In May of 2009, the City of Reno Historical Resources Commission presented the Ginsburg/Cassity home at 543 Ridge Street with the Residential award for “outstanding renovation, restoration and/or preservation of a single family home or multi-family residential building.” You can see the home on HRPS Mansions on the Blvd and DeLongchamps Residential tours and can often catch proud owner Mike Cassity putting about in the lovely yard.

The picturesque charm of the lovely brick home at 543 Ridge Street in the beautiful Rio Vista Heights subdivision beckons to all who drive or walk past it. Elegantly understated, it was built for the prominent Ginsburg family (see article page 3-4) in 1927-28. The Ginsburg family occupied the home from 1928 until the mid-1950s. Other DeLongchamps’ Tudor-style homes would grace this neighborhood populated by many of Reno’s prominent business families. Edward Chism, founder of Chism Ice Cream, built his Tudor-style home down the street at 575 Ridge Street.

Through the years 543 Ridge Street was owned by many other well-known Reno families, such as Hans Lugin-Buehl and his wife Aimee, and attorney and state senator Peter Echeverria. The Lugin-Buehls purchased the home from Anna Ginsburg in 1955 and appear to have lived there until the late 1970s. The Ginsburg/Cassity home benefited the Quasi Endowment Fund to further support Basque Studies—what a fitting tribute to Peter Echeverria.

With the donation and endowment, it is also fitting to note that this historic home is contributing to the further study of Nevada.

It is an understatement to say that the quaint, Frederic DeLongchamps-designed Ridge Street Tudor Revival was in a "shabby chic" condition when Joannie and Mike Cassity purchased the home from the University in 2005. The home stood vacant for some time before it was placed for sale and was in a pretty sad state of disrepair.

Overgrown garden vines covered most of the house. The vines had worked their way through the roof (which was pulling up) and were growing in the attic! Neighborhood raccoons found the home and left tiny footprints in the attic! Neighborhood raccoons found the home and made it their den.

The Ginsburg/Cassity Home at 543 Ridge Street, a classic DeLongchamps’ Tudor Revival style home. Photo courtesy of Cindy Ainsworth.
The Cassitys were living in California when the home came on the market, but their daughter, a Reno resident, kept an eye on the sale of the property. The Cassitys jumped at the opportunity to buy the home when escrow fell through on a previous buyer’s offer.

What impressed the Cassitys was the fact that the interior had not been gutted and modified the way many other older homes have been. It is believed that the interior layout has remained the same throughout the years. Beautiful arches grace the interior entry ways. This arch design is even echoed in the brick fireplace pattern. Delightful quarter circle windows on either side of the chimney appear to wink at you. The Cassitys have no intention of removing the original windows. However, the ugly window screens are gone, replaced with period style shades. Often referring to the original DelLongchamps plans, they have made it a point to maintain the 1920s feel and originality of the home.

The Cassitys have lovingly worked on the home, doing much of the labor themselves. Mike has a woodshop in the basement (along with a wonderful wine cellar) and recently built book cases in the front living room that borrow details from original built-ins located elsewhere in the home. For the benefit of his wife Joannie, Mike also added the side window trellis that appears on the original home. For the benefit of his wife Joannie, Mike also added the side window trellis that appears on the original DelLongchamps’ drawings.

The Cassitys are thrilled to be a part of the Ridge Street neighborhood and have come to love Reno. Mike noted that they really wanted to participate in Reno’s downtown redevelopment renaissance and feel that their rehabilitated home has contributed to that cause. HRPS thanks the Cassitys for their commitment to historic preservation and home has contributed to that cause. HRPS thanks the Cassitys for their commitment to historic preservation and feel that their rehabilitated

543 Ridge Street — Ginsburg/Cassity Home (continued)

Continued from page 1

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I would like to thank Mike and Joannie Cassity for sharing their story about this wonderful home. Other information for this article came from Anne Simone and Aline Leffey’s extensive research on Frederic DeLongchamps and the 543 Ridge Street home; various Polk’s Reno City Directories and Nevada Phone Books; Washoe County Assessor office information; DeLongchamps Architectural Archive, Special Collections, UNR; 2004 winter issue of the University of Nevada’s Silver and Blue. Cindy Ainsworth is a charter member and past president of HRPS. Currently she is the HRPS Administrator. She serves on the City of Reno Historical Resources Commission.

From Your HRPS President

We have some very good news on the Powning Conservation District! The City of Reno now has a Conservation District. This is a major step in recognizing the importance of the neighborhood. This district, adjacent to downtown Reno, will also demonstrate to visitors that Reno is very aware of the importance of our heritage.

This season’s HRPS walking tours have been highly successful, with participation exceeding that of previous years. The open house and tour of the Crissie Caughlin Ranch property was a tremendous success and very well attended. Thanks to Cindy Ainsworth for her excellent talk on the history of the ranch.

The final round of 2009 walking tours will begin on September 1st and continue through the 26th. The annual fall social will be held on October 23, 2009, at the National Automobile Museum with the Siena Automobile Museum, followed by a bus tour to the sites of the following day, will continue in the up-coming school year. The program is for Reno fourth grades and possibly one middle school class. The pilot program presented at two schools in May 2009 was highly successful. The students were very enthusiastic about the photos and the bus tour.

I thank all of you for your support and encouragement. HRPS is indeed grateful.

— Felvia Belaustegui, HRPS President

HRPS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

Please make check payable to Historic Reno Preservation Society and mail along with this application to:

PO. Box 14003, Reno, NV 89507

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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?

As of July 1, 2009, 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.

FootPrints Vol. 12 No.4 Fall 2009
Harry Ginsburg was a successful jeweler and a community leader. For many years he took an active interest in civic affairs and was one of the organizers of temple Emanu El and an active member of B’nai B’rith. The newspaper offices were on the same block as many meetings of B’nai B’rith were hosted by Anna, at their 543 Ridge Street home.

David Ginsburg, former HPBS board member and Harry Ginsburg’s grandson, fondly remembers many large family Jewish holiday gatherings at the home. David commented that, with kids being kids, Harry would chase the grandchildren out of the sitting room, complaining that he was trying to listen to the news on the radio.

Harry Ginsburg was born in 1882 in Kovno, Russia (now located in independent Lithuania). He attended Russian public schools. He married Anna Epp in 1903 and had three children, Leo, Sam and Ed. Interestingly, according to the 1949-50 Who’s Who in Nevada, in 1904 Harry was a watchmaker to the Cat’s Family Jewels. The Ginsburgs immigrated to the United States in 1905, first living in Denver and then moving to San Rafael, California where, according to the Reno Evening Gazette, Harry established the largest jewelry store in the area.

In 1915, Harry and his family moved to Reno and took over the store and lease of the Marymont Jewelry Store. An article stated that he “proposes to add many of the largest novelties in the jewelry line.” His specialty was watch repair and manufacture of custom-designed jewelry.

That store was located at the corner of Virginia and Second streets and at the time was one of the largest jewelry stores in Reno. The store was eventually taken over by Frank Golden, owner of the Golden Hotel, before the turn of the century. In 1916, Ginsburg moved the store to 133 North Virginia St. where it became one of the best-known jewelry firms in Nevada. Of course, the store was expanded and Ginsburg added a custom jewelry design department. A 1923 ad stated that the store was “equal to any shop on the coast.”

Harry Ginsburg died in 1934 and his son, Sam, who became a partner with his father in the business, took his place. Sam was an expert diamond merchant, often traveling the world searching for valuable precious stones and designing his own custom-designed jewelry. In an article dated 1971, he says, “I arrived in Honolulu from the Far East with $160,000 worth of sapphires and rubies in my flight bag.” At the time, he was only Nevada member of the National Appraisers Association and was an authority on appraising the value of precious stones of all kinds.

Sam chose to retire and closed the store on December 31, 1951, but he continued to do custom jewelry work. He stated in an article that he was looking forward to “doing what I want to do.” The North Virginia Street building where the jewelry store and other small businesses were located was replaced by the Onewold Casino in the mid-1970s.

The two other Ginsburg sons were equally successful Reno businessmen. Leo founded the popular home furniture company, Incorporated. Ed later joined as secretary/treasurer. The business was incorporated in 1914 as the Onslow Furniture Company. The home furniture business steadily grew and soon the store was too small to adequately handle the ever expanding merchandise.

The opening of the new and modern Home Furniture store in 1941 was an important addition to the Sierra Street business district. Located at the north-west corner of Sierra and First (where the Parking Gallery is located today), the two-story building, designed by Lehman Ferris and owned by the Yorli Land and Livestock Company, was constructed of brick with stucco facing. The building was surrounded by thirteen display windows and twenty-three model rooms graced the interior. The building must have been an impressive sight.
The Ginsburg Family Businesses (continued)

The Home Furniture building saw its fair share of disasters. This building was first damaged in the 1957 Sierra Street gas explosion. David Ginsburg remembers all the windows on First Street blew out. The building also survived Reno’s major floods in 1950 and in 1955. Home Furniture was truly a family run business. After college in 1957, a young David Ginsburg, Leo’s son, joined the company and remained with the firm until it was sold in 1971. His dad made sure that he learned the furniture and home furnishing trade first-hand by starting him in the warehouse and then moving him to other departments, including the drapery department.

Twice a year, David would hit the road, often with his dad Leo, to do the furniture buying. This was a common practice among furniture and home furnishing stores. Most of the U.S. furniture manufacturers and factories were located in the southern states. Many of the furniture companies were located in the stores. Most of the U.S. furniture manufacturers and factories were located in the southern states. Many of the furniture manufacturers and factories were located in the stores. Most of the U.S. furniture manufacturers and factories were located in the stores.

In 1957, the building was occupied by today’s malls. The store featured everything for your home furnishing needs: high-end furniture, draperies, linens, floor covering, gift wines, houses and appliances. There was even a “hi-fi” shop featuring Roy Kelble’s House of Records, “Reno’s largest, most complete record shop.”

Leo and Ed Ginsburg retired in 1971 and sold the business to their sons and California furniture store owners, Bob and Bill Brenner who wanted to enter the northern Nevada market. In 1975, the building was then occupied by Arden Wholesale Incorporated. Sadly, this unique contemporary building was demolished to make way for the juvenile court building.

I would like to thank David Ginsburg for sharing his family stories and photos. Other information for this article was obtained from Jerry Fenwick, Reno Evening Gazette and Nevada State Journal newspapers dating from 1951 to 1975; Who’s Who in Nevada, 1949-50; Nevada Humanities’ Online Nevada Encyclopedia (www.onlinenevada.org) article by Blochon on Historic Street Clock of Reno.

People standing in line for the 1961 grand opening of the Home Furniture store at Sierra and First streets. Photo courtesy of David Ginsburg.

1941 Reno Evening Gazette ad for the grand opening of the Home Furniture store at Sierra and First streets.

Reno Evening Gazette article, “featuring the concrete flooring of floors and ceiling for the entire building at one time then jacking them into position by pneumatic hydraulic method.” The concrete floors were then secured to the already con- structed steel columns by shear bars.

This unique construction caused quite a stir in downtown Reno. Many “sidewalk superintendents” stopped daily to watch the lift slab process. Amazingly, this method only took 17 days to install six floor slabs and the bottom floor and roof slab.

The opening of this store in 1961 must have been a large event with the opening of today’s malls. The store featured everything for your home furnishing needs: high-end furniture, draperies, linens, floor covering, gift wines, houses and appliances. There was even a “hi-fi” shop featuring Roy Kelble’s House of Records, “Reno’s largest, most complete record shop.”

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Concrete floors pre-stressed concrete method. This, according to a

Wagon Tracks Across the Truckee Meadows

by Lloyd Shanks

Rattlesnake Mountain is a fenced off area protecting a portion of a deep wagon trail heading from the north end of the valley towards the south. This site is marked by a bullet-riddled signpost indicating it is a portion of an emigrant wagon train path. This claim has been disputed by those who maintain that the emigrant wagon trains followed the Truckee River and continued in a westerly direction across the meadows, and the marked trail is only a portion of a road used by ranch wagons many years after the last wagon train passed.

As indicated in the pictures on pages 9 and 10, this deep path is much like the wagon ruts still existing in many parts of the country stretching from St. Joseph, Missouri to Nevada. Those ruts were carved by the steel tires of countless wagons, and in some places, were so deep that a man could sit on one edge of them and his feet would not reach the bottom. It would take a huge number of trips in a light ranch wagon to make a path as deep as the trail made by the wagons pulled by the ox teams most often used by the emigrants.

As the wagon trains followed the Truckee River east of the most northerly hills of the Carson Range, it was necessary for them to cross the river numerous times. T. H. Jefferson’s map number IV of the Map of the Emigrant Road from Independence, Missouri to San Francisco, California in the public domain. Or taken from Rattlesnake Mountain and Letters of the California Oregon Trail by Dale Morgan, indicates that, at that time, there were numerous oxbows on the Truckee River between Truckee Meadows and Pyramid Lake. In his book Ode to Hunger: George R. Stewart claims “They had to ford the river more than once to the mile.” In Fearful Journey, Harold Curran includes the following entry from a diary kept by Andrew Child in 1850, describing how to avoid many fords:

“It has been usual to ford the river twenty or thirty times within as many miles to avoid the walls of rock. The fords are all very bad,

The river being a rapid stream and its bottom covered with large rocks. By following the mountain road, all these fords but eight (8) may be avoided.”

The wagon train in which Heinrich Lienhard traveled, that preceded the ill-fated Donner Party train in 1846, was near the south side of the river and chose to enter the Truckee Meadows by the “mountain road” that led to a ravine between the two mountains south of the river. In his diary, parts of which are published in From St. Louis to California, Heinrich Lienhard stated that as they proceeded down the “steep hill” at this point it was a “sleigh ride.”

Most of the emigrant wagons did not have brakes, and the rear wheels would simply be blocked with timber or chained in place and the wagon would then slide down a steep grade. It is possible that the Donner Party also followed this steep path.

Whether all or most of the wagon trains could have crossed the Truckee Meadows by paralleling the Truckee River is also a matter of controversy, depending on whether the area east of the present site of the Reno airport now occupied by the

Continued on page 10
Now, Emily’s Journey (continued)

was early July, when climbing a pass "Shoe Tree." In spite of the fact that it sites, such as the world-famous Nevada welcoming and steered them to historic endless miles of tedious, unchanging crowd that she had expected it to be

Continued from page 7

...Reno, Nevada. Photo courtesy of Cindy Ainsworth.

Dust off your dusters and polish up your driving goggles as HRPS takes you on an historic motoring evening Wednesday night, October 31, at the National Automobile Museum. Join us in Gallery 4 for cocktails and auction item viewing and bidding at 6 p.m.

You’ll also have an opportunity to visit the museum’s Alice Ramsay display. Dinner, catered by the Siena, will be served at 7 p.m., followed by a special guest speaker in keeping with our “Alice’s Drive” theme. Tickets are $60 and can be obtained by sending a check to Felvia Belaestegui, 3015 Heatheridge Lane, Reno, NV 89509.

If you have auction items to donate, particularly those with an automotive theme, please contact Carrie Young at 624-1046 or via email at caayoung@unr.edu.

Mt. Rose Elementary Centennial Commemoration

H

RPS member and Mt. Rose Elementary School parent Jenny Brekhus is looking for individuals who are interested in working with her to plan for the celebration of the school’s centennial.

Mt. Rose Elementary is the region’s oldest operating school and one of the “four Spanish sister” schools (Orvis Ring, McKinley Park, Mary S. Doten, and Mt. Rose Elementary), built starting in 1909.

Mt. Rose principal Karen Wallis is the "mother" of the school, having taught there for 23 years. Jenny Brekhus is the "father" of the school, having taught there for 33 years. Both began their careers at Mt. Rose in 1986 and are working together to commemorate the school’s centennial.

Jenny Brekhus can be contacted at 323-2331 or by email at jennybrekhus@gmail.com.

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FootPrints Vol. 12 No. 4, Fall 2009

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Delongchamps Residential Architecture - This walk takes you on a neighborhood tour of many noteworthy homes, both large and small, designed by Reno's notable architect, Frederic Delongchamps. Also, hear about his life and what made him so unique to this area. Meet at the Hardy House, 442 Flint Street. Tour Guides: Anne Simone and Sharon Honig Bear.

Tuesday, September 8
5:30 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 Guide: Ed Windhart.

Saturday, September 12
10:00 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, September 15
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 first City of Reno Conservation District. Meet at Mckinley Arts & Culture Center, 925 Riverside Drive. Tour Guide: Felvia Belaustegui.

Saturday, September 19
10:00 a.m.

Upper Ralston/Northern Little Italy - Enjoy a walk in a residential neighborhood with a mix of architectural styles. Proximity to the University has traditionally determined the mix of residents, professors and students alike. Meet at the intersection of S. Virginia St. and the Strand, College Avenue. Tour Guides: Jim and Sue Smith.

Tuesday, September 22
5:30 p.m.

Historic Truckee River Walk - A relaxing stroll along the Truckee River reveals ecletic architecture surrounded by rich political histories and spiced with colorful anecdotes. Meet at Mckinley Arts and Cultural Center, 925 Riverside Drive. Tour Guide: Joan Collins.

Saturday, September 26
5:00-5:00 p.m.

New Tour! Prohibition in Reno - We've turned back the docks to the 1920s and '30s. We'll walk streets and alleys and visit significant buildings, recalling Reno's saloons and reformers (the WCTU and Anti-Saloon League). We'll even visit an alleged speakeasy. Then join us for an optional post tour Repeal of Prohibition celebration at the Amendment 21 Grill, 425 S. Virginia St. Tour starts at Amtrak's Reno Station, 135 East Commercial Row. Tour Guides: Debbie Hinman and Sharon Honig Bear.

Online Reservations for HRPS Walks Now Available
at www.historicreno.org

FootPrints Vol. 12 No. 4, Fall 2009

FootPrints Vol. 12 No. 4, Fall 2009

Now, Emily's Journey by Debbie Hitman

This story is a follow-up to the FootPrints article on Alice Ramsey, entitled 'Alice's Journey'. Published in Volume 12, No. 3, Summer 2009. It's Emily's story, the intrepid young woman who undertook the re-enactment of Alice's journey on its 100-year anniversary. I had the opportunity to meet Emily and her crew during her stay in Reno and was very impressed by her spirit and sense of adventure. Alice’s descendants were cheering her on from their various homes around the country, but I wasn’t surprised if Alice herself was doing the same, from a much more distant vantage point.

On June 9, 2009, it was a gray day in New York City with rain shutting down upon the 1909 Maxwell and its female occupants, exactly as it had 100 years to the day and hour earlier. Well, nearly so—the Maxwell was five minutes late leaving 1930 Broadway this time around. And the female occupants were, instead of Alice Ramsey and her crew, driver Emily Anderson and her co-pilot and navigator Christia Catania.

Following the Maxwell in separate vehicles were a three-man film crew, headed by Emily’s brother, filmmaker Bengt Anderson, the team mechanics, an Alice Ramsey re-enactor named Sally Barnett and Emily’s parents Richard and Margaret. One of the very important members of the Anderson crew was Emily’s infant daughter, Kaisa. Unlike Alice Ramsey, Emily was able to have her child traveling with her, a much safer plan in today’s world than in 1909.

As they drove, Emily and her crew encountered "The Loneliest Town in America." During her talk, Emily told the crowd, “One of our biggest challenges was that, unlike Alice, we had to deal with the modern day cars. One of the things that I think most people don’t realize is the Maxwell can’t stop on a dime.” Also, unlike modern convertibles, in the Maxwell the occupants are sitting up high with no windshield to shielding them from the elements. Just as they began to merge, Emily tried to move over to the shoulder, backfire and the engine died. Frantically Emily screamed to the driver, “He was actually going slower than we were!” Emily exclaimed, to gales of laughter from the audience. “To me it has really opened my eyes to how important it is to preserve our history, take care of our small towns and remember where we come from.”

For the first half of the trip, the Maxwell experienced frequent mechanical troubles; one piston rod broke three times. Because of the repeated problem with babbits, which is a metal alloy used for bearings and such, the Maxwell acquired its name (Babbits, pronounced with a French accent or Babbs for short) by which it would be known for the remainder of its journey. But aside from losing first gear in Nebraska and traveling on the rest of the way without it, the second half of the trip went a lot more smoothly with respect to mechanical difficulties.

The day’s travel to Omaha was the longest day of their journey and Emily related. They had traveled 260 miles that day, seeing not much but mile upon mile of cornfields. The Maxwell had been running really well for a few days, Emily told the audience. With about two miles to go into Omaha, it was necessary for the crew to leave the two lane highway and merge onto the fast-moving, five-lane interstate. As they began to merge, Emily said, they heard a loud backfire and the engine died. Frantically Emily tried to move over to the shoulder, with the interstate traffic cruising by at warp speed. Rich Anderson came out of the Maxwell, questioning Emily. “Was it the same noise again?” “No, this was a different noise,” Emily and Bengt Anderson exclaimed. Of course, driving across the country on the crew had 100 years to the day and hour earlier. Well, nearly so—the Maxwell was five minutes late leaving 1930 Broadway this time around. And the female occupants were, instead of Alice Ramsey and her crew, driver Emily Anderson and her co-pilot and navigator Christia Catania.

Emily Anderson (behind the wheel) and Christia Catania on Lake Tahoe’s Pioneer Trail, on the last leg of their cross-country journey. Photo courtesy of Cindy Ainsworth.

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Emily Anderson (behind the wheel) and Christia Catania on Lake Tahoe’s Pioneer Trail, on the last leg of their cross-country journey. Photo courtesy of Cindy Ainsworth.
No dogs please.

Online Reservations for HRPS Walks Now Available

Tour cost is $10 per person, free to HRPS members. Walks generally last from 1½ to 2 hours.

DELONGCHAMPS RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE - This walk takes you on a neighborhood tour of many noteworthy homes, both large and small, designed by Reno's notable architect, Frederic Delongchamps. Also, hear about his life and what made him so unique to this area. Meet at the Hardy House, 442 Flint Street. Tour Guides: Anne Simone and Sharon Honig Bear.

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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.

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UPPER RALSTON/NORTHERN LITTLE ITALY - Enjoy a walk in a residential neighborhood with a mix of architectural styles. Proximity to the University has traditionally determined the mix of residents, professors and students alike. Meet at the intersection of Washington Street, The Strand, and College Avenue. Tour Guides: Jim and Sue Smith.

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NEW TOUR! PROHIBITION IN RENO - We've turned back the clocks to the 1920s and 30s. We'll walk streets and alleys and visit significant buildings, recalling Reno's saloons and reformers (the WCTU and Anti-Saloon League). We'll even visit an alleged speakeasy. Then join us for an optional post tour Repeal of Prohibition celebration at the Amendment 21 Grill, 425 S. Virginia St. Tour starts at Amtrak's Reno Station, 135 East Commercial Row. Tour Guides: Debbie Hinman and Sharon Honig Bear.

NOW, Emily's Journey by Debbie Hinman

This story is a follow-up to the FootPrints article on Alice Ramsey, entitled "Alice's Journey," published in Volume 12, No. 3, Summer 2009. "Emily's story, the intrepid young woman who undertook the re-enactment of Alice's journey on its 100-year anniversary, I had the opportunity to meet Emily and her crew during her stay in Reno and was very impressed by her pluck and spirit of adventure. Alice's descendants were cheering her on from their various homes around the country, but I wasn't surprised if Alice herself was doing the same, from a much more distant vantage point."

Emily's biggest challenges was that, unlike Alice, we had to deal with the modern day cars. One of the things that I think most people don't realize is the Maxwell can't stop on a dime. Also, unlike modern convertibles, in the Maxwell the occupants are sitting high with no windshield, so the draft created by large passing vehicles was a substantial hazard. "We end up being the windshield ourselves, with our faces and our bodies," laughed Emily. She did relate the one incident in Ohio where the Maxwell crew actually got to pass another vehicle on the road—it was a piece of farm equipment and the women passed it in high spirits, whooping and hollering to the driver. "He was actually going slower than we were!" Emily exclaimed, to gales of laughter from the Reno audience.

Of course, driving across the country on lesser traveled roads at 35 miles per hour gave Emily time to reflect on the nature of the changes that have impacted "small town America." During her talk, Emily told of how they would be driving through the quaint, historic downtown sections of older midwestern towns looking for a small Mom & Pop-type diner in which to grab a snack or cup of coffee. Though the historic buildings might be there, none of them would be "For Sale" or "Out of Business." "That's been a really sad thing to see," Emily regretfully told the audience. "It makes me really wonder how important it is to preserve our history, take care of our small towns and regard them as precious." For the first half of the trip, the Maxwell experienced frequent mechanical troubles; one piston rod broke three times. Because of the repeated problem with babbitt, which is a metal alloy used for bearings and such, the Maxwell acquired its name (Babbitt, pronounced with a French accent or Babbs for short) by which it would be known for the remainder of its journey. But aside from losing first gear in Nebraska and traveling on the rest of the way without it, the second half of the trip went a lot more smoothly with respect to mechanical difficulties.

The day's travel to Omaha was the longest day of their journey. Emily related. They had traveled 260 miles that day, seeing not much but mile upon mile of cornfields. The Maxwell had been running really well for a few days. Emily told the crowd. With about two miles to go into Omaha, it was necessary for the crew to leave the two lane highway and merge onto the fast-moving, five-lane interstate. As they began to merge, Emily said, they heard a loud backfire and the engine died. Frantically Emily tried to move over to the shoulder, with the interstate traffic cruising by. Rich Anderson came running up to the Maxwell, questioning Emily. "Was it the same noise again?" Emily said, "No, this was a different noise," Emily Anderson exclaimed. "We end up being the windshield ourselves, with our faces and our bodies," laughed Emily. She did relate the one incident in Ohio where the Maxwell crew actually got to pass another vehicle on the road—it was a piece of farm equipment and the women passed it in high spirits, whooping and hollering to the driver. "He was actually going slower than we were!" Emily exclaimed, to gales of laughter from the Reno audience.

Continued on page 8
Now, Emily’s Journey (continued)

Continued from page 7

crowd that she had expected it to be endless miles of redoux, unchanging scenery, rather like the midwest cornfields, but says she and Christie were awed by the beauty and variety of the landscape. They encountered local journalists who, along with the townspeople, were friendly and welcoming and steered them to historic sites, such as the world famous Nevada “Shoe Tree.” In spite of the fact that it was early July, when climbing a pass outside of Austin, Babbs had her first encounter with hail. Emily’s first concern was for the Maxwell—“The car, oh the beautiful car!” she exclaimed to Christie. Christie, being of a more practical turn of mind responded—“Forget the car, what about US?”
The group spent the Fourth of July weekend in Reno, watching the Nugget’s fireworks from the back deck of HRPS member Gee Willis and John Ion’s home. After driving out for the past month, they were very appreciative of the wonderful home-cooked barbecue fare served at the Willis’ Ion home. Emily, looking very tanned and relaxed, cuddled Kaisa and admitted to feeling a little “bittersweet” about the approaching end to her adventure. “I do need to get home to my dying garden, though,” she admitted.

After nearly 3,000 miles and exactly one month, after being plagued by any number of mechanical difficulties, bees, bugs, rocks, rain and hail, the Maxwell with Emily behind the wheel and Christie in the co-pilot’s seat rolled across the Golden Gate Bridge and onto Crissy Field in San Francisco, on noon on July 9. A celebratory barbecue was held in the team’s honor, with Babbs being the centerpiece of the celebration.

There could be no better postscript to the adventure than Rich’s observation in his title “Reno Area’s Fantastic Road Trips,” how it has changed our lives, surely it has adventure than Rich’s observation in his title “Reno Area’s Fantastic Road Trips,” how it has changed our lives, surely it has. There could be no better postscript to the adventure than Rich’s observation in his title “Reno Area’s Fantastic Road Trips,” how it has changed our lives, surely it has.

Each page is loaded with high quality photographs (many in color), excellent sketches and well-researched historical and contemporary notes to help you identify important points of interest. Whether it be the Steamboat Ditch, the Yellow Jacket Shaft in Virginia City, the American couot (a bird that frequents Washoe Lake and Virginia Lake), Chalk Bluff along West Fourth Street, or the site of an historic sawmill at Incline Village. Who doesn’t want to impress their friends with knowledge about the geologic history of Slide Mountain and Mount Rose, our darlings of the Carson Range. Learn about the extensive mining history in the area and see spectacular photographs of our area’s bird and plant life—all through the engaging real time adventure of a road trip. And for those of you only interested in old buildings and dead people, there is plenty of that.

Many talented people were involved in the writing, snapping, publishing of this book, too many to mention here, but I want to say this. Its clever and intuitive layout, the striking images and well-written text, and the book’s tough road trip feel, make the book a pleasure to hold. In fact, from now on I think I’m just going to just leave my copy in the car.

In addition to local book stores, this book can be purchased directly from the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology with this information: Geologic and Natural History Tours in the Reno Area (Expanded Edition) Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology Special Publication 19, $24.95 plus shipping; phone (775) 682-8766; www.nbmg.unr.edu (click on Publications Sales). For walk-in purchases, please go to 2175 Raggio Parkway, Reno, Nevada, 89512.

Kim Henrick is a HRPS member and a member of the HRPS Editorial Board. She is a volunteer at the Nevada Historical Society.

HRPS Annual Fall Social October 21, 2009

D ust off your dusters and polish up your driving goggles as HRPS takes you on an historic motoring evening Wednesday night, October 21, at the National Automobile Museum. Join us in Gallery 4 for cocktails and auction item viewing and bidding at 6 p.m. You’ll also have an opportunity to visit the museum’s Alice Ramsey display. Dinner, catered by the Siena, will be served at 7 p.m., followed by a very special guest speaker in keeping with our “Alice’s Drive” theme. Tickets are $50 and can be obtained by sending a check to Felvia Belaestaeugi, 3015 Heatheridge Lane, Reno, NV 89509.

If you have auction items to donate, particularly those with an automotive theme, please contact Carrie Young at 264-1076 or via email at cayung@unr.edu.

Information for this article came from conversations with Emily Anderson and her team, the Team Blog on alice ramsey.org, and Emily’s talk delivered at the National Automobile Museum, July 6, 2009. Debbie Himiman is a HRPS Board Member, HRPS Tour Guide and on the HRPS Editorial Board.

If you want to learn more about Emily’s journey, check out the Anderson’s website at alice ramsey.org. The day by day team blog is there, as well as wonderful photographs chronicling the entire journey.

And watch for Bengt Anderson’s video photographs chronicling the entire journey.

Kim Henrick is a HRPS member and a member of the HRPS Editorial Board. She is a volunteer at the Nevada Historical Society.

FootPrints Vol. 12 No. 4, Fall 2009
The Ginsburg Family Businesses (continued)

The Home Furniture building saw its fair share of disasters. This building was first damaged in the 1957 Sierra Street gas explosion. David Ginsburg remembers all the windows on First Street blew out. The building also survived Reno’s major floods in 1956 and 1955.

Home Furniture was truly a family-run business. After college in 1957, a young David Ginsburg, Leo’s son, joined the company and remained with the firm until it was sold in 1971. His dad made sure that he learned the furniture and home furnishing business. In 1961, he began traveling to all the furnishing companies named after the town where they were located. David would travel to such romantic locales as Bassett, Virginia, and Drexel and Thomasville, North Carolina. Home Furniture had the exclusive northern Nevada distribution rights to these furnishing companies.

The store combined the old location home furnishings with the Kiddies Store and Maple Shop. According to a 1960 Reno Evening Gazette ad for the grand opening of the Home Furniture store at Sierra and First streets, this unique construction caused quite a stir in downtown Reno. Many “sidewalk superintendents” stopped daily to watch the lift slab process. Amazingly, this method only took 13 days to install six floor slabs and the basement floor and roof slabs.

The Ginsburg Family Businesses (continued)

The opening of this store in 1961 must have been the opulent opening of today’s malls. The store featured everything for your home furnishing needs: high end furniture, draperies, linens, floor covering, giftware, furnishings, and appliances. There was even a “hi fi” shop featuring Roy Kroell’s House of Records, “Reno’s Largest, most complete record shop.”

Leo and Ed Ginsburg retired in 1971 and sold the business to their friends and California home furnishing store owners, Bob and Bill Brenner who wanted to enter the northern Nevada market. In 1975, the building was then occupied by Arden Wholesale Inc. Sadly, this unique contemporary building was demolished to make way for the juvenile court building.

I would like to thank David Ginsburg for sharing his family stories and photos. Other information for this article was obtained from Jerry Femwick, Reno Evening Gazette and Nevada State Journal newspapers dating from 1915 to 1975; Whos Who in Nevada, 1949-50; Nevada Humanities’ Online Nevada Encyclopedia (www.onlinenevada.org) article by Bledsoe on Historic Street Clock of Reno.

Cindy Ainsworth is a charter member and past president of HRPSC. Currently she is the HRPSC Administrator. She serves on the City of Reno Historical Resources Commission.

Wagon Tracks Across the Truckee Meadows

by Lloyd Shanks

Rattlesnake Mountain is a foreshed off area protecting a portion of a deep wagon trail heading from the north end of the valley towards the south. This site is marked by a bullet-riddled signpost indicating it is a portion of an emigrant wagon trail path. This claim has been disputed by those who maintain that the emigrant wagon trains followed the Truckeer River and continued in a westerly direction across the meadows, and the marked trail is only a portion of a road used by ranch wagons many years after the last wagon train passed.

As indicated in the pictures on pages 7 and 10, this deep path is much like the wagon ruts still existing in many parts of the country. Truckee Meadows is the site of one of the most important wagonings and, while some, were so deep that a man could sit on one edge of them and his feet would not reach the bottom. It would take a huge number of trips in a light ranch wagon to make a path as deep as the trail made by the wagons pulled by the ox teams most often used by the emigrants.

As the wagons followed the Truckeer River east of the northmost hills of the Carson Range, it was necessary for them to cross the river numerous times. T. H. Jefferson’s map number IV of the Map of the Emigrant Road from Independence, Missouri to San Francisco, California in the public domain, Oberholtzer 1846 included Letters of the California Oregon Trail by David Morgan, indicates that, at that time, there were numerous oxbows on the Truckeer River between Truckeer Meadows and Pyramid Lake. In his book Oxdale by Burger, George R. Stewart claims “They had to ford the river more than once to the mile.” In Fearful Journey, Harold Curran includes the following entry from a diary kept by Andrew Child in 1850, describing how to avoid many floods:

“It has been usual to ford the river twenty or thirty times within as many miles to avoid the walls of rock. The Fords are all very bad

The wagons in which Heinrich Lienhard traveled, that preceded the ill-fat
ded Donner Party in 1846, was on the south side of the river and chose to enter the Truckeer Meadows by the “mountain road” that led to a ravine between the two mountains south of the river. In his diary, parts of which are published in From St. Louis to California, Heinrich Lienhard stat
ed that as they proceeded down the “steep hill” at this point it was a “sleeve ride.” Most of the emigrant wagons did not have brakes and, as the rear wheels would simply be blocked with timber or chained in place and the wagon would then slide down a steep grade, it is possible that the Donner Party also followed this steep path.

Whether all of the wagon trains could have crossed the Truckeer Meadows by paralleling the Truckeer River is also a matter of controversy, depending on whether the area east of the present site of the Reno airport now occupied by the
Creek as follows: well known diarist James Clyman described his crossing of the Truckee Meadows, just to the west of it was either very difficult, or judged to be impossible, to cross: indicate that Steamboat Creek and the area (labeled “Cold Creek” on Jefferson’s map). Fearful Crossing (1849)

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**Wagon Tracks (continued)**

A bend near the top of the cut through Virginia Range leading down to Hidden Valley. Photo courtesy Larry Marran.

 depended entirely on the amount of snow and rainfall the previous winter. In From Oregon and California in 1848, author J. Quin Thornton reported that Mr. F. J. Reed, of the Donner Party, measured the depth of the snow at the top of Donner Pass using a rope at a point where a spring caused an opening in the snow and found it to be 65 feet deep. Certainly the waggons, &c. assigned to the lovely valley, with blue grass to the river. We followed this road wound around a belt of marsh & supposing to be a ‘Cutoff’ as the Virginia Range, and cut through Hidden Valley. Photo courtesy Larry Marran.

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**The Ginsburg Family Businesses**

Harry Ginsburg was a successful jeweler and a community leader. For many years he took an active interest in civic affairs and was one of the organizers of temple Emunah Emet and an active member of B’nai Brith. The newspaperman, Harry, often remembers many large family Jewish holiday gatherings at the home. David Ginsburg, former HPRB board member and Harry Ginsburg’s grandson, fondly remembers many large family Jewish holiday gatherings at the home. David commented that, with kids being kids, Harry would chase the grandkids out of the sitting room, complaining that he was trying to listen to the news on the radio.

Harry Ginsburg was born in 1882 in Kovno, Russia (now located in independent Lithuania) and was educated in Russian public schools. He married Anna Epp in 1903 and had three children, Leo, Sam and Ed. Interestingly, according to the 1949-50 Who’s Who in Nevada, in 1904 Harry was a watchmaker to the Czar's family. The Ginsburgs immigrated to the United States in 1905, first living in Denver and then moving to San Rafael, California where, according to the Reno Evening Gazette, Harry established the largest jewelry store in the area. In 1915, Harry and his family moved to Reno and took over the store and lease of the Marymont Jewelry Store. An article stated that he “proposes to add many of the largest novelties in the jewelry line.” His specialty was watch repair and manufacture of custom designed jewelry.

That store was located at the corner of Virginia and Second streets and at the time it was one of the largest jewelry stores in Reno. The store was eventually taken over by Frank Golden, owner of the Golden Hotel, before the turn of the century. In 1916, Ginsburg moved the store to 133 North Virginia St. where it became one of the best-known jewelry firms in Nevada. After the years, the store was expanded and Ginsburg added a custom jewelry design department. A 1923 ad stated that the store was “equal to any shop on the coast.”

Many remember the Park Lane clock that stood in the center of the mall and became the symbol for the shopping center. The clock originally was located in front of the Ginsburg Jewelry Company at 133 North Virginia. Populbar between the mid-nineteenth century and into the 1930s, these street symbols not only served to advertise businesses but were city timepieces since most people did not wear watches. At one point, there were two “dudling” Virginia Street jewelry store clocks. The Ginsburg clock stood directly across from the Gimlin-Lee Jewelers clock.

The clock was donated to The City of Reno. Plans included relocating the clock to the downtown redevelopment area.

Harry Ginsburg died in 1954 and his son, Sam, who became a partner with his father in the jewelry business. Sam was an expert diamond merchant, often traveling the world searching for valuable precious stones to purchase for his custom designed jewelry. In an article dated 1931, he says, “I arrived in Honolulu from the Far East with $160,000 worth of sapphires and rubies in my flight bag.” At the time, he was the only Nevada member of the National Appraisers Association and was an authority on appraising the value of precious stones of all kinds.

Sam chose to retire and closed the store on December 31, 1951, but he continued to do custom designed jewelry. He stated in an article that he was looking forward to “doing what I want to do.” The North Virginia Street building where the jewelry store and other small businesses were replaced by the Onslow Casino in the mid-1970s.

The two other Ginsburg sons were equally successful Reno businessmen. Leo founded the popular Home Furniture, Incorporated. Ed later joined as secretary/ treasurer. The business was incorporated in 1907 and was located at 119 North Virginia. The Home Furniture business steadily grew and soon the store was too small to adequately handle the ever expanding merchandise.

The opening of the new and modern Home Furniture store in 1941 was an important addition to the Sierra Street business district. Located at the north west corner of Sierra and First (where the Parking Gallery is located today), the two story building, designed by Leman Ferris and owned by the Yori Land and Livestock Company, was constructed of brick with terra cotta facing. The building was sur- rounded by thirteen display windows and twenty-three model rooms graced the interior. The building must have been an impressive sight.

Continued on page 3

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The Cassitys were living in California when the home came on the market, but their daughter, a Reno resident, kept an eye on the sale of the property. The Cassitys jumped at the opportunity to buy the home when escrow fell through on a previous buyer’s offer.

What impressed the Cassitys was the fact that the interior had not been gutted and modified the way many other older homes have been. It is believed that the interior layout has remained the same throughout the years. Beautiful arches grace the interior entry ways. This arch design is even echoed in the brick fireplace pattern. Delightful quarter circle windows on either side of the chimney appear to wink at you. The Cassitys have no intention of removing the original windows. However, the ugly window screens are gone, replaced with period style shades. Often referring to the original DeLongchamps plans, they have made it a point to maintain the 1920s feel and originality of the home.

The Cassitys have lovingly worked on the home, doing much of the labor themselves. Mike has a woodshop in the basement (along with a wonderful wine cellar) and recently built book cases in the front living room that borrow details from original built-ins located elsewhere in the home. For the benefit of his wife Joannie, Mike also added the side window trellis that appears on the original DeLongchamps’ drawings.

The Cassitys are thrilled to be a part of the Ridge Street neighborhood and have come to love Reno. Mike noted that they really wanted to participate in Reno’s downtown redevelopment renaissance and feel that their rehabilitated home has contributed to that cause. HRPS thanks the Cassitys for their commitment to historic preservation and home has contributed to that cause. HRPS thanks the Cassitys for their commitment to historic preservation and home has contributed to that cause.

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I would like to thank Mike and Joannie Cassity for sharing their story about this wonderful home. Other information for this article came from Anne Simone and Arline LaFerry’s extensive research on Frederic DeLongchamps and the 543 Ridge Street home; various Polk’s Reno City Directories and Nevada Phone Books; Washoe County Assessor office information; DeLongchamps Architectural Archive, Special Collections, UNR; 2004 winter issue of the University of Nevada’s Silver and Blue.

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**Fall 2009 Programs**

Jack Hursh Jr. • Program Chairs: 140-1352

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 23, Nevada History in Maps: A presentation discussing the 4,000 maps on the UNR historic map web site http://www.delaware.unr.edu/maps/digitalcollections/mvmaps/ Would you like to see the exact location, on an 1886 map, of the Dyer Bros. General Grocery store in Austin, NV? Or the location of the Ladies Aid Hall in Goldfield in 1905? Or how the Nevada highway maps evolved? All will be revealed on September 23! Presented by Linda Newman, Geoscientist and Map Librarian, Emerita and creator of the Nevada Maps web site.

Wednesday, October 21, Annual Fall Social. The social will be held at The National Automobile Museum with the Siena Hotel catering the event. See page 8 for details.

Wednesday, November 18, Basque Aspen Art of the Sierra Nevada: A presentation discussing the 4,000 maps on the UNR historic map web site http://www.delaware.unr.edu/maps/digitalcollections/mvmaps/ Would you like to see the exact location, on an 1886 map, of the Dyer Bros. General Grocery store in Austin, NV? Or the location of the Ladies Aid Hall in Goldfield in 1905? Or how the Nevada highway maps evolved? All will be revealed on September 23! Presented by Linda Newman, Geoscientist and Map Librarian, Emerita and creator of the Nevada Maps web site.

Wednesday, November 18, Basque Aspen Art of the Sierra Nevada, Jean and Phillip Earl. A new book, Basque Aspen Art of the Sierra Nevada, by Jean and Phillip Earl, is contributing to the further study of Nevada Basque studies—what a fitting tribute to Peter Echeverria. With the donation and renovation, it is also fitting to note that this historic home is contributing to the further study of Nevada Basque studies.

In May of 2009, the City of Reno Historical Resources Commission presented the Ginsburg/Cassity home at 543 Ridge Street with the Residential Award for "outstanding renovation, restoration and/or preservation of a single family home or multi-family residential building." You can see the home on the Tour of Homes on the Night of Chacina. The Ginsburg family occupied the home from 1928 until the mid-1950s. Other Delongchamps’ Tudor-style homes would grace this neighborhood populated by many of Reno’s prominent business families. Edward Chism, founder of Chism Ice Cream, built his Tudor-style home down the street at 575 Ridge Street.

The picturesque charm of the lovely brick home at 543 Ridge Street in the beautiful Río Vista Heights subdivision beckons to all who drive or walk past it. Elegantly understated, it was built for the prominent Ginsburg family (see article page 3-4) in 1927-28. The Ginsburg family occupied the house from 1928 until the mid-1950s. Other Delongchamps’ Tudor-style homes would grace this neighborhood populated by many of Reno’s prominent business families. Edward Chism, founder of Chism Ice Cream, built his Tudor-style home down the street at 575 Ridge Street.

The Ginsburg/Cassity Home at 543 Ridge Street, a classic Delongchamps’ Tudor Revival style home. Photo courtesy of Cindy Ainsworth.

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