought prejudice and discrimination to become the first African American member of the American Institute of Architects. Against long odds, he opened his own practice in Los Angeles in 1922 and quickly gained the title, “architect to the stars,” as the Hollywood elite clamored for his services. In 1931, he received a commission from automobile magnate, E. L. Cord, to design a \$300,000,

32,000-square-foot home in Beverly Hills. The Cord estate became a standing advertisement for Williams's work.

Through his connections with Cord and other wealthy southern Californians, Paul Williams designed a number of buildings in Nevada, beginning with the Luella Garvey House in Reno in 1934. The list of known PRW properties in Reno includes the Rafael Herman House at Rancho San Rafael Park, Loomis Manor Apartments, the First Church of Christ, Scientist, and the El Reno Apartments. In southern Nevada, he designed the ranch buildings at E. L. Cord's Circle L Ranch outside Dyer, the Carver Park housing development at the Basic Magnesium Plant in Henderson, and the La Concha Motel, the Guardian Angel Cathedral, the O. H. Nelson residence—among others—in Las Vegas.

The Paul Revere Williams project has attracted a lot of attention from architecture aficionados and owners of Paul R. Williams buildings. As a result, numerous attributions have been made, all of which require substantiation. Sometimes there is insufficient evidence or the claims turn out to be false—usually to the owner's great disappointment. But sometimes, with persistence and digging, the sought-after confirmation is found and a treasure is unearthed. Such is the case with the Lovelock Inn and the residence next door to it in Lovelock, Nevada.

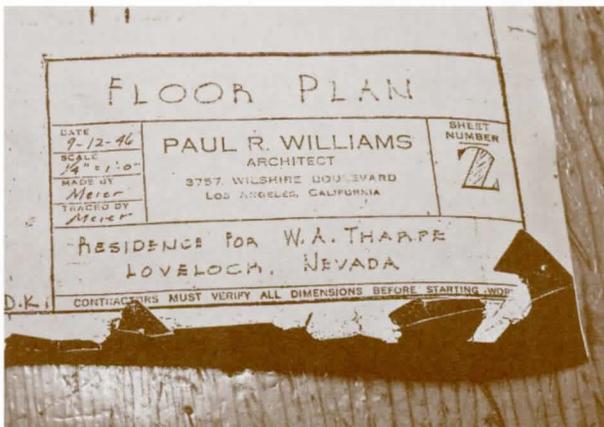
I was skeptical when Deborah mentioned that she had heard from a real estate agent in Lovelock



The Lovelock Inn's western feel is enhanced by its porches, railings and dormers. Photo courtesy Sam Brackstone, 2010.

about a Paul Revere Williams motel that was currently on the market. I think I said, “Well, I sure would be surprised.” And so I was! Had it not been for the Paul R. Williams Project and Deborah Brackstone's dogged determination to follow each and every lead, the origin of these properties would have remained hidden—or, at the least, doubted. Not only is the Lovelock Inn another arrow in Nevada's architectural-history quiver, but it also helps us understand the other Paul R. Williams buildings in the state as well as to elucidate additional important themes in Nevada's history.

The Lovelock Inn is linked to E. L. Cord, the famous automobile manufacturer and investor in numerous Nevada endeavors including ranching, mining and radio. The Lovelock Inn was connected to automobile tourism in Nevada in the mid-twentieth century before the Interstate Highway was re-routed to by-pass the towns that had flourished along the original transcontinental road. The inn was the brainchild of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Tharpe of Indiana. In the 1940s, the couple set their sights on opening a motor inn. When World War II ended in 1945, Americans were eager to hit the road. The automobile was the perfect mode of travel for growing families, giving rise to the peculiarly American phenomenon, “The Family Vacation.” A motor inn seemed like an excellent investment and the Tharpes came west in hopes of finding the perfect location for their new endeavor.



The smoking gun, proof that Paul Revere Williams designed the property. Photo courtesy Sam Brackstone, 2010.

Serendipity Strikes Again (continued)

Mrs. Tharpe's uncle, E. L. Cord, suggested they try Nevada, and after touring the state, they settled on a large parcel fronting U. S. Highway 40 south of Lovelock. Lovelock was well situated—between Winnemucca and Reno—for transcontinental automobile travelers. There was little in the way of competition there and it happened to be close to Uncle E. L.'s vacation ranch. Cord also recommended that the Tharpes engage Paul Revere Williams to design their motel, as well as a house for themselves.

The Lovelock Inn opened in spring 1949. An advertisement in the December 1948 issue of Nevada Magazine described the motel as “new and beautiful” and as a “house by the side of the road with an ever-welcome light shining for the travel weary.” The Tharpes offered western-styled luxury and comfort, and the cachet of Paul Revere Williams's design, aimed at the sophisticated traveler. Before beginning construction on the inn, Williams designed a home next door for the Tharpes.

As a level-headed Midwesterner, Bill Tharpe insisted that Williams's design be of the highest quality: solid and durable, and be able to stay warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Built at a cost of \$260,000, the 33-unit, single-story, brick, wood, and stone building featured a six-foot deep wrap-around porch that gave the building its western flare. False dormers on the office section added to the feel of a ranch house. The roof was covered in bright red-orange shingles, easily visible from the highway. The roof is still visible today in Google Earth.

Paul Revere Williams was known for capturing romance and elegance in simple designs. He did the same with the Lovelock Inn. The exterior was unadorned masonry with large casement windows. In contrast, Williams poured his prodigious artistic skills into the lavish interior. He selected knotty pine, rock maple, and wormwood for cornices, doors, ceilings, and walls. Each

room was air conditioned and had a private bathroom. So guests could register without leaving their cars, a breezeway was built onto the office so guests could register and drive straight to their rooms. Contributing to the high cost of the project, Williams obtained most of the materials, equipment, and labor from the Reno-Carson City area.

The Lovelock Inn had a reputation for being swank and there are rumors that Hollywood stars who themselves lived in Paul Revere Williams-designed homes came to Lovelock just to see what Williams had done in that remote location.



The Tharpe Residence, 2010. Photo courtesy Sam Brackstone.

Throughout the 1950s, the Lovelock Inn was a popular stop along U. S. 40. Things changed in the early 1960s, however, when U. S. Highway 40 became U. S. Interstate 80. The route was moved to the east, by-passing towns that had staked their twentieth-century livelihoods on automobile travelers. Now motorists sped by, with only an impersonal off-ramp beckoning them to come closer. Facing this new future, the Tharpes retired, sold the Inn and their home, and moved back to Indiana. The Lovelock Inn, in an excellent state of preservation, is currently for sale. Here's hoping the new buyers will appreciate—and protect—its heritage.

Chronologically, the Lovelock Inn lies midway in Paul Revere Williams's career in Nevada. His commissions reflect the broad range of his talents, from

the Regency style of the Garvey House and the Art Moderne Loomis Manor Apartments in Reno (1934 and 1939, respectively) to the Google La Concha Motel in Las Vegas (1962). In between, there were buildings on working ranches in Reno and Fish Lake Valley, and of course, the Ranch-style Lovelock Inn. Without the southern California tax emigrés, who came to Nevada to take advantage of the One Sound State program, Williams probably would not have come here. As a black man, he had a difficult time conducting business in Reno in the 1930s and '40s. But he was a consummate professional; he persisted and ultimately prevailed. Today, he is admired for his artistic talent and revered for his courage and determination to work in the profession he loved, despite prevalent discrimination. The Lovelock Inn is a welcome—and serendipitous—addition to Nevada's architectural heritage. 

Note: When faced with my surprise over a possible Paul R. Williams building in Lovelock, I contacted my colleagues on the board of Preserve Nevada. Honor Jones suggested I call her good friend, Deanne Munk

Davidson, who has lived in Lovelock for years. Deanne immediately took up the quest and marched right over to the Lovelock Inn and asked point-blank, “Is this a Paul Revere Williams's building?” On their recent trip to Reno, Deborah Brackstone and her husband Sam drove to Lovelock and spent several hours with the current owners of the Lovelock Inn and the Tharpe residence. Deborah generously shared what she learned and copies of Sam's fine photographs. Thanks to all of you.

Mella Rothwell Harmon is a HRPS member and an architectural historian. Ms. Harmon holds a master's degree in land use planning and historic preservation from the University of Nevada, Reno.



HRPS September 2010 Historic Walking Tours

Tour cost is \$10 per person, or free to HRPS members. Walks generally last from 1½ to 2 hours. No dogs please. No dogs please. **Reservations are required and space is limited.** Please visit www.historicreno.org or call 747-4478 for information and reservations. **Cut-off date for reservations is the day before the tour.**

Saturday,
September 4,
10:00 a.m.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET - Perhaps you've done the Mansions on the Bluff and DeLongchamps walk but how about the houses on the other side of Court, Ridge, California and Arlington? Distinctive architecturally-styled homes line these quiet streets where many of Reno's families lived, some for more than 50 years. Today the neighborhood is a blend of family homes and businesses. Meet on the southwest corner of Arlington and Court. Tour guide: Anne Simone.

Tuesday,
September 7,
5:30 p.m.

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

Saturday,
September 11,
10 a.m.

LITERARY RENO - Take a "Tour of Writing" from the "Underbelly." There's more to Reno's literary history than *City of Trembling Leaves!* Reno continues to be a mythical magnet for 'outsider' writers and characters...the misfits, outcasts and seekers. Let your imagination roam as we travel downtown streets encountered by traditional writers like Will James, Robert Laxalt and Joanne DeLongchamps; then walk the haunts of contemporary writers such as Bernie Schopen, Willy Vlautin and Susan Palwick. Meet at the Riverside Artist Lofts, 17 S. Virginia. Tour guides: Sharon Honig-Bear and Charlotte Voitoff.

Tuesday,
September 14,
5:30 p.m.

EL RENO APARTMENT HOMES - Visit the original site of these charming and unique homes and view seven of them at their new locations. Other examples of the Sierra Vista Addition architecture will be seen. Meet at the Statewide Lighting parking lot, 1311 S. Virginia. Tour guide: Debbie Hinman.

Saturday,
September 18,
10:00 a.m.

BRICKS AND STONES - A walk in the Humboldt and Lander streets neighborhood. Discover the architectural treasure trove of this area, a mix of bungalows, Tudor and Mission revivals and cottage styles. Meet at My Favorite Muffin, 340 California Avenue. Tour guide: Bill Isaef.

Saturday,
September 18,
10:00 a.m.

KIDS' ARCHITECTURAL TOUR - This tour introduces children in first through third grades to architecture and the art of observation by challenging them to discover the historic detailing prevalent in Reno's downtown architecture. The goal is to create a new generation of informed citizens of the man-made environment and in turn, fans of historic Reno. Meet at 448 Ridge Street. This tour is limited to 20 children and all children must be accompanied by an adult. Tour cost is \$10 per person, \$5 for children, free to HRPS members and their children. Tour guide: Mercedes de la Garza, Architect.

Haunted Nevada Series at the Historical Society

The Nevada Historical Society at 1650 N. Virginia, Reno, invites you to a free series in the Society's Reno History gallery from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. each Saturday in October. Haunted Nevada will feature spirited topics with a special guest speaker. Visit www.museums.nevadaculture.org and select Reno, then Programs & Exhibits for details and more activities.

October 2, 2010, 2:00 p.m. Bones and Stones: A history of moving Reno's cemeteries. Speaker: Arline LaFerry, researcher.

October 9, 2010, 2:00 p.m. Spiritualism. Speaker: Michael Maher, NHS Research Librarian

October 16, 2010, 2:00 p.m. Movie: "Godmonster of Indian Flats." Special Guest - Zombo from News Channel 8.

October 23, 2010, 2:00 p.m. Paranormal Tourism - Virginia City Ghost Tours. Speakers: Bats in the Belfrey Group.

October 30, 2010, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. Safe Trick or Treating. We will have candy available for your little ghouls.

HRPS Opens the Door to the Past with Its First Reno Harvest of Homes Tour

For those of you who regularly participate in our thrice-annual walking tours, the highlight of the walks is always that golden moment when a homeowner, flattered by the interest of the group, asks, "Would you like to see the inside?" These unexpected glimpses of historic interior architecture, rare but so appreciated, add immeasurably to the impact of the tour.

This October, HRPS friends and members will have the opportunity to get an inside look at six historic and distinguished homes in Reno. Featured on our Reno Harvest of Homes Tour will be the 1901 Patrick Ranch House, a fine example of the Folk Victorian style and an early resident of the Old Southwest neighborhood south of the Newlands area. A second home is the unique Hart House, designed in 1937 and occupying land that once belonged to the Patrick Ranch. This unusual home, with its Oriental design features and octagonal living room is surrounded by delightful landscaping reminiscent of a Japanese tea garden. Participants will be treated to one of the "grand dames" of the Powning Addition, the 1902 brick Queen Anne-styled Upson House. Also included on the tour will be Full Circle House on Moran Street and the Sewell House on Monroe.

A special treat will be a visit to the "The Enchanted Garden," on the corner of



Mayberry and Sherwood Drives. The site includes a lovely cottage home, charming cabins from the Siesta Motel on old Highway 40, and a fabulous garden. This site is significant as the location of Rick's Resort in the early 1900s, home to the training camp for Jack Johnson, winner of the internationally-known 1910 Johnson-Jeffries fight. Later, the site was an exclusive club known as The Willows.

The tour will be held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, October 2. Participants will purchase a wristband that will permit them access to all six homes between these hours, so they can visit them on their own schedules and using their own transportation. This tour should be of particular interest to those members who would love to attend the walking tours, but can't manage a two-hour walk.

To kick off the Home Tours, HRPS is sponsoring a Porch Party the evening before at the Caughlin Ranch House and Garden Shoppe Nursery, 3636 Mayberry Drive. The event will run from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and replaces the annual Fall Social. Instead of a sit-down dinner and program, the party will feature hors d'oeuvres, music, tours of the historic house, our popular silent auction and wine from Tahoe Ridge Winery and Ferrari-Carano Vineyards, and beer from Silver Peak Brewery.

Participants wishing to only attend one of these events may purchase a ticket for either the Home Tour or the Porch Party for \$25, or a combined ticket will be available for \$45.

Tickets for the Porch Party ONLY or Porch Party AND Tour may be purchased at the Garden Shop Nursery at Caughlin Ranch (cash/check only), or reserved by sending check to HRPS/ Porch Party, P.O. Box 14003, Reno, NV 89507.

HRPS Reno Harvest of Homes Tour

The Pearl Upson House,
937 Jones Street,
corner of Keystone Avenue

The Patrick Ranch House,
1225 Gordon Avenue, between Mt.
Rose and Monroe Streets.

The Hart House,
1150 Monroe

The Sewell House,
1280 Monroe at Sharon

Full Circle House,
360 Moran

The Enchanted Garden,
2775 Mayberry Drive at Sherwood

Tickets for TOUR ONLY will be available for purchase (cash/check only) at Ryries Art and Home, St. Ives Florist, Sundance Bookstore, and Ince Jewelers, or online at www.historicreno.org.

All tickets will be available September 1 and all questions should be directed to the HRPS office at 747-4478.

Proceeds from the Harvest of Homes Tour will be used to create a new Neighborhood Preservation Fund, offering mini-grants to homeowners to finance home and neighborhood improvement projects. "The tour not only reveals some gems of Reno's neighborhoods, but will help us improve and preserve those very same neighborhoods," said event chair Sharon Honig-Bear. "We know you will enjoy this rare opportunity to get an inside peek at some of Reno's residential history." 

Article by Debbie Hinman, HRPS Board member, HRPS tour guide and HRPS Editorial Board member. Sketch of the Patrick Ranch House by Loren Jahn.

Friday, October 1, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. Porch Party Caughlin Ranch House
Saturday, October 2, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Reno Harvest of Homes Tour

Nevada State Treasurers: Some Had Sticky Fingers

by Patty Cafferata

Editor's Note: Patty Cafferata is an author, historian, attorney, past president of HRPS and a past Nevada State Treasurer.

Most of the twenty Nevada State treasurers performed their duties without any harmful consequences to the state, but a few were corrupt and seriously impaired the state's future.

The state treasurer is one of the six constitutional offices in Nevada. This official receives the state's money, banks and invests it to earn money for the state. The treasurer also operates the municipal bond bank, local government investment pool, Millennium Scholarship program, the college investment fund and the unclaimed property program.

Here is a quick overview of the treasurers, highlighting the two who dramatically influenced the state's history. Each of the treasurers were unique in their own way, but they shared some common traits. Many of the treasurers held another elected office before becoming the treasurer. All the treasurers were



Henry Blasdel, Governor of Nevada when Eben Rhoades was State Treasurer. Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.

swept into office on the tide of their political party, except for Ken Santor. For example, if a majority of the state-wide winners were Democrats, then the Democratic candidate for treasurer won,

and likewise, if the Republicans won a majority of the seats, the Republican candidate for treasurer won.

All the treasurers were white: eighteen men and two women. They were mostly in their thirties and forties when first elected. Eben Rhoades was the youngest at age 29 at his first election. At death, Eben Rhoades was the youngest at 34 and George Richard was the oldest at 91 years old. They all died in Nevada or California, except C.C. Batterman, who died in Arizona. The last six treasurers are still alive: Mike Mirabelli, Stan Colton, Patty Cafferata, Ken Santor, Bob Seale, and Brian Krollicki.

Eight treasurers came from Washoe County; two were native Nevadans, George Russell and Dan Franks; and three were foreign born, George Tufly in Switzerland, John Egan in Ireland and William McMillan in Nova Scotia. Twelve were Republicans; six were Democrats, one a member of the Silver Party, and one a member of the Silver-Democrat Party. Despite the fact that more Republicans than Democrats held the office, as of 2010, the Democrats

NEVADA STATE TREASURERS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

NAME	TERMS OF SERVICE	COUNTY
Ebenezer "Eben" Rhoades (R)	1864-1869**	Esmeralda
Christopher "C.C." Clayton Batterman (R)	1869-1871	Storey
Jeremiah "Jerry" Schooling (D)	1871-1879	Washoe
Lyman Littlefield Crockett (R)	1879-1883	Washoe
George Tufly (R)	1883-1890**	Ormsby/Carson City
George W. Richard (R)	1890* & 1894*	Ormsby/Carson City
John F. Egan (R)	1891-1894**	Storey
William "Bill" J. Westerfield (Silver)	1895-1899	Washoe
David M. Ryan (Silver-Democrat)	1899-1911	Storey
William McMillan (R)	1911-1915	Storey
Edward "Ed" C. Malley (D)	1915-1927***	Nye
George Russell (R)	1927-1935*	Elko
Daniel "Dan" Franks (D)	1935-1963	Lincoln
Michael "Mike" Mirabelli (D)	1963-1979	Washoe
Stanton "Stan" Colton (D)	1979-1983	Clark
Patricia "Patty" D. Cafferata (R)	1983-1987	Washoe
Kenneth "Ken" Santor (R)	1987-1991	Washoe
Robert "Bob" Seale (R)	1991-1999	Washoe
Brian Krollicki (R)	1999-2007	Douglas
Kathleen "Kate" Marshall (D)	2007-present	Washoe

*Appointed to fill out a term of a deceased or resigned treasurer.

** Died in office.

***Malley resigned due to the charges pending against him for embezzlement.

Nevada State Treasurers (continued)

served 73 years to the Republicans' service of 60 years.

Two of the treasurers, Lyman Crockett and George Richards, were investigated for their questionable dealings with the state's money, but were found not to have committed any wrongdoings.

On the other hand, Republican Eben Rhoades and Democrat Ed Malley embezzled money from the state's treasury. Rhoades committed suicide before he could be brought to justice but Malley served time in prison.

Ebenezer "Eben" Rhoades Treasurer: 1864-1869

The first treasurer, Eben Rhoades, significantly harmed the state's future. He embezzled most of the money in both the permanent school fund and the general fund.

A Republican, he and his brother, Henry, left Massachusetts to seek their fortunes and settled in the mining town of Aurora, Nevada in the 1860s. Eben owned a hardware store and filed numerous mining claims in the area.

A popular man, the people of Esmeralda County elected him the county treasurer and he served one year before being elected state treasurer. His brother Henry acted as Eben's deputy in Aurora.

In November 1864, the first election for constitutional officers was held after Nevada became a state on October 31, 1864. The first term of office for these officials was two years and in subsequent elections, the term was four years. The voters elected Eben state treasurer in 1864 and reelected him in 1866. After Eben's first election, he and Henry moved to Carson City, the state capital. Henry became Eben's deputy, allowing Eben to spend little time in the office. He preferred to stay in San Francisco, relying on his brother to manage the treasury.

Eben pocketed cash from the general fund, an estate, and from the sales of

federal lands earmarked to be deposited in the permanent school fund. Additionally, other elected officials were taking advantage of the treasury. Governor Henry Blasdel and the controller, William Parkinson, borrowed money from Eben, and they failed to repay their loans.



*Fred Balzar was governor of Nevada during the difficult time when Ed Malley embezzled \$516,000 from the state.
Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.*

Apparently, when the shortage in the treasury was about to be exposed, Eben committed suicide in San Francisco by taking an overdose of either cocaine or morphine, both readily available at the time.

When C. C. Batterman was appointed to fill out Eben's term, he discovered that the tin box holding the treasury was almost empty. He blew the whistle and an audit took place. The auditor concluded that Eben had gotten away with about \$106,000.

When the state attorney general sued Eben's estate and his bondsmen to recover the money, the jury decided in the state's favor. The bondsmen, all powerful men in Nevada, did not wish to pay for the defalcation. They rushed to the legislature and managed to overturn the court decision.

The state filed another suit and won in court. The bondsmen went back to the Legislature and argued that no one could prove exactly when Eben took the money, in his first or second term. Since he could have stolen the money in his first term, the second-term bondsmen should not be held liable for his actions. Ultimately, the bondsmen never paid a penny for Eben's theft.

Because the legislature failed to take any action to recover the funds or make up for the loss of these revenues, the consequences of Rhoades' activities were several. Nevada failed to pay off its territorial debt until the 1920s, but the more important result was the long-term damage to the permanent school fund.

The interest on the permanent school fund has been and is used to pay to educate the students in K-12. In the 1980s, the state's permanent school fund contained about \$30 million. At the same time, other western states held about \$300 million in their school funds. The amount of lost interest to the Nevada school funds is in excess of \$100,000,000. The state and its education system will never recover from Rhoades' crime.

Edward "Ed" Malley Treasurer: 1915-1927

The eleventh state treasurer, Ed Malley, embezzled \$516,322.16 from the treasury. Although there were no long-term consequences to the state, the citizens suffered because they paid higher property taxes to cover the theft.

In the early 1900s, Malley moved to Nevada from Colorado—interested in the mining boom in Tonopah. Politically involved, he served as chief of police. During a campaign for Nye County sheriff/assessor (these jobs were combined then), he and others were in an automobile, when a gun tangled up in a bunch of coats discharged striking Malley in the arm. A doctor amputated the arm above the elbow.

Continued on page 10

Nevada State Treasurers (continued)

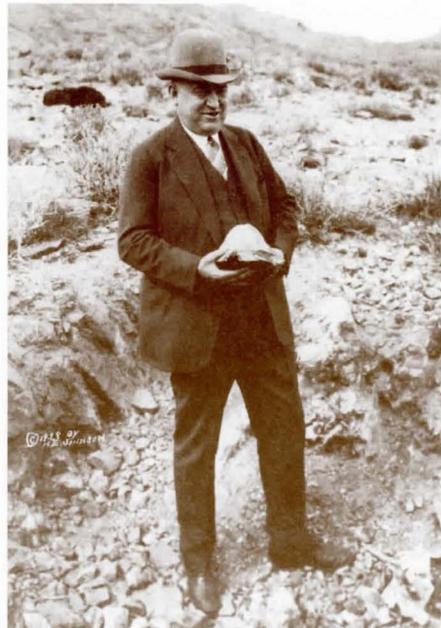
Continued from page 9

In 1914, the voters elected Malley state treasurer and re-elected him three more times, but he failed to complete his last term when his embezzlement was discovered. Malley stole the funds with the help of the state controller, George Cole, and H. C. Clapp, the cashier of the Carson Valley Bank, owned by George Wingfield, who was also Malley's surety or guarantor.

Over the years, Malley invested the state's cash in Signal Hill Oil Co., but when he failed to get a return, he was in trouble. The conspirators used a simple scheme. Whenever the cash in the treasury was scheduled to be counted, Clapp issued a cashier's check to Malley to cover the missing funds. After the check was counted as part of the state's cash, Malley returned the check to Clapp.

When Clapp was fired for drunkenness, the conspiracy unraveled. With \$516,000 missing from his bank, George Wingfield became aware of the extent of the problem. He notified Governor Fred Balzar of the embezzlement.

Clapp pled guilty and turned state's evidence against Malley and Cole.



George Wingfield, banker and guarantor of the State Treasurer Ed Malley. Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.

Pat McCarran, who intensely disliked Wingfield, represented Malley at trial. Malley and Cole were found guilty and the three men were sentenced to five to fifteen years in the Nevada State Prison. After serving three years, seven months

and 18 days, the men were paroled. They were finally pardoned and their civil rights restored in 1935. Malley died in California at age 88 years in 1966.

The state did not suffer as much from this embezzlement. George Wingfield cut a deal with Governor Fred Balzar and paid only about \$154,000 of the loss. And, the Legislature raised property taxes by 10 cents for 10 years to make up the difference between the \$516,000 and Wingfield's \$154,000 payment. As a result, while the future of the state was not impacted, the residents paid additional property taxes for years to make up for Malley and Cole's theft.

Conclusion

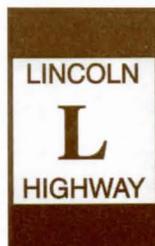
Most of the state treasurers protected the people's money, investing it wisely to generate income to pay the state's bills. Eben Rhoades and Ed Malley changed Nevada's history and development as a result of their embezzlements. Rhoades' theft of the permanent school funds will never be recovered because the lost interest cannot be replaced. Malley's crime directly hurt the Nevada citizens because they paid increased property taxes to replace the money he stole. 

From Emigrant Trails to the Lincoln Highway and Beyond

Lincoln Highway's Truckee Meadows' Roads Bus Tour
October 16, 2010 • 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Join the Nevada Chapter of the Lincoln Highway Association and HRPS for a fall tour of the Lincoln Highway from Vista Boulevard to Dog Valley. We will visit the remnants of our Nevada trails and roadside history, with a few surprises along the way. This will be a once in a lifetime opportunity to see some hidden treasures!

Lunch is included and will be held at Louis' Basque Corner, once the home of the Lincoln Bar on East Fourth Street. Cost is \$35.00. Reservations are limited. Call 747-4478 by September 27th to reserve a seat, but receipt of your check will



be your ticket. Please make checks out to the Lincoln Highway Association, Nevada Chapter. Mail to: HRPS/Lincoln Highway, P.O. Box 14003, Reno, NV 89507.

Details: We will meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Sparks Museum, 814 Victorian Ave., Sparks and leave promptly at 9:30 a.m. There is parking behind the museum and at the Sparks parking lot by the theaters. Please wear sturdy shoes, as there will be some walking on uneven ground. Water will be provided, but you may want to bring something along to eat for later in the afternoon. 

Nevada Historical Society

Docent Training Session
September 22, 2010
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Have you thought about becoming a docent at the Historical Society? During a four-hour training session you can learn about the various areas where docents work to assist the mission of the Historical Society.

Docents act as gallery guides, give school tours, work in the research library, assist in the artifacts, museum, and photography collections, as well as the museum store. Individual mentoring will be given in the docent's area of interest following the training session.

Please call 775-688-1190 ext. 231 or email shayeszorn@nevadaculture.org if you are interested in being a docent. 

HRPS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

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

- New Member
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Name(s) _____
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 Occupation: _____ Employer: _____
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Annual membership includes: Footprints (HRPS Quarterly) • Free participation in walking tours

- Student \$15.00 Individual \$25.00 Family (Children 18 yrs and younger) \$40.00
 Business Contribution \$50.00 Supporting \$100.00 HRPS Angel \$250.00

Additional donation: _____

Thank you for joining HRPS. An organization is only as strong as its members. There are many areas in our organization where your enthusiasm, skills, and dedication will be invaluable to historic Reno and future generations. The goal of the Historic Reno Preservation Society is to preserve the historic resources of our community. What would you like to contribute to HRPS?

**FOR OFFICE
 USE ONLY**

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

RV 04.07.08/FO-DCD

As of July 1, 2008, HRPS converted its membership to a fiscal year cycle. All memberships will run from July 1 through June 30 of the following year. Have you renewed your membership? Check the website www.historicreno.org for a membership form.

From Your HRPS President



Sharon Honig-Bear
 HRPS President

This is my first message as your new President of HRPS. I am looking forward to this year, bringing opportunities for us to come together to experience the rich heritage of our community.

I am writing this while visiting Buffalo, New York. Years ago I attended the university here, a very young student from a suburban town, who had no exposure to great architecture. I discovered that Buffalo is a hidden jewel of a city (despite the weather), laid out by "City Beautiful" champion Frederick Law Olmsted and enriched by the works of Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, Eero Saarinen and miles of "Victorian Ladies" that were affordable even to impoverished students.

Thus began a lifelong love of architecture. I also understood, as a young woman, how important our neighborhoods and history are in maintaining a community's identity.

Those early lessons have translated easily to my life in Reno. In the quarter-century that I have lived here, I went from personally exploring this area, to actively sharing my knowledge with others through HRPS. My "information junkie" personality found the perfect outlet with HRPS tours.

It is part of HRPS mission to educate citizens about our lovely little town and I encourage you to join me in my lifelong quest for knowledge. HRPS provides a number of ways to help. Our seasonal tour schedule remains the backbone of our educational efforts—supplemented by stimulating monthly programs. We are always working to create new and creative tours. For the first time, we are planning a home tour to provide an "insider" look at some popular homes. If

you are a member of HRPS, please take advantage of our activities. Consider becoming more active this year through volunteerism; email our office if you have time to spare.

If you are not a member currently, please consider joining our nonprofit organization at this time. We have just begun our membership year so this is the perfect time to take that step.

I have gotten to know many of you through the walks that I have led—and hope to make even more acquaintances during my term of office. Please introduce yourself and together we can build the kind of community that values its past. At the very least, knowing more about Reno helps me enjoy what I experience daily. And I cannot help but think what pleasure I would derive if, say thirty years from now, a college student tells me that her love of architecture began right here, in this hidden jewel known as Reno!



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FALL 2010 PROGRAMS

Jack Hursh Jr. – Program Chair: 746-3252

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

Wednesday, September 22, 7:00 p.m.: Paul Ferrari, C.E., president of Ferrari Shields Structural Engineers, will speak about the restoration of the 1875 St. Mary's in the Mountains Catholic Church in Virginia City. The seismic retrofit was accomplished by "emplacing" a reinforced concrete structure into the unreinforced brick walls of the buildings in such a manner that the historic exterior and interior of the building appear essentially unchanged.

Friday, October 1: HRPS Porch Party – Caughlin Ranch House. See page 7.

Saturday, October 2: HRPS Harvest of Homes Tour. See page 7.

Saturday, October 16: Lincoln Highway Association's Truckee Meadows Roads Bus Tour, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. \$35/pp includes lunch at Louis' Basque Corner. See page 10.

Wednesday, November 17, 7:00 p.m.: Ray Hagar and Guy Clifton discuss *Johnson-Jeffries Dateline Reno*, their newly released book commemorating the 100th anniversary of "The Fight of the Century." Clifton and Hagar interviewed boxing and Nevada historians and compiled fight coverage from Reno's two newspapers, the *Reno Evening Gazette* and the *Nevada State Journal*.

Opinions expressed in *FootPrints* are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial staff, the Historic Reno Preservation Society executive board or the general membership. *FootPrints* is a quarterly publication printed in Reno, Nevada. All rights reserved. ©2010 Historic Reno Preservation Society (HRPS).

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