

## Carson City Planning Division

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# MEMORANDUM

To: Historic Resources Commission F-3

From: Jennifer Pruitt, Planning Division

Date: January 13, 2011

Subject: HRC-10-097  
2010 Historic Resources Commission Annual Report

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Carson City's Historic Resources Commission (HRC) was established in May 1981. The Commission evolved from a cultural resources inventory that was undertaken to document the remaining historic structures within Carson City. This resource inventory completed in March 1980 also recommended the formation of two historic preservation districts within Carson City.

In May 1982, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) created Carson City's historic district on the City's west side with support from the Nevada Landmarks Society, the Nevada Division of Historic Preservation & Archeology, the Westside Protective Association, and the Carson City Chamber of Commerce. The District's boundaries were recommended by the HRC, formerly known as the Historic Architecture Review Committee.

The HRC seven member (six current members) commission includes building, design and preservation professionals familiar with, and sympathetic to the problems of older buildings and sites. Property owners within the Historic District are also represented on the Commission.

One of the changes implemented in 2009 was the HRC meetings were held the second Thursday of every other month at 5:30 p.m. at the Carson City Community Center instead of every month as in previous years. The HRC reviewed 15 applications in the year 2010 which is lower than the HRC application average over the past seven years. In addition to the HRC approved applications, 13 projects were approved administratively by the HRC Chairman, Mike Drews. The administrative approvals included seven re-roofing projects, two minor fencing projects and five minor maintenance projects in the Historic District.

In 2010 the HRC selected the following recipients to receive the Carson City's 2010 Historic Preservation Award:

- Noreen Humphreys was selected by the Historic Resources Commission for her outstanding efforts in Historic Preservation. Noreen is noted as an author, artist and historian. She was the co-founder of the Carson City Landmarks Society and the Friends of the Library. Noreen was also honored in 1972 as the Woman of the Year by the Carson City Chamber of Commerce. Noreen wrote historical articles for the Nevada Appeal Newspaper and the Las Vegas Sun Newspaper. Noreen's passion and dedication to the Historic Preservation of Carson City has been extraordinary.
- The Edwards House LLC, as owners of the G.J. Edwards House was selected by the Historic Resources Commission for the outstanding efforts of Historic Preservation as it related to the recent renewable energy efforts. Photovoltaic panels were installed in 2008 and the historic integrity of the stylistic stone structure remained intact, which was the first project of this kind in the Carson City Historic District. The one and a half story structure displays elements of both Greek Revival and Gothic Revival design. As noted in the resources inventory, the structure represents one of the City's most interesting and carefully executed architectural designs and reflects the stone building tradition that is so important to the City, which was built in 1883. The property is located at 204 N. Minnesota Street.
- Carter and Peggy Twedt, as owners of the Twedt residence were selected by the Historic Resources Commission for the inspired addition and remodel of the one story vernacular residence with minor Greek Revival style influences. The existing single-family residence was built prior to 1875. The property is located at 612 W. Robinson Street.
- Kilpatrick Johnston & Adler LLC, as owners of the Frank Norcross House was selected by the Historic Resources Commission for the remarkable addition to the two-and-a-half story structure with Craftsman style influences. As noted in the resources inventory, the structure represents an early and relatively uncommon use of cast concrete block in the City, which was built in 1906 by Judge Norcross, and continues to have a long association with individuals in the legal profession. The property is located at 412 N. Division Street.

The annual preservation awards program honors individuals, organizations, or projects that have made important contributions toward preserving Carson City's heritage. This award recognizes excellence in advancing the goals of historic preservation while providing outstanding rehabilitation.

The HRC completed historic structures reports for the Brewery Arts Center and the Performance Hall. The HRC was awarded \$25,000 from the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) to complete the reports. The HRC completed the work associated with the HPF grant with the assistance of consultants, Dan Pezzoni and Pete Serafin in June of 2010.

In April 2010, the HRC was awarded \$21,000 in HPF grant to complete a National Register Nomination for the Carson City Historic District and re-survey 50+ properties in the Historic District which have had significant alterations to the exterior since 1980; Dan Pezzoni was selected through a Request for Proposal process as the consultant to complete the work. See attached table of the Historic Preservation Fund awards from 1987-2010.

The HRC submitted a HPF application on December 1, 2010 for 2011/2012 to conduct survey work of properties west of the Carson City Historic District and to design and install Interpretive historic signage at significant Carson City Parks which will enhance both City residents and visitors perceptions of the site(s), city, and region. By drawing attention to an area's unique history and identity, the public can better appreciate the story of a place. The HRC and the Parks and Recreation Department have selected the following areas for the signage:

- Morgan Mill Road River Access Area - 67/33 funding , source is Question 1, topics could include old Empire City, Mr. Ambrose, V&T railroad, and possible others
- Carson City Fairgrounds/Fuji Park - 60/40 funding, source is Residential Construction Tax, topics could include historic log flumes, the Ormsby County Poor Farm, the graveyard, and possible others
- Fulstone Wetlands - 60/40 funding, source is Carson City Open Space Program, topics could include Native Americans and uses related to wetlands plants, etc. The Fulstone area and adjacent freeway corridor had/has recorded historic sites.

If funding is available it will be awarded in the spring of 2011.

Not only will this information serve as the basis for many planning, economic development, and educational activities, it will also contribute toward Carson City's responsibilities as a CLG. Once collected, this inventory information is accessible to local governments, historic preservation organizations, tourism and economic development entities, interested citizens, as well as state and federal agencies. The inventory information is also available on the Planning Division (Historic Resources Commission) web site.

Attachments:

HPF Awards 1987-2011 Table  
2010 Old House Journal article June-July 2010  
Carson City Historic Preservation Awards

## Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) Awards

Year	Amount	Project
2011	TBD	Interpretive Signage and Surveying
2010	\$ 21,000.00	National Nomination for Carson City Historic District and survey work
2009	\$ 25,000.00	Historic Structures Reports for the BAC and the Performance Hall
2008	\$ 20,000.00	Carson City Context Statement, Carson City Mid-Century Survey
2007	\$ 45,000.00	Survey of Post World War II Subdivisions
2006	\$ 7,000.00	Survey of Post World War II Subdivisions
2005	\$ 7,500.00	East Carson City Historic Survey-Phase II
2004	\$ 4,100.00	Carson City Historic District Overview Brochure and Design Guideline
2004	\$ 5,660.00	Roberts House Door Rehabilitation
2003	\$ 12,500.00	East Carson City Historic Survey-Phase I
2002	\$ 4,000.00	GIS Documentation of the Historic District
2001	\$ 5,000.00	Roberts House Rehabilitation (City-owned property)
1999	\$ 3,000.00	Rehabilitation of the V & T Depot roof
1998	\$ 10,000.00	Rehabilitation of the Civic Hall (City-owned property)
1997	\$ 750.00	Rehabilitation of Civic Hall doors
1996	\$ 20,250.00	Raycraft Ranch Prehistoric Site-Management Plan
1995	\$ 16,750.00	Continued rehabilitation of the Carson Brewery Building
1993	\$ 37,100.00	Continued rehabilitation of the Carson Brewery Building
1992	\$ 36,333.00	Continued rehabilitation of the Civic Hall
1991	\$ 35,399.00	Continued rehabilitation of the Carson Brewery Building
1990	\$ 9,700.00	Architectural Study for the Civic Hall (City-owned property)
1987	\$ 20,350.00	Rehabilitation of the Carson Brewery Building (City-owned property)
	\$ 346,392.00	

STYLE



The picturesque Queen Anne style survived into the 20th century in Carson City, exemplified by the Herman Springmeyer House, circa 1908, with its fanciful conical porch roof.

# A Frontier Find

NEVADA'S CAPITAL BOASTS AN ARCHITECTURAL BONANZA.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JAMES C. MASSEY AND SHIRLEY MAXWELL



Carson City, the capital of Nevada, has grown into a modern mini-metropolis, but it's still a town that cherishes its frontier beginnings and post-Civil War past. Its old buildings are a remarkably sophisticated collection of the architectural styles that captured America's fancy after the Civil War, often rendered in an unmistakably western vernacular.

Tucked up against the Sierra Mountains in western Nevada's high desert country, the town was founded in 1858 and named for the nearby Carson River. (The river, in turn, had been named for Kit Carson, legendary trapper, guide, and fighter.)

Carson City is a hop-skip-and-a-jump from Lake Tahoe, Reno, the storied ghost town of Virginia City, and the long-abandoned gold-mining camps that built the West. Yet it is emphatically not a ghost town. (For the record, its historically significant metal was silver, not gold.) And while it has its share of neon-spangled casinos and slot spots (this is Nevada, after all), there's more than gambling to this little city.

### Architectural Riches

Carson City's historic building stock runs the gamut from churches, schools, and other institutional buildings--such as the imposing Nevada State Capitol and the U.S. Mint (now the Nevada State Museum), which was constructed in 1864 to turn gold and silver from the fabled Comstock Lode into



TOP: One-story plus-mansard-roof houses, like the 1875 Belknap House, are uncommon. Note the handsome pair of bay windows at the side. BOTTOM: The U.S. Mint, home of the famed Carson City silver dollar, was designed by Alfred B. Mullett using distinctive local sandstone. The 1869 building is now the Nevada State Museum.

coins--through modest settlers' homes, commodious Victorian mansards, and substantial Queen Anne houses.

Meandering through the city's residential historic district west of Carson Street provides tantalizing glimpses of what the town may have looked like in successive decades of the 19th century. (A helpful Kit Carson Trail Map at the Visitors' Center gives dates for selected buildings.)

## Stone Surprises

Across many parts of the timber-rich United States, wood was, by far, the most common house-building material in Carson City, with brick a distant second. Here, however, these mundane materials are overshadowed. It's not so much revered for the optimum use of local sandstone, quarried by contractors in the Nevada state prison and used in the construction of jails, hospitals, and small public and private structures, but for the sheer beauty of the stone. Sometimes cut into rough-hewn blocks, sometimes given a thin polished surface, the shimmering, faulted sandstone lends a unique spirit and patina to the town.

RIGHT: The Forman-Roberts House Museum is noted for its exuberant Gothic Revival ornament. Built in 1864 in Washoe City, it was moved here via railroad in 1874. BELOW: The 1863 Ormsby-Rosser House is typical of small early houses in Carson City.



One of Carson City's best-loved landmarks is the small Gothic Revival Forman-Roberts House on Carson Street, originally constructed in 1864 in nearby Washoe City (which, like many early mining towns, was short-lived). Saloon keeper James Doane Roberts and his British-born

wife, Annie, had the house transported to Carson City in 1874, probably by flat car on the brand-new Virginia and Truckee Railroad. In Nevada's up-and-down mining economy of the 1870s, moving houses from town to town was fairly common.

The two-story clapboard-covered

house could well have been inspired by A. J. Downing's 1842 architectural pattern book, *Cottage Residences*, but it has a Western flavor all its own. Its lacy, jig-sawn wooden ornament (a fine example of Carpenter Gothic detailing), absurdly steep gables, pointed-arch windows, and bright yellow paint job have made it a favorite with locals and visitors alike. Preservation groups rose up in its defense when it was threatened with demolition to make room for a park in 1969, and the little landmark is now a house museum surrounded by a miniscule public park.

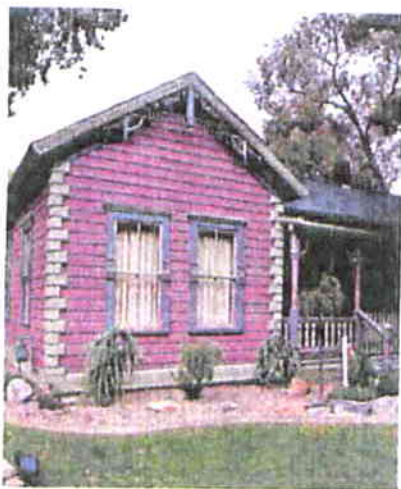
## Literary Landmark

The Orion Clemens House (1863-64) on Division Street is a large, L-shaped, gable-fronted frame residence sporting Italianate brackets and deep cornice returns. Over the years it has lost its shapely Italianate window trim and acquired a covering of stucco over the original wooden siding. Orion Clemens was the first (and only) secretary of the Nevada Territory. He intended his new house to serve as a part-time governor's mansion, because he often was called upon to serve as acting governor. Clemens was the elder brother of Mark Twain (Samuel Langhorne Clemens), and Twain spent some time there during a stint as a reporter for a Virginia City newspaper. Twain's impressions of his brother's house can be found in his autobiographical travelogue *Roughing It*.

## Materials in Spades

The Rinckel Mansion on North Curry Street (1876) is one of only a few brick





ABOVE: Frame gable-and-wing houses are common. This one on Ann Street is enhanced with wooden quoins on the gabled front.



residences in Carson City—and the only known architect-designed house in town. Built by Charles H. Jones for a German immigrant who made his fortune in the Comstock mines, the imposing two-story house is crowned with impressive iron cresting.

Sandstone in distinctive pink, green, and brown tones is used to good effect in the Thomas J. Edwards House (circa 1883) at the corner of Minnesota and Musser Streets. Typical of 1880s vernacular style, a pretty two-story side bay and a welcoming front porch with graceful arches between the square posts relieve the austere lines of the gable-fronted house.

The 1875 Belknap House on North Nevada Street is a simple but handsome example of the Mansard style in frame and clapboard. (In more elaborate, cityfied forms, Mansards are referred to as Second Empire—or even “General Grant Style,” in recognition of their popularity during the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant.) Arched hoods shield the dormer windows, and dignified modillions underline the cornice—but there’s a note of Western whimsy in the flat, applied “dentils” on the frieze and the curvy pendant trim on the porch.

One-story L-shaped cottages enlivened by spindlework and Carpenter Gothic trim are representative of the respectable work-



TOP: No fewer than three bay windows adorn the 1875 Olcovich-Meyers House, designed in a late Italianate style with Gothic Revival gables. ABOVE: The warm-toned local sandstone is used in major public buildings and in a few houses, including the circa 1883 Edwards House, where it was laid in a random ashlar pattern.

ing-class houses of the 1870s and 1880s. They were often the homes of folks who had their own ideas about design and decoration, aided perhaps by a drawing or two from the architectural pattern books that circulated even to the late-19th-century Nevada frontier. They provide a delightful sidebar to Carson City’s old-house scene.

An intrepid pedestrian could take in all this post-Civil War charm on foot.

Those who are willing to hop into their cars and venture beyond the city limits (and well beyond the Victorian era) will be rewarded by the unassumingly handsome sandstone buildings of the Stewart Indian School campus (circa 1890-1930, and a National Historic Landmark).

Carson City has rightly been called Nevada’s hidden treasure—and it’s more than worth the hunt. ■



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# Old House JOURNAL

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for Cabinet Installs

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Frontier Victorians

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that increase  
curb appeal



## Historic Resource Commission Preservation Awards

Name of Structure/Owner	Address / APN	Year Awarded	Comments
Rinckel House Nevada Press Association	102 North Curry St 003-215-04	2001	
Adams House Carson Tahoe Hospital Foundation	990 North Minnesota St 001-201-04	2001	
St. Charles Hotel Robert McFadden	310 South Carson St 003-113-09	2001	
Carson Brewery Building Brewery Arts Center	555 West King St 003-206-01	2001	
Wungnema House Carson City Parks	844 North Saliman Rd 002-181-01	2001	
State of Nevada Courthouse	100 South Carson St 003-218-02	2003	Heroes Memorial Building
Brougher-Bath House Carlita Ray	503 North Nevada St 003-222-05	2003	
Pecorilla Residence Karen Pecorilla	1004 West King St 003-187-04	2004	
Glenbrook Properties Shelly Aldean	504 West Fifth St 003-127-05	2004	
The National Best Sellers Building Lopiccolo Family Trust	123 West Second St 003-112-06	2004	
Mayor Ray Masayko		2005	Individual Award
Olcovich House Verive and Cain	110 West Fourth St/Curry St 003-113-13	2005	
State Farm Office Building Bret and Dani Andreas	810 North Nevada St 001-192-08	2005	
The Lucky Spur Stew's LLC	302 North Carson St 003-229-07	2005	
Westside Court Art Hannafin PUD Project	Block bounded by West Robinson St, West Caroline St, North Minnesota St and Phillips St	2005	
Resource Concepts, Inc. McClain, John and Carolyn Et Al	340 N. Minnesota St. 003-192-21	2006	Originally Dr. Simeon L. Lee Home Awarded 5/18/06
Bliss Mansion Bungalow Cynar, Joyce	408 West Robinson St. 003-236-01	2006	Bliss Bungalow Not Selected
Albertson's Highway 50 East Albertson's Inc.	3325 Highway 50 East 008-311-04	2006	Not Selected

## Historic Resource Commission Preservation Awards

Name of Structure/Owner	Address / APN	Year Awarded	Comments
Adele's Abowd, Charles and Karen	1112 N. Carson St. 001-178-06	2006	Adele's Restaurant Awarded 5/18/06
First Presbyterian Church, Robin Williamson, Joe McCarthy, Peter Wilday, Paul Ferrari First Presbyterian Church of CC	110 N. Nevada St. 003-214-05	2006	Individual awards Awarded 5/18/06
Masonic Lodge/Debug Computer Carson Lodge #1	729 N. Carson St. 004-261-01	2006	Depot Building Awarded 5/18/06
Professional Office Gibbons, Thomas J III	111 S. Division St. 003-216-15	2006	Nominated by Dr. Thomas J. Gibbons III Constructed 1944 1040 square feet Awarded 5/18/06
Private Single Family Residence Scheufler, Paula Jean	314 W. Ann St. 001-186-03	2006	Nominated by Peggy Spears Constructed 1910 1298 square feet Not Selected
Private Single Family Residence Jack and Sheryl McLaughlin	611 West Robinson St. 003-243-01	2006	Nominated by the McLaughlin's Constructed in 1919 Not Selected
Private Single Family Residence Peter Smith and Patricia Cooper- Smith	1206 North Nevada Street 001-172-02	2007	selected
Office Building Northern Nevada Title Company	512 N. Division 003-237-03	2007	selected
McKeen Motor Car No. 22	Carson City Railroad Museum	2007	selected
Jim Phalan and Jeff Phalan owners of the Firkin & Fox Restaurant and Pub	310 South Carson Street 003-113-09	2008	selected
Mark and Jenny Lopiccolo owners St Charles Hotel remodel	310 South Carson Street 003-113-09	2008	selected
Richard Baker Former HRC member		2008	individual award
Marv Teixeira Former Carson City Mayor		2009	individual award
Edward and Maureen Waterhouse	312 W. Musser Street 003-211-03	2009	selected
Noreen Humphreys		2010	individual award



## Historic Resource Commission Preservation Awards

Name of Structure/Owner	Address / APN	Year Awarded	Comments
Carter and Peggy Twedt	612 W. Robinson Street 003-275-01	2010	selected
Kilpatrick Johnston & Adler LLC Frank Norcross House	412 N. Division Street 003-238-03	2010	selected
Edwards House LLC G. J. Edwards House	204 N. Minnesota Street 003-192-09	2010	selected

Updated: 1/4/11

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