

July 2013 Artown
Walking Tours!
See Pages 6-7



Historic Reno
PRESERVATION
S O C I E T Y

HRPS HRPS

FootPrints

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

vol. 16 no. 3 ❖ Summer 2013

Getting Control of Reno Garbage

by Joyce Cox

We take for granted our garbage service, our clean streets and neighborhoods. Today city and county services regulate and control the disposal of our garbage – but early Reno did not have this luxury.

There were 9,141 people residing in Washoe County in 1900, most living in Reno (City) and the surrounding Truckee Meadows. They were accumulating tremendous amounts of garbage – household wastes (pottery, buttons, cutlery, food scraps), garden waste and tree trimmings, agricultural and stockyard wastes (dead cattle, sheep, chickens), slaughter house wastes, old or worn machinery including old automobiles and tires. Where was this garbage going? Some was being dumped down outhouses, some into the Truckee River, but most of it was being dumped on empty lots in the city or county.

In June 1905, the *Reno Evening Gazette (REG)* reported that the Reno City Council went on record as being in favor of buying land that would be used as a garbage dump. The article reported, “Heretofore the city has had no dump of any description and this has caused much of the ammmulation [sic] of filth about town.”

The ideal dump property would have a ravine or gulch where garbage could be dumped then later burned when the ravine became full. By August 1905, the Reno City Council had found the perfect spot, a half-mile north of Reno in Washoe County, that belonged to H. H. Greer. The property was at the north end of what was to become Sutro Street, near the University of Nevada and the race track. H. H. Greer deeded ten acres of land to the City for \$600 in August 1905.

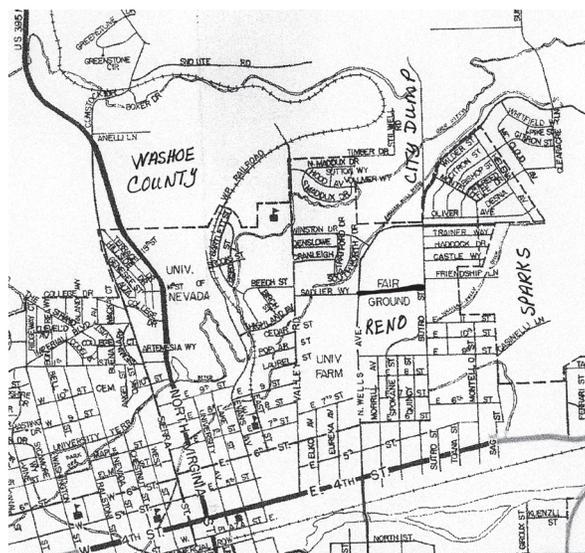
One man was hired to guard the dump and keep the garbage burning. There were always problems at the dump with garbage scattered by wind and rain, smells from decaying garbage, and fires that spread from the dump to surrounding properties.

Those living near the new dump were against the dump location from the very beginning. I. N. Lewis complained that refuse washed onto his land when it rained. The City Council heard complaints in 1907 with Mayor Wilson stating that the dump “is a menace to the health of the residents.” The *REG* reported in 1909, “Hundreds of loads of garbage and trash are hauled to the northeast part of the city and there dumped where a small portion is burned and the balance is scattered over the surrounding county by the winds thus spreading disease and increasing profanity among the farmers adjacent to these evils.” The City of Reno was sued in 1952 because the smoke, trash and debris created a nuisance for those living near the dump.

In the years 1907, 1909, 1924, and 1950, the City seriously considered purchasing an incinerator to provide faster and cleaner disposal of garbage and to replace the open burning at the dump. H. B. Maxson, the Reno City Engineer and Superintendent of Streets and Sewers, highly recommended the purchase in 1908 and 1909. The incinerator proposals were always defeated as too costly.

George Trusi, a Washoe County Commissioner, told the Reno City Council in 1924, “Reno is a city almost entirely surrounded by garbage!” Garbage was piled up at the Sierra Street entrance to Reno and on the road north of the race track. Trusi said this

Continued on page 2



Before there was a McCarran loop or I-80, the Reno City Dump was bounded by Sutro on the east, near Valley Rd. on the west, Wells (Alameda) on the south, and what would become McCarran on the north. The Orr Ditch crossed through the dump.

Getting Control of Reno Garbage (continued)

The Washoe County Health Department testified before the State Senate Ecology Committee in 1971 that, "Washoe County has the distinction of establishing the first state approved sanitary landfill facility in Nevada on January 2, 1968, which today serves a population of approximately 120,000 people."

Dump Caretakers

Dump caretakers lived at the dump in order to watch over it. Charles Hamblet was caretaker in 1926. John Kelsey took over from 1927 to 1935 and operated a profitable salvage business. Kelsey lost his salvage business when the City gave the job to a Mr. White, after receiving numerous complaints against Kelsey for driving people away from the dump with a shot gun. Spencer Penn was a caretaker in early 1943, then replaced by Ambrose Hirt until 1944. Hirt received \$100 per month, the use of the cabin at the dump, and 50 percent of money received for selling junk.

One of the most famous or infamous caretakers was George Cook, caretaker off and on in the 1940s and early 1950s. Reno Scavenger Company filed a complaint against Cook for trespassing and removing junk from the dump to sell as salvage in 1941. By 1942, Cook was caretaker and paid \$50 per month to the city to sell salvaged trash. A sign near Cook's store stated, "Used Goods for Sale Cheap." The City terminated Cook's franchise/salvage contract in 1952 although an advertisement in the *Nevada State Journal (NSJ)* in 1954 showed Cook's Junk Yard still located at 2425 Sutro.

W. B. "Bill" Shilling, described as a sprightly septuagenarian, supervised the dump 24 hours a day beginning in 1952. Bill's job was to tell people where to dump their loads of garbage and to make sure fires were not set. Shilling was known to search through the dump for useful items – and had found three working watches. Preston Willey later had the contract with the City to salvage items from the dump. Willey paid the city \$5.00 per day to salvage scrap metal and \$1.50 for each truckload of cardboard, newspapers and magazines that he could salvage.

Hogs to Eat the Garbage

In 1949, the City considered using hogs to eat the garbage at the dump, as other cities were doing as early as 1917. The San Jose Hog Company sent a letter to Emory Branch, Reno City Manager, offering to put a pen for their hogs on the hill at the dump and to let their hogs eat the trash. The San Jose Hog Company wrote to Mr. Branch saying, "Let our pigs eat your garbage." Branch reported to the Reno City Council recommending they sign a five-year contract with the San Jose Hog Company.

Conflicts arose when the Washoe County hog farmers learned that hogs from California were coming to the dump. The



A 2013 photo of what probably was the entrance to the Reno City Dump at 2425 Sutro. Photo courtesy Joyce Cox.

Washoe County Hog Growers Association testified before the Reno City Council that their hogs should be allowed to eat Reno's trash. Hogs from the Washoe County hog ranches were already eating table scraps from hotels and restaurants so could easily eat the trash from Washoe County homes. Nearby residents didn't like the idea of hogs at the dump saying, "You can smell the smoke for two miles when the wind is from the north, but you can smell a hog farm for ten miles no matter which way the wind blows."

Another problem with hogs was that an employee was needed whose sole duty was to remove "rusty tin cans off the hog's snouts" so the hogs could continue eating. The Reno City Council voted against using hogs, either San Jose hogs or Washoe County hogs, to eat city garbage.

Interesting Dump Activities

A 1954 *NSJ* article reported that dumps fascinate people because they wonder what interesting or valuable items could be found at the dump. Reports of valuable or odd items found at the dump were often in the newspaper.

In 1947, the sharp eyes of a city librarian saved a scrap book made by a prominent Nevada resident containing over 200 pages of "interesting clippings dealing with political happenings of Nevada and the United States." In 1954, the Chism's Ice Cream Co. asked permission to have "thousands of old soda pop bottles" immediately covered so that scavengers would not dig them up to redeem them.

The Reno City Dump was often the place for illegal activities. Sheriff Ray Root arrested three people in 1937 for conducting an opium den at the "dump grounds." Drugs, an opium pipe and firearms were seized. John William Westenrider was arrested in 1953 near the Reno City Dump for being an ex-felon in possession of a gun and Gurtha Jamar was arrested at 2425 Sutro Street (the dump cabin) for "keeping a disorderly house." Jamar and Westenrider pled guilty in 1954 for "operating a house of ill fame near the city dump." 

Information for this article came from *Solid Wastes Disposal Study for Washoe County* by Kennedy Engineers, June 1966; "Reno's Dump Ground is Major Municipal [sic] Operation," *NSJ*, 11/12/50, p. 6; "Picturesque [sic] View is Afforded From Reno's Garbage Dump," *REG*, 3/13/54, p. 7 and numerous *REG* and *NSJ* articles. Thanks to Arline Laferry for her research and suggestion for this topic.

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

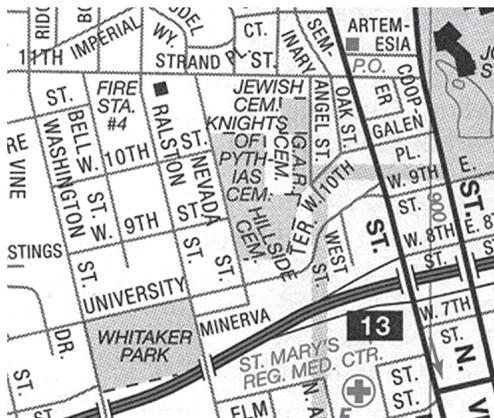
Hillside Cemetery Revisited

by Debbie Hinman

Sometimes preservation is not enough. I first wrote about historic but neglected Hillside Cemetery back in 2006. For those of you who might have missed the story or are unfamiliar with this historic spot, Hillside is Reno's oldest existing cemetery, located on a rise above the city near the University.

I hadn't been to Hillside in some years and was looking forward to seeing it again, hopefully to witness some positive change. Hillside has been preserved, in that the weeds have been kept more or less at bay, broken bottles and trash cleared away, and the offerings of defunct appliances and sofas with eruptions of stuffing are continually removed from the gate. But my hope was that funding would have arrived from some benevolent source, allowing for the broken and toppled headstones to be repaired and put right. Dreaming bigger, I had envisioned grass and native plants (other than sagebrush and thistles) and perhaps some benches for visitors, something on the order of the very neat and well-maintained Hebrew Cemetery nearby. Hillside has been "preserved" in the sense that it still exists but it needs much more.

Because early newspapermen could not be bothered with frivolous details like the spelling of residents' names, the name of Hillside cemetery's first owner appeared as some combination of Wiltshire/Wilshire/William Sanders/Saunders. Sanders began with a county contract for burying indigents in his potter's field on this plot of land. In 1875, the State of Nevada granted patent to Sanders of 40 acres for use as a cemetery. So the problem began here with a privately-owned cemetery — not necessarily the best plan for perpetual care and maintenance. Sanders sold plots but maintained ownership of the area between the plots. Again, a complicated ownership structure. Though there have been plans, discussions, movements and all other manner of addressing of this issue, the years have ticked by and no resolution has come to pass. The land has been passed from Sanders descen-



Hillside Cemetery is located on the south end of a cemetery complex near the University, south of Strand, west of Angel Street, north of University Terrace, and east of Nevada Street.



The view of Reno across Hillside Cemetery. Photo courtesy Debbie Hinman.

dants to their attorney, to the university and then to a private owner. The cemetery is still under private ownership but the challenges inherent in restoration and bringing in irrigation, etc. are still insurmountable for the owners, though they do their best to prevent further desecration.

This all occurred to me as I stood in front of Hillside's gates on a brilliant sunny day in late March, waiting for 20 or so history students to arrive. An imaginative UNR professor named Dr. Elizabeth Raymond, teaching a class in American Social History focusing on the Social History of Death, had arranged a unique experience for her students — an old-fashioned field trip.

I had been invited to talk to the class about the site's history; I also selected four prominent citizens whose graves were still identified to introduce them to. In addition to my part, John Drew Lawton, who in partnership with his father owns the cemetery, joined us to discuss the challenges inherent in possession of a cemetery.

The students were attentive and engaged and avidly explored the grounds, stopping often to read inscriptions and take note of distinctive headstones. It was evident that the broken monuments and lack of respect for this final resting place for so many early residents (originally 1434) disturbed them. We left Hillside and walked to the Hebrew Cemetery with its well-tended graves, orderly paths and green lawn. The students were quiet, visibly moved by the contrast between the two cemeteries.

To be fair to the Lawtons, the Hebrew Cemetery has a non-profit organization administering it. All local Jewish congregations contribute to its upkeep. With private ownership of Hillside where very few descendants of those buried there are still alive or involved, everything falls to the owners. Drew Lawton says he and his father are still working toward a plan for the site, but have no firm details to share at this point. It is evident that the Lawtons care what happens to this cemetery and those buried there but there is no easy solution. Drew invites anyone with questions or suggestions to call Drew at his office at Sierra Memorial Gardens, 775-323-1835.

Following the class, Dr. Raymond spoke of her students' reactions. Said Raymond, "So many of my students, relatively new to Reno, were delighted to learn that there was more to Reno than casinos and strip malls. Too often there's no venue for applying the insights that students gain from their formal history course work to the local community — I know that my students greatly enjoyed the tour, because several of them wrote about how much difference it made to see a derelict cemetery, and realize how much history was still evident there."

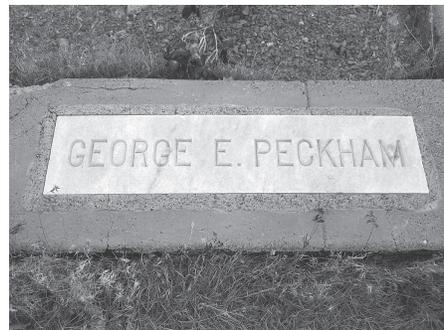
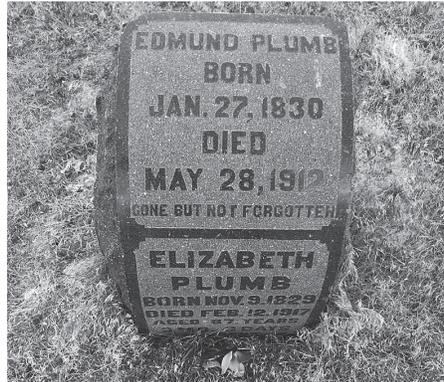
Hillside Cemetery Revisited (continued)

I felt good about that day, not only for the small part I might have played in increasing the students' awareness of Hillside but for the hope it gives me that future generations will understand the importance of what we still have and will take up the cause of historic preservation. After spending that morning with some of the faces of the future, I think we might be in pretty good hands.

What follows are some brief histories of Reno residents buried at Hillside Cemetery, who left their names on Reno streets and their marks on our city.

Edmund and Elizabeth Plumb (born in 1830 and 1829 in England) — The Plumbs married in 1851 and immigrated to the United States in 1862. Coming to the Reno area, the Plumbs acquired land (area of present Plumb Lane) and established a ranch. Although the Plumbs had no children, their household consisted of many nieces and nephews at different times throughout their 50+ years in the Reno area. In 1881, Edmund received his citizenship through the Reno courts. In 1892, nephew Edmund married Katie Marsh at the Plumb Ranch. A wedding luncheon was served, then the guests viewed the eclipse of Mars by the moon with the naked eye. Edmund died in 1912, Elizabeth in 1917. Nephew Edmund died in 1936 and is also on the roster of those buried at Hillside, as is his son Harry's infant daughter.

Warren Hill Gould (born in 1834) — Gould owned and operated a dairy farm and the Reno Creamery. The Gould Dairy Farm was at Mill and Gould Streets, near the former Washoe Medical Center, now Renown. Gould was known as a livestock trader, but in 1891 built the valley's first commercial creamery at his ranch. His operation featured a steam-powered butter maker, producing 150 pounds from a single cycle. A third of his produced butter went to the Palace Hotel in San Francisco, a contract negotiated for Gould by Francis Newlands. A year later, cheese made by Gould was submitted to the Chicago World's Fair and won first place. Gould was a passenger on the first train running west



*From the top, the Plumb marker, the Gould monument, and the Peckham marker.
Photos courtesy Debbie Hinman.*

from Omaha, Nebraska on the Union Pacific Railroad in 1869. The train was held up for three hours at Promontory, Utah for a momentous occasion — the placing of the golden spike to join the Union Pacific with the Central Pacific, establishing the first Transcontinental

Railroad. Gould then continued his journey to Reno on the Central Pacific. Gould died in 1893 at 57, after treating a cow for black leg disease. According to his descendent, Prudence Gould Muran, the cow actually had anthrax and Gould contracted it via an open cut on his hand. Three sons carried on the business, and grew it into Reno Creamery Company. When the discussion has surfaced over the years with regard to exhumation of those buried at Hillside, Ms. Muran has been vocal about the issue. She cites the anthrax and the fact that anthrax spores can survive for hundreds of years. Gould's funeral was held Sept. 3, 1893 at the Gould family home and then a procession followed to Hillside Cemetery. The procession was said to be one of the longest ever seen in this community.

George E. Peckham (born in 1851 in Massachusetts) — At nine years of age, he and his mother and sister (Mr. Peckham had died some years prior) traveled to San Francisco via the Isthmus of Panama (there was no canal at that time). In 1864, George's mother brought him to the town of Galena in northern Nevada, as she had been engaged as a cook at one of the logging camps there. At age 14, George got a job carrying mail between Galena and Washoe City on foot, 25 miles per day roundtrip. In 1865, George's mother married Thomas Norcross, who was widowed with two sons. On George's 21st birthday, his stepfather gave him a tract of land where George established the Peckham Ranch, near the site of Kietzke and Peckham Lanes. In 1876, George married Emma Shepherd. The Peckhams had four sons and a daughter. George Peckham died in 1925 and was buried at Hillside Cemetery. 

Information for the historical portions of this article came from various local newspaper stories and searches on Ancestry.com.

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



Historic Reno Preservation Society's July 2013 Historic Walks Celebrate Artown



July is the perfect month to take a morning stroll or evening walk and along the way learn some history about Reno. In the spirit of Artown, our July 2nd tour, Truckee River All the Time, will be free. However, reservations are still needed for the tour.

Artown is one of the nation's most comprehensive arts and culture festivals, which takes place annually during the entire month of July in Reno, Nevada. In 2012, the festival featured more than 500 events - with over 66 percent offered free to the public - and attracted more than 300,000 people. With more than 160 partners, the month-long festival takes place at venues citywide. Artown receives major funding from the City of Reno, and is sponsored by U.S. Bank, NV Energy, Waste Management, Grand Sierra Resort, JLH Inc., Wild River Grille, KOLO 8 News Now, RGJ Media, KNPB-TV, KTHX-FM, KUNR-FM, with additional support from the Nevada Arts Council.

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

Tuesday
July 2
6:00 p.m.

TRUCKEE RIVER ALL THE TIME – “In The Spirit of Artown” Free Tour – This delightful summer walk along the Truckee River will kick off HRPS July Walks in Reno for Artown. See Reno’s relationship with the Truckee over time, learn of the great floods and of Reno’s architectural heritage, hear the Voice of the City, observe how the HRPS Walks relate to the Truckee and the history of Reno. Meet at the Wild River Grill at the Riverside Hotel. Tour guides: Jim and Sue Smith. **RESERVATIONS REQUIRED.**

Saturday
July 6
9:00 a.m.

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

Sunday
July 7
9:00 a.m.

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

Tuesday
July 9
6:00 p.m.

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

Saturday
July 13
9:00 a.m.

LAKE ADDITION – Meander past divorce-trade dwellings and Victorian architecture, through one of Reno’s earliest additions. Includes a stop at the Lake Mansion. Meet at the Nevada Museum of Art, 160 West Liberty Street. Tour guide: Debbie Hinman.

Tuesday
July 16
6:00 p.m.

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

Saturday
July 20
6:00 p.m.

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

July HRPS and Artown Historic Walks (continued)

Sunday
July 21
12:00 p.m.

SPECIAL TOUR – DOWNTOWN CHURCH TOUR – Visit three of Reno’s oldest and most architecturally significant downtown churches, Trinity Episcopal, First United Methodist Church and Saint Thomas Aquinas Cathedral. Meet at Trinity Episcopal Church, 200 Island Avenue. Tour guide: Mac Wieland. **Please note special starting time at 12:00 p.m.**

Tuesday
July 23
6:00 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
July 27
9:00 a.m.

BEYOND THE ARCHES – Witness downtown Reno as it has reinvented itself for 150 years. This tour links the downtown Reno arches with stories of the forces that shaped the town: railroad and mining, immigrants, as a notorious divorce and gambling mecca—and now as a livable cultural hub. Walk in the footsteps of Bill Harrah, Myron Lake, Baby Face Nelson, Frederic DeLongchamps and others. Meet at the National Automobile Museum, 10 S. Lake St. Tour guide: Jim Smith.

Sunday
July 28
9:00 a.m.

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

Tuesday
July 30
6:00 p.m.

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

2013 Harvest of Homes Tour Sneak Preview

Summer is barely here and yet HRPS is thinking ahead to autumn and our 4th Reno Harvest of Homes Tour. This increasingly popular celebration of Reno’s older neighborhoods and homes of distinction will be held Saturday, September 21 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. It has proven to be a crowd-pleasing day and is our primary fundraiser for the Neighborhood Preservation Fund’s grant program to help owners rehabilitate their properties.

This year’s Tour proves that great homes come in all sizes, from a charmer in the Newland Manor neighborhood to two grand homes that will keep you busy looking for some time. The homes are stretched out like stepping stones, at fairly regular intervals from Virginia Lake (on the south) to our oldest home from 1904 in the Powning’s Addition (north of the Truckee).

The homes can be visited in any order but following our Tour lineup reveals how Reno grew from its oldest neighborhood out through early “suburbs.” Among the fascinating aspects of the Tour, you will encounter the work of distinguished artist John LaGatta, a fabulous indoor swimming pool that rivals that of Hearst Castle and a home that feels like the clock turned back on Reno by 100 years.

Last year, the Tour really captured the imagination of the community and we saw a large jump in attendance, with almost 1,000 people participating. The fall issue of

FootPrints will feature details about each home, highlighting the history and qualities that prompted each home to be selected for the tour. Tickets will go on sale in late August at retail outlets throughout the area, and of course, online at the HRPS website. We are holding prices to \$25 in advance and \$30 on the day of the event.

Besides attending the Tour, there are other ways to add to the success of the event. You can volunteer for a shift or gather a “team” – from your workplace or other group – to help on Tour day. You can help financially with a sponsorship or by placing an ad in the Tour Program. All volunteers and donors are recognized in the Program and in several other ways. For more information about any of these opportunities, contact Home Tour Chair Sharon Honig-Bear at sharonbear@sbcglobal.net or 843-3823. 

HRPS Harvest of Homes Tour Lineup for 2013 Saturday, September 21

2301 Lakeside - The Hancock/Marshall Mansion
245 Glenmanor - Mike and Pat Ferraro Klos’s home
927 Joaquin Miller - Paul and Sue Rutherford’s home
725 California - The Kinder/Mueller House/La Gatta House
629 Jones St. - The Cann/Burke House

A Very Special Hobby

by Debbie Hinman

From my front lawn in the Old Southwest, I can see the rear of the homes on Joaquin Miller Drive that back onto Monroe, some of my favorite homes in all Reno. Toward the end of 2012, I began to see furious activity in the rear of a small, neglected white stucco house whose dilapidated state had always saddened me. I watched with interest each time I went to my car or walked my dog. The home was gradually coming back to life — I was impressed by the fact that the broken wooden-slat fence had not been replaced by the standard 8-foot redwood one, but instead by graceful ironwork panels and a gate reinforced with what appeared to be lovely, aged barn wood. The garage roof, which had been caving in, was replaced and edged with replacement terra cotta tiles and sported a modern but tasteful garage door. The weeds were cleaned away and a stone fountain had become the centerpiece of the now immaculate small yard. A fresh coat of white paint and chocolate trim highlighted the wonderful Spanish-style exterior. I mentally applauded whoever was responsible for restoring the lost beauty of this little home.



The back gate to Casino del Rey. Photo by Debbie Hinman.

Soon thereafter, HRPS board members received an invitation to an Open House and when I checked the address, I realized it was this house. It was at this event that I had the pleasure of meeting Tim and Nancy Gilbert for the first time.

Tim is tall and soft-spoken and works in the gaming software field; Nancy is dark-haired and energetic and has her own law practice. In spite of their busy occupations, they obviously find time and have the passion to devote to rescuing unique homes from neglect, thereby providing local residents with rental properties of distinction.

The Gilberts have restored seven homes in the Old Southwest so far, dating back to 2003, on Nixon, Patrick, St. Lawrence and Mark Twain. But it is their latest two acquisitions that particularly sparked my interest, due to my research on W. E. Barnard (*FootPrints* Vol. 16 No. 2 Spring 2013). The Gilberts purchased Greystone Castle, a stone Cottswold Cottage, in 2011 and Casa del Rey, a stucco Spanish Revival, in 2012, both on Joaquin Miller Drive. Del Rey is the project I observed which drew my attention to the couple.



Tim and Nancy Gilbert.
Photo courtesy of the Gilberts.

Although Greystone was in far better condition initially than Casa del Rey, it too needed attention. The plumbing and electrical needed updating. The flooring was in need of repair, as was the roof, and the rain gutters needed to be replaced. Casa del Rey needed all this, as well as much cosmetic work on the interior plaster. It also required a new bathroom and kitchen to replace bad mid-century renovations.

But while all of this careful renovation is a tremendous boon to the neighborhood and preserves the unique history of these homes, the Gilberts have taken it a step farther. They are not content to simply replace damaged or missing fixtures with serviceable substitutes — they take pride in replacing these items with original pieces from the home's era as available, or with a replica item as close as can be found to the original. And if one is not readily available, the couple has a go-to list of craftsmen who can recreate pieces for them.

In speaking with Nancy in particular, you can easily observe in her “the thrill of the hunt.” She is an avid researcher of home periods and architectural styles. She has at immediate hand the names of junk and antiques dealers and surplus yards throughout California where genuine period items can be found. Nancy has an unerring instinct for what is exactly right for every room in terms of light fixtures and even artistic switch plates. When the Gilberts are through with a property, you can be assured it is as close to original as possible in today's world, yet with the modern conveniences demanded by

A Very Special Hobby (continued)

today's lifestyle. When you enter Casa del Rey, for example, it is not as if you are in 2013 walking into an old house; it's more as if you are transported back to 1930, entering a new one.

When I asked Tim and Nancy why they do this, why they select particular properties and take this kind of painstaking effort with homes they will not inhabit, their answer was, "We make our selections based on architecture, provenance and location. Both Greystone Castle and Casa del Rey are architectural gems. We look for bungalows in the Old Southwest that have most, or all, of their original features intact. We also look for bungalows with fireplaces, coved ceilings, arched entries, wainscoting, original tile and hardwood floors. Our tenants also want a garage, so that is important. If a bungalow has 'good bones,' but is missing original features we can re-create those missing features in the renovation, as we did with Casa del Rey."

As one who personally witnessed Casa del Rey's transformation from a dilapidated eyesore (but with those good bones) to the restored beauty it is today, I am very grateful for people like the Gilberts who revere Reno's history. I know William Barnard would be pleased. 

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



Greystone Castle on Joaquin Miller, rehabbed by the Gilberts in 2012.
Photo by Debbie Hinman.

It's HRPS Membership Renewal Time: July 1, 2013

It's time to renew your Historic Reno Preservation Society membership for 2013-2014. As most of you know your HRPS membership is due July 1. **Please look at your address label on this newsletter to see the status of your membership renewal date.**

You can grab a membership renewal form from the HRPS website at <http://historicreno.org> and there is always a membership renewal form in *FootPrints*. We have included an envelope printed with a renewal form in this Summer issue of *FootPrints* for your mailing convenience.

If you haven't already had a chance to look at the July Walking Tours line-up, you'll be glad to see that there are some great new tours this year as well as HRPS fascinating evening programs starting again in September! And, with your membership you receive a copy of *FootPrints* four times a year. The HRPS Walking Tours and *FootPrints* are free to you with your HRPS membership.

You'll want to get all the announcements about the HRPS Harvest of Home Tour for 2013 to be held Saturday, September 21, 2013, the Neighborhood Preservation Fund and its winners.

Carrie Young, Membership Director

Historical Society Needs Volunteers

Would you like to assist the Nevada Historical Society and its professionals by volunteering as a docent? Docents perform vital work in all areas of the historical society including in the galleries as tour guides, in the outreach services to area schools, in the research library, artifacts, manuscript, and photography collections, and in the front office and museum stores.

To become a NHS Docent you complete a 4-hour training program, a minimum of two workshops, and attend at least three lectures. You must become a member of the Nevada Historical Society and the Docent Council and work a minimum of 48 hours per year.

The next docent training will be Friday, September 20, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Nevada Historical Society, 1650 North Virginia Street, Reno, NV 89503. For information, please call 688-1190, and ask for Shery. 

Bowers Mansion Open With Tours

The recently renovated historic Bowers Mansion in Washoe Valley, 4005 U.S. 395 N, is now open for tours for the first time since 2009! Tours are from 10 am to 3 pm Saturdays and Sundays through September 29, 2013. Tours are on the hour at 10 and 11 am, noon and 1, 2, and 3 pm.

Tour rates are \$8 for adults, \$5 for ages 6-17 and 62 and older, and free for children 5 and younger. Details: 775-849-0201 or www.washoecounty.us/parks.

Bowers Mansion will also host a series of programs called "Programs

on the Porch" at 7 pm Fridays from May 31 through June 28. Washoe County Parks Ranger Jerry Buzzard will host the programs, which will include music and guest speakers. The programs are free with donations accepted. 

Message from Your Outgoing HRPS President, Sharon Honig-Bear

The news made me happy. The Washoe County Library, completed in 1966 and located at 301 South Center Street, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on February 13, 2013. The National Register, as many of you know, is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation.

What many of you don't know is that this designation has personal meaning to me. I worked in that glorious building for over 18 years, entering its world of mushroom pods and verdant walkways. I loved the rich, fertile aroma that awaited me when the building was reopened after a long weekend. I was amazed how the building was a time capsule of societal unrest when I explored the bomb shelter, still holding emergency provisions. I lived through the discomforts of asbestos abatement and frequent shifting of service points and staffing. I loved the quote by architect, Hewitt Campau Wells (and paraphrased by me): "If I can't build the library in a park, then I will build a park in the library." What else can I say? I loved that place.

So, personal reasons aside, why is it important that the Downtown Reno Library (as it's now known) received this important designation? This gives me a perfect moment to talk about the challenges of recognizing the "near past," architecture and design so new that we hardly pay attention to its significance. The Library is a good example of this.

The "near past" or "mid century modern"—both buzzwords for architecture and design, roughly originating from approximately 1933 to 1965—is now considered a major aesthetic movement. This style emphasized creating structures with ample windows and open floor



plans, with the intention of opening up interior spaces and bringing the outdoors in. It also encompasses that fun style known as *Googie* or *populuxe*, the Jetson-looking design we see in older motel signs around Reno. These styles remain undervalued in most communities and that puts their elements at serious risk.

We have had some successes, besides the Library, with the "Planetarium" on the UNR campus being one of them. Still, we're aware that we're losing Reno's "near past." The motels and motor courts on 4th Street and Downtown are deteriorating. Their neon is no longer lit. Getchell Library is condemned. People deride the innovative Pioneer Center.

The time is now to reconsider the importance of midcentury architecture—before it is gone and future generations wonder why there is nothing left from decades of Reno's past. Is this any different then from us wondering today why there is so little left from Reno's "far past?"

HRPS is planning to take on the challenge of highlighting the near past in 2014. Prompted by Nevada Assemblywoman Heidi Swank's resolution (Nevada Assembly Joint Resolution AJR 7) to designate May

10, 2014 as Mid Century Modern Day around the State, HRPS will be looking at our own activities to highlight this movement. We are considering a new walking tour, a bus tour and some lectures and speakers. If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact our office. I know this will be fun and enlightening for all.

Welcome to our latest Lifetime Members, Kathy and Scott Williams. The Williams attended a HRPS tour in 2012 and discovered a new view on Reno's older neighborhoods. This exposure influenced Kathy, a realtor, to focus on homes in Southwest Reno. Why not follow the 17 people who have already stepped forward? This is the perfect time, as we begin a new "membership year," to consider your Lifetime Membership.

This is my last message in the capacity as the President of HRPS. For the past six years on the Board, the past three as President, I have worked to understand your needs, the community's needs – and how to bring them together. I've learned a lot and enjoyed myself more. I was helped every day, in every way, by an inspiring group of volunteers, many of whom I'm happy to say are now friends of mine. Lucky me.

I leave the organization in the capable hands of Byllie Andrews and will sit with the Board, in an ex officio role, for the next year. My commitment to HRPS remains strong and you will continue to see me at the Home Tour and on walking tours. To a great future, admiring and respecting Reno's glorious history!

Sharon Honig-Bear



HRPS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

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

Name(s) _____
Mailing Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Phone (H) _____ Fax _____
E-Mail: _____

NEW! Pay online at www.historicreno.org

Annual Membership Includes:
HRPS Quarterly (Footprints) • Free participation in walking tours

New Member Renewal

Student \$15.00
 Individual \$25.00
 Family (Children 18 yrs & younger) \$40.00
 Business Contribution \$100.00
 Supporting \$100.00
 HRPS Angel \$250.00
 Lifetime Member \$500.00
 Additional donation to help our
 Neighborhood Preservation Fund \$ _____

Thank you for joining HRPS.

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

Communications
 Special Events
 Outreach/Education
 Preservation Issues

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY PAID: Check Cash Amount: _____
 Membership # _____ Renewal Date: _____

RV 06.04.2012/FO-DCD

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. Articles may be reprinted in print or electronic formats only with permission of the HRPS Editorial Board. All rights reserved. © 2013 Historic Reno Preservation Society (HRPS)

**HRPS
Life Members
2013**

Darleen Azizisefat
 Jacqueline Black
 Lynn Bremer
 Betty Easton
 Melinda & Dan Gustin
 Sharon Honig-Bear
 Jon and Linda Madsen
 Marshall & Pat Postman
 Terry & Fran Terras
 Charlotte Voitoff
 Betty Watts
 Kathy & Scott Williams



**Scan me
with your
smartphone
and I'll take
you directly
to the
HRPS website**

**Thanks to the
following HRPS
Business Members
who are supporting
the works of HRPS**

Robert H. Broili Law Office
 Gilbert Properties
 Harold & Alice Jacobsen
 Sherry McConnell
 Bert Pincolini
 Prairie Wind Consulting of Nevada
 William C. Thornton
 Charlotte Eckmeyer



P.O. Box 14003
Reno, NV 89507

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
RENO NV
PERMIT NO. 20

RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED



Bulk Rate Mail
Bulk Rate mail is not forwarded.
FootPrints is mailed using a Bulk Rate Mail permit. If your address changes, please notify us at HRPS, P. O. Box 14003, Reno NV 89507, with your address change, to keep **FootPrints** coming.



Status of Restoration of Newlands Manor Pillars

The campaign to restore the eight Newlands Manor Pillars has begun and HRPS needs to raise \$10,000 to complete the project in summer, 2013. The pillars have graced four corners at Nixon Avenue since 1927 and mark an eclectic neighborhood of bungalows, cottages, Spanish Revival homes and other architectural gems.

We have a pledge of \$1,000 to start the campaign and we are turning for support to those of you who pass and admire the Newlands Manor Pillars. To donate to this great cause, you can use the enclosed membership renewal form. Just check the "additional donation" box and write *Newlands* on the line next to your donation amount. You can also go to historicro.org and make a donation online with a credit card and PayPal. Thanks for helping with this Project! 



- HRPS Officers**
- President:** Byllie Andrews
- Vice President:** David Vill
- Secretary:** Gene Williams
- Treasurer:** Roger Steininger
- Past President, Ex Officio:** Sharon Honig-Bear
- Board of Directors**
- Jack Bacon, Eric Broili, Rosie Cevasco, Betty Dodson, Charlotte Eckmeyer, Steve Ellison, Sheryl Hayes-Zorn, Kimberly Roberts, Barrie Schuster
- Program**
- Jack Hursh Jr: Jack.Hursh@gmail.com
- Membership Director**
- Carrie Young
- Walking Tours**
- Rosie Cevasco
- Webmaster**
- Rosie Cevasco
- Administrator & Publicity**
- Cindy Ainsworth 747-0340
- FootPrints Managing Editor**
- Carol Coleman
- Editorial Staff**
- Joyce Cox, Kim Henrick
Debbie Hinman 322-9400
- Editorial Board**
- Mella Rothwell Harmon
- Editor Emeritus & FootPrints Founder**
- Sharon A. Walbridge
- Graphic Design:**
Double Click Design • www.dcdreno.com