



FootPrints

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

FALL 2026
■ vol. 29 no. 4 ■

The Historic Reno Preservation Society

Presents

14TH HRPS HISTORIC HOMES TOUR

Saturday, September 26 • 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

It is HRPS' pleasure to bring you the 14th Historic Home Tour of stunning historic homes, each with their own design and décor for you to appreciate.

HRPS follows the National Trust for Historic Preservation guidelines for appropriate age of our homes, that says they must be at least 50 years old. Our oldest home was built in 1932, and the most recent build was 1972 making it 54 years of age. The five homes were built at

least seven years apart during the years from 1932 to 1972.

- This issue of *FootPrints* will be your Home Tour Program.
- Additional copies of *FootPrints* will be available on September 26.
- When you reach your first house, you will be given a small program with a map and brief information on each house.
- Advance ticketing is described on page

2 and is available through the HRPS website through September 24.

- Ticketing the day of the event will ONLY be available at 1960 Manzanita. Cash or credit/debit cards will be accepted this year on tour day.

We know you will enjoy seeing all five of our historic homes this year and thank you for supporting the Historic Reno Preservation Society. Proceeds from the tour supports HRPS' preservation grant program. 



Top (l-r) 600 Gordon Avenue, 124 Greenridge Drive, 156 Greenridge Drive.
Bottom (l-r) 140 Crestview Place, 1960 Manzanita Lane.

2026 HOME TOUR DETAILS

Saturday, September 26 · 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

ADVANCE TICKET SALES

ADVANCE TICKET SALES will be available on the Historic Reno Preservation Society (HRPS) website through September 24.

Advance Ticket prices are \$40 for members and \$50 for non-members. Champion and Lifetime members are free. Advance ticket purchase is encouraged. Scan this QR code to go directly to the HRPS website: historicro.org.



WITH YOUR ADVANCE TICKET YOU CAN START at any home on the tour where you can check in and receive a wristband to allow entrance into all five homes. Our friendly check-in volunteers will be ready to sign you in, fit you with a wristband, and give you a pamphlet with home addresses and a map so you can step back in time to Old Reno with us.

DAY OF EVENT TICKET SALES

DAY OF EVENT TICKETS will be sold on **September 26 ONLY** at 1960 Manzanita Lane.

- Ticket price on Day of Event is \$50.
- Cash or credit/debit cards will be accepted.
- You will receive your wristband and pamphlet with home addresses and map.

WITH YOUR WRISTBAND IN PLACE, YOU CAN VISIT THE HOMES IN ANY ORDER YOU CHOOSE

600 Gordon Avenue (1932)
124 Greenridge Drive (1941)
156 Greenridge Drive (1950)
140 Crestview Place (1958)
1960 Manzanita Lane (1972)

WE ARE ALL GUESTS IN THESE HISTORIC HOMES AND WE ASK THAT YOU FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES LISTED BELOW TO RESPECT THE CARE AND DEDICATION THAT THE HOME OWNERS HAVE INSTILLED INTO THEIR HOME.

- Please do not open drawers, cabinets, closets or handle any household furnishings.
- Please wear booties over your shoes if requested.
- No smoking, eating, or drinking while on private property. A capped bottle of water is acceptable when you are in the houses.
- Please no photography, video cameras or cell phone use inside the homes.
- Please mute your phones and step outside if you must speak on the phone.
- No pets or baby strollers can be accommodated. Homes are not ADA compliant and don't accommodate wheelchairs.
- Our volunteers monitor traffic flow at the home's entry. Please follow their directions. If lines form, we will advise people in line on homes where lines are shorter.
- When you've looked at a room, please move on to make room for the next guest.
- Please follow the recommended traffic flow within a house and respect restricted areas.
- Sorry, restrooms are NOT available in tour homes.
- Please do NOT block driveways of homes.

THE HARVEST OF HOME TOUR THANKS...

Debbie Hinman

for historical research and writing

Melissa Hafey

for research

Steve Ellison

for Program photography

Amy Burton

for photographing home details

Double Click Design

for design, layout, and printing

Washoe County Assessor's

for square footage records of the houses

HOMEOWNERS

John & Tracy Spears

John and Sandra Raffealli

Kathleen & Paul Elcano

Jim Megquire

Paul & Linda Smith

600 GORDON AVE. (1932)



Gordon Avenue, extending from Mount Rose Street northward to California Avenue, was early-on known as Esmeralda Avenue. The street was renamed after a prominent Nevada mining man, Gurney Gordon, who passed away in 1935. He had owned considerable real estate in the southwest part of Reno.

A building permit was issued in 1930 for a six-room brick house in the amount of \$8000. Designed by prominent Nevada architect Frederic DeLongchamps, the house was built for Dr. and Mrs. William Howell, who had relocated to Reno from Gardnerville. By early 1932, the Howells were entertaining in their new home. However, they divorced not long after moving in. Agnes and their three children remained in the home. Then, in August of 1935, Agnes and William remarried in the Gordon home, “in front of a large



fireplace in a room decorated with ferns and palms.”

In addition to the Howells, other owners included the Kearneys (c.1943-1960), the Goedert family and the Gerviches. In 1996, local realtor Kitty Howard (who specializes in Old Southwest properties) purchased the home. In 2018, the current owners, John and Tracy Spears, purchased the home from Howard.

Interestingly, the Gordon Avenue home was not the house DeLongchamps originally designed. Former owner Kitty Howard obtained blueprints from UNR’s Special Collections. These plans show that a larger home with a second story was intended. It is unknown why the house was altered, but the Great Depression might have had an impact on the cost of the construction that resulted in simplification of the more extravagant first design. As the plans showed a larger, more elaborate structure, possibly the Howells felt they didn’t need such an extravagant home, though the Howell family included two adults and three small children.

The style of the house is Colonial Revival with a cross-gabled roof, featuring a “bullseye vent” in the gable. One of the most stunning feature of the home is the curved pediment over the entry porch, which rests on Tuscan columns and presents a welcoming face to visitors. Another prominent feature is the multi-

paned wood windows. The living room includes an original fireplace and a wall of historic photographs. The dining room has a vintage look, with its wallpaper and built-in corner china cabinet. The kitchen has been modernized with features that recall its past. There are hard wood floors, a small butcher block, farmhouse sink, old-style cabinets and a dining nook. There are two bedrooms which retain historic detail. The primary bathroom has been remodeled with the home’s era in mind including vintage floor tile and French-themed wallpaper.

As a postscript, Tracy recalls visiting Kitty in this home. Tracy told Kitty, “If you ever decide to sell this house, please call me first.” Kitty made that call and Tracy and John are happily at home there today.



AT A GLANCE 600 Gordon Avenue

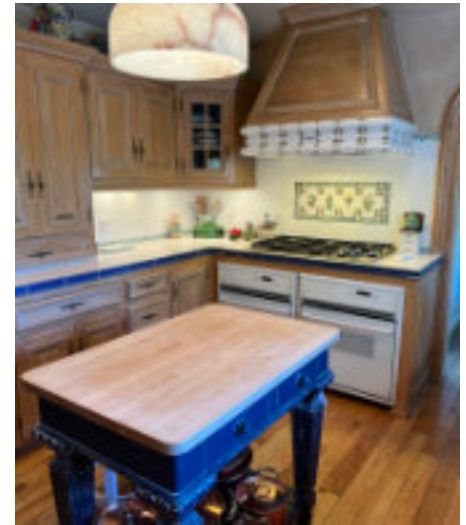
BUILT: 1932

OWNER: John & Tracy Spears
(since 2018)

SQUARE FOOTAGE:
1650 (2 bedrooms, 1.5 baths)

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:

- Architect: Frederic DeLongchamps
- Architecture: Colonial Revival
- Neighborhood: Marker Tract
- Kitchen entirely updated
- Primary bathroom remodeled



In August 1937, an advertisement filling most of one newspaper page announced “Greenridge: Reno’s Exclusive Suburb. A highly-restricted development of 64 residential building sites.” The ad extolled the outstanding views of the sites, including the nearby Washoe County Golf Course to the east. Greenridge was slated to become the newest, most upscale neighborhood in Reno, surpassing the Old Southwest.

The first notice in newspapers of our Greenridge Tour Home at 124, appeared in 1944, though the Assessor’s record lists the home build date of 1941. The first owners were the Strassburgs. F. P. Strassburg had been in real estate in Fallon but decided there was more opportunity in the fast-growing city of Reno. He would also open an investment company. A few years later, the Strassburgs’ home was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Frank Hassett. Hassett was a

local insurance man. The Hassetts occupied the home for over 20 years then sold it to Dr. and Mrs. Riley. The current owners, the Raffaealli family, purchased the home from the Rileys in 1989.

The home is a Transitional Ranch style with a low-pitched hipped roof, but there are some stunning details that make it truly unique. There is a raised dot detail on either side of the porch entrance and stacked, rectangular panels on either side of the main window, resembling shutters. The sunken attached garage is topped by a terrace with unique railing.

The interior reflects Sandy’s exquisite taste. There is a warm and welcoming entryway leading to a large, rectangular living room. One side is filled with the original built-in bookcases and a fireplace. Other stunning features of the room are its unique wood-plank ceiling with contrasting beams and the large picture window that offers a view of the extensive back garden, a parklike expanse that seems to go on forever.

The primary bedroom and ensuite bath have been recently remodeled but the special touches, such as the wallpaper and wainscoting, echo an earlier style. There is a warm, welcoming study with tall bookcases and a color scheme of emerald green and plum. The adjoining bathroom is a vision from the home’s past with its original glossy green tile, pink toilet and sink.

The kitchen would be any chef’s dream with hardwood cabinets and floor, and lots of counter space edged in blue tile. The hood over the built-in stove is wood, edged in tile with a lovely pattern echoing throughout the kitchen. One of the kitchen entrances has an archway that matches the wood in the kitchen.

There is a walkout basement with an antique sideboard displaying colorful ceramic ware, with a “corn” theme. Downstairs is a guest bedroom and bath and great room. Originally these were servant’s quarters according to the owner.

Wandering the grounds, you almost get the impression you are in an English garden; wooden steps will take you to a lower level. This home is fabulous, inside and out, and will no doubt be a tour favorite. 🏡



AT A GLANCE 124 Greenridge Drive

BUILT: 1941

OWNER: John & Sanda Raffaealli (since 1989)

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 2,322 (5 bedrooms, 3 baths)

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:

- Architecture: Transitional Ranch
- Neighborhood: Greenridge
- Original doors, floors, hardware
- Original cabinets and woodwork in Living Room

156 GREENRIDGE DR. (1950)



Our second Greenridge home occupies a sizable lot in a later addition to this upscale neighborhood. The owner and developer of Greenridge was Norman Biltz. Biltz was well known for purchasing and developing land around Lake Tahoe in the 1920s. In the 1930s, he began buying ranches south of Reno and created Greenridge, a significantly upscale housing development.

This gorgeous home was constructed at the very end of 1950 and purchased by Pete Petersen for \$19,000, a hefty sum for a property in those days. Peterson was Reno's Postmaster. A clue to how significant he was in this city is that he was asked to be a pallbearer for Senator Patrick McCarran who passed away in 1954. Robert Brigham owned the home next. He had just moved to Reno and

joined the Harrah's Management Team, later becoming the Vice President of Human Resources for Harrah's and teaching business classes at the University of Nevada, Reno. Later residents of the home were the Hildahl family. N. Earl Hildahl was a CPA with the firm of Barnard and Hildahl. The Elcano family has occupied the home since 1980.

The architectural style of the house is a late example of Tudor Revival with a steeply pitched roof intersected by multiple gables, decorative half-timbering, a large chimney, and multi-paned windows. The gable-end over the garage projects outward over the door and is set on a trussed wooden post, an interesting detail. The Elcano family completed a second story to the home in the 1980s though the original footprint of the home remained unchanged.

Upon entering the home, you face a

beautiful stairway with wooden steps and a stylish curved handrail. To the right is an elegant dining room, complete with a large crystal chandelier rescued from a neighboring home during renovations. To the left is the well-curated living room with an ebony grand piano and an intricately carved harp, a gift from a neighbor. The painting above the fireplace was a gift from Mr. Elcano to his wife for their first Christmas in the home. The kitchen features marble counters and a large marble-topped island, as well as a sitting area with a second wood-burning fireplace.

The second floor houses the primary suite with access to a balcony overlooking the backyard. The primary bath features striking marble countertops and bathtub surround. On the second story there is a cozy study featuring art by Mr. Elcano's sister, another bathroom and two well-appointed guest rooms.

The gardens are as beautiful as the home and feel like a city park. The various patios and balconies all have wonderful views. The backyard features a fountain surrounded by colorful flowers. Manicured plants of all kinds grace both front and back gardens.

Although HRPS has offered our annual home tours for many years now, this home will likely be one of the favorites. 🏡



AT A GLANCE 156 Greenridge Drive

BUILT: 1950

OWNER:
Kathleen & Paul Elcano (since 1980)

SQUARE FOOTAGE:
2,920 (4 bedrooms, 4 baths)

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:

- Architecture: Tudor Revival
- Neighborhood: Greenridge
- Daylight basement
- Second story completed in 1980s to add bedrooms and bathrooms
- Laundry chute in a closet

140 CRESTVIEW PL. (1958)



Our third home in the Greenridge subdivision is located on Crestview Place, an area built somewhat later than the homes right on Greenridge Drive, primarily in the 1950s and 1960s. The construction date of this home according to the Assessor's record is 1958. We can't know what the original home at this address looked like, as it underwent a massive remodel around 1995. One of the listing agents remarked, when the house came up for sale, "We sold them a cute fixer-upper and they basically razed it and built a new house over it." And the current home is truly spectacular.

The original owners of the newly-constructed home were Jordan and Elizabeth Crouch. Jordan Crouch had a history of significant roles in Reno. A Tennessee native, he was named Assistant Vice President of Public Relations for the



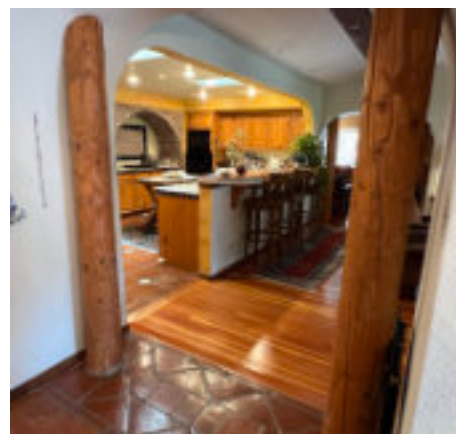
First National Bank in 1949. He later held positions such as Executive Vice President of the Nevada Bankers Association and was past Director of the Greater Reno-Sparks Chamber of Commerce. His wife Elizabeth directed the chorale group for the Twentieth Century Club. Following the Crouch family were Rudi and Vicki Semenza, owners of Semenza's Pizza. The Megquiers purchased the home in 1996 and Jim still occupies it.

Mission Revival architecture was somewhat unusual in Reno in this era, though there are a few Spanish-style bungalows scattered throughout the Old Southwest and in other older portions of the city. This remodel was based on designs by local architect Gail Richie. The home features a rich stucco exterior, a low-pitched red clay tile roof and arched entryways throughout. An attractive courtyard with seating areas, a fountain and bell tower leads to the 10-foot custom front door, imported from Mexico. Some of Richie's decorative touches were the rustic beamed ceilings, peeled log pillars and hand-forged wrought iron accents.

The home features three bedrooms, three baths in addition to the great room, study and kitchen. In the dining room, French doors open to the rear patio and back garden. The breakfast nook adjoining the spacious kitchen opens to the courtyard.

Aside from the lovely architecture, once inside, it becomes obvious that the Megquiers were collectors of unusual and fascinating art. The home features some remarkable items, such as paintings by local artists Joan Arrizabalaga and Edward Martinez and a fascinating painting featuring Mexican lace and a woman's eye, purchased at a yard sale in Cancun. There are some vintage finds, such as a mirror with side lamps in the master bedroom which was salvaged from a hotel near Donner Summit and in the master bathroom, a nude painting of Marilyn Monroe. The study features artwork and a collection of antique nutcrackers.

We know this stunning home will be a favorite among our tour participants and we appreciate this owner, and all our generous homeowners, for allowing HRPS to feature their wonderful homes. 



AT A GLANCE

140 Crestview Place

BUILT: 1958

OWNER: Jim Megquire (since 1996)

SQUARE FOOTAGE:
3,172 (3 bedrooms, 3 baths)

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:

- Architecture: Mission Revival
- Neighborhood: Greenridge
- Addition to the east added a guest bedroom, office and Primary Suite
- Private courtyard with fountain, gas grill and bell tower
- Front door imported from Mexico

1960 MANZANITA LN. (1972)



This beautiful property was built in the newly-minted Lake Ridge (originally two separate words) subdivision in 1972. A Legal Notice published in the *Gazette-Journal* from 1968 declared the parcel to be a part of the City of Reno, although there were already homes within this parcel, outside the city limits. William A. Hirsh Jr., a resident of Verdi for 18 years, then Incline Village from 1968 to 1972, decided to have a home built in this subdivision and he knew just the architect who could create the perfect home.

Caspar Ehmcke was born in 1908 in Munich, Germany. He went to school for architecture and during the war years was hired by the government to design the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and later opened his own firm, specializing in store planning and design. In 1949, he built his first private residence, then reverted to stores, including a Lanz store in Reno's Park Lane Mall. From there he returned to

residential architecture, creating exquisite homes in Incline Village.

At some point Ehmcke and Hirsh met—possibly as Hirsh was an original partner in Park Lane Centre, or when they both lived in Incline Village. Ehmcke agreed to build a home for his new friend, but insisted on getting to know the Hirshes first to acquaint himself with their lifestyle and preferences. The home would be a showplace, as well as a reflection of its owners.

The Hirshes occupied the home for 45 years. There was a second owner in between, then Paul and Linda Smith purchased the home in 2024.

The style can be considered French Regency or a late example of the French Eclectic style, with its steeply-pitched hipped roof, casement dormers, and small projecting corner towers. The home was designed in Ehmcke's signature architectural style. The casement windows, wrought-iron railings, and false timbering with hand-hewn beams recall a rustic French Tudor hunting lodge.

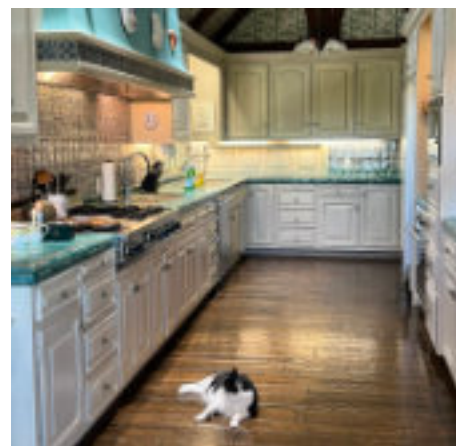
The entry still sports its original tile and features multiple closets and a powder room with its original wallpaper and matching drapery. To the left is the master suite, featuring his and hers en-suite bathrooms. A Juliet balcony off the hallway to the master suite overlooks the great room and the level below. Straight off the entry is the great room with an amazing view. Looking up, you see iron brackets

joining the ceiling beams, designed by Ehmcke. This room retains much of its original interior design.

From the great room, a stairway to the lower level features a cozy window seat. Below is a two-story conical fireplace with openings to the drawing room and the great room.

The breakfast room is lovely with its original wallpaper and vaulted ceiling. The kitchen would be any chef's dream and the green tile countertops are beautiful and original to the home. A Dutch door joins the kitchen with the formal dining room. This room is elegant with an arched ceiling, a massive chandelier and high arched windows looking into the kitchen.

The yard is wonderful, as befits the home, featuring Linda's lovely rosebeds. You won't soon forget this home. 



AT A GLANCE 1960 Manzanita Lane

BUILT: 1972

OWNER: Paul & Linda Smith (since 2024)

SQUARE FOOTAGE:
4,904 (3 bedrooms, 4.5 baths)

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:

- Architect: Caspar Ehmcke
- Architecture: French Regency
- Neighborhood: Lakeridge
- 89 drawers & cabinet doors in kitchen
- His & Her bathrooms in Primary Suite



1

600 GORDON AVE. (1932)



DeLongchamps Colonial Revival

This Frederic DeLongchamps designed home features local brick in a Colonial Revival style. It boasts an airy entry hall flanked by a spacious living room and charming dining area. Original blueprints (available for viewing) reveal its journey from extravagant design to the economic reality of building in the 1930s.

2

124 GREENRIDGE DR. (1941)



Transitional Ranch

A brick path through the front garden leads to a deceptively large Transitional Ranch home with Art Deco railing, porch and door detailing. The living room features panoramic views that compete with the striking ceiling detail and art displays while a period bathroom tries to upstage with its original tiling.

3

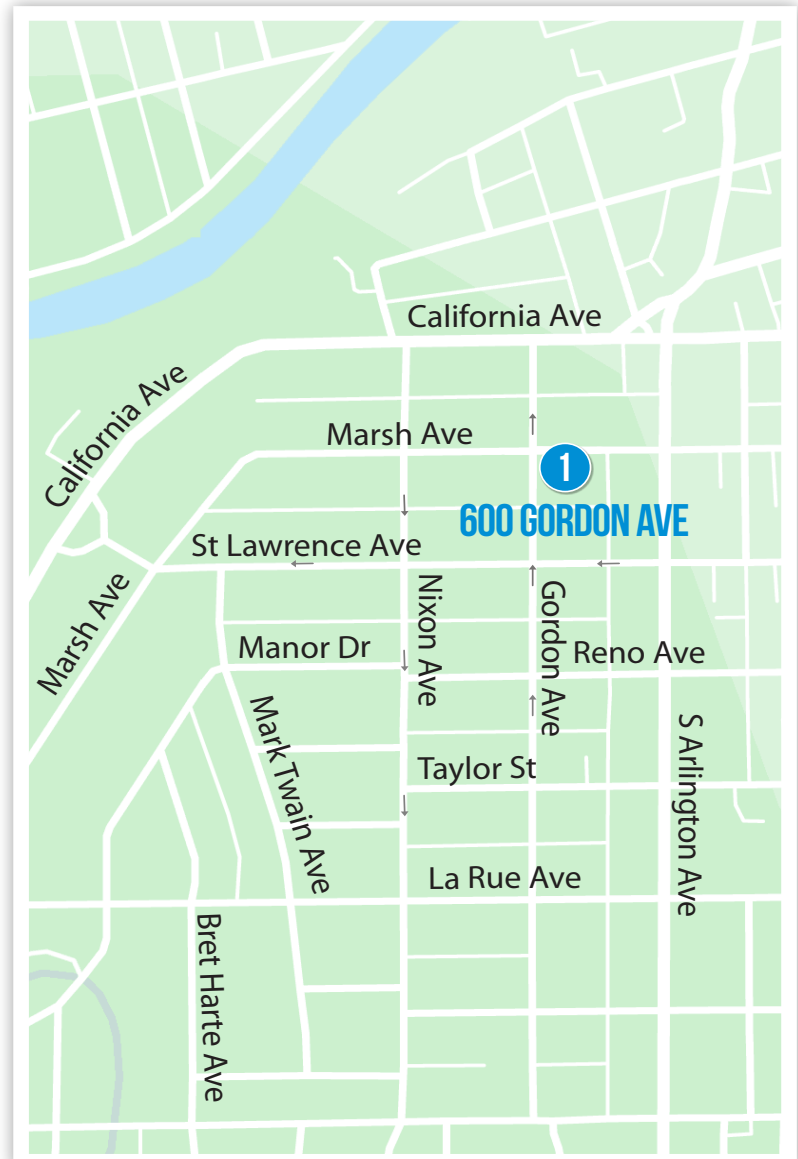
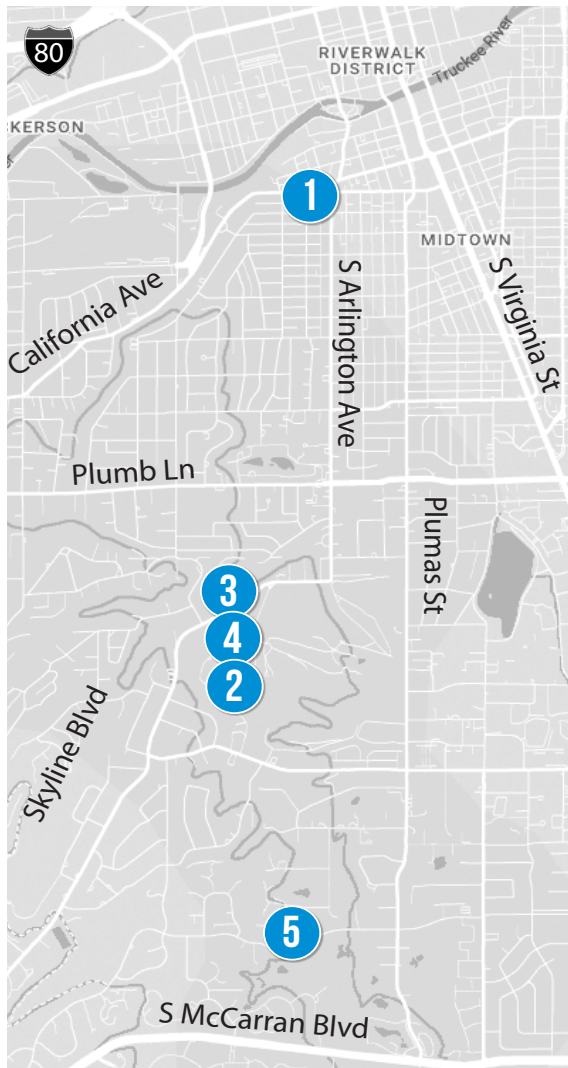
156 GREENRIDGE DR.



Tudor

Everything about this Tudor is a testament to its living from its multiple styles. The house features a living room, dazzling dining room, kitchen/family room that overlooks a balcony and view of the park. The house features stunning marble in the kitchen and four well-appointed bedrooms.

OVERVIEW MAP



3

156 GREENRIDGE DR. (1950)



Mission Revival

This Mission Revival speaks gracious with its wide staircases, elegant music room, dining area, and spacious living room. It opens onto an extensive garden and a park-like backyard. Upstairs features a primary bath and several bedrooms.

4

140 CRESTVIEW PL. (1958)



Spanish Colonial Revival

The entry courtyard of this Mission Revival with its peaceful fountain and impressive bell tower transports one to old Europe. Saltillo tiled floors and timber posts and beams contrast with light plaster walls that form a lovely backdrop for the home's uniquely curated art pieces.

5

1960 MANZANITA LN. (1972)



French Regency

Featuring stunning views within and without, this elegant French Tudor flaunts curves, cutouts, original wallpaper and colorful tiling. A circular Santa Fe style inglenook, winding adobe staircase library and multi-level peek holes are a few of its must-see charms. The expansive kitchen retains some 1970s state-of-the-art appliances that delight.





Historic Reno Preservation Society
with the Washoe County Library System
present the



2026 Fall HRPS Speaker Programs

Co-Chairs: Sheryln Hayes-Zorn and Susan Mullen

**Held at Noon on the second Sunday of the month,
these FREE programs offer topics related to Reno's history and culture.**

Because we often fill the 100-seat meeting room at South Valleys Library for these Speaker Programs, the library has asked that people register in advance. The HRPS newsletter, which is emailed to members and friends the first of each month, will have instructions as to how to register. Of course, if you don't get to register, we won't turn you away as long as there are seats available.



Date: Sunday, September 13, 2026

Presenter: Tina Bundy Nappe

Topic: Life at the Bundy Guest Ranch

Time: Noon to 1:30 pm

Location: Washoe County South Valleys Library, 15650 A Wedge Parkway

From 1947 to 1960, the Bundy Guest Ranch, a mile from Bowers Mansion near Davis Creek Park, hosted divorcees, vacationers, and friends. Who were these people? How did Gus and Jeanne Bundy, who had no formal experience in hosting and caring for guests, manage to care for guests,

maintain a household, and raise two daughters? Gus Bundy was a noted local photographer and artist who recorded the people and places of the 1940s and 1950s.

Mid-century Washoe Valley divorce ranches offered the rustic allure of the American West. Although a few guests were wealthy, a number needed to work. They moved here to fulfill Nevada's strict six-week residency requirement to obtain a quick divorce. In 1961, the divorce era was over, and the Bundy Guest Ranch was sold.

Tina Bundy Nappe has always regarded Washoe County as home, while in school, working, raising a family, and now as a retiree and volunteer. Tina is a UNR graduate who focused on conservation of the environment and wildlife during her career and into retirement.





Date: Sunday, October 11, 2026

Presenters: Debbie Hinman and Cindy Ainsworth

Topic: Becoming the “Biggest Little City” – the Story of the Reno Arch

Time: Noon to 1:30 pm

Location: Washoe County South Valleys Library, 15650 A Wedge Parkway

What better way to celebrate Reno’s roadside heritage than by taking a look at the old arch. Seen

on hundreds of postcards and advertising materials, the arch is the most recognizable of all Reno symbols. Throughout the years, the old arch, now located on Lake Street, has gone through four transformations, gone from light bulbs to neon, and has graced many different city locations. Reno architect Max Hershenow is quoted as saying “its charm is its purely functional design evoking American industrial might.”



Cindy Ainsworth is a charter member of HRPS and the second president. Cindy has researched and written extensively about Reno history, including the Reno arch.

Debbie Hinman is a native Nevadan and chief researcher for the Historic Reno Preservation Society’s quarterly publication, *FootPrints*. Debbie is an expert on many facets of local history and has developed an extensive repertoire of talks about people and events in Reno.



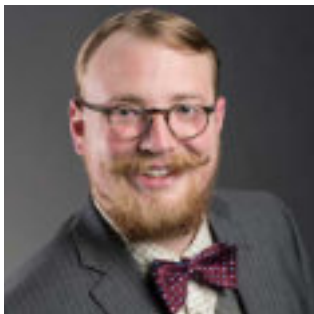
Date: Sunday, November 8, 2026

Presenter: Garrett Barmore

Topic: History and Architecture of W. M. Keck Museum, Earth Science Building, University of Nevada, Reno

Time: Noon to 1:30 pm

Location: Washoe County South Valleys Library, 15650 A Wedge Parkway



The Mackay School of Mines building has supported earth science education and research since 1908. This talk will discuss the history of

the building, the Mackay School of Earth Science and Engineering, and the Keck Museum. Over 150 years of history will be discussed, including the dawn of industrial mining in Nevada, early mining education at the then Nevada State University, the rise of the Mackay School of Mines, and the future of one of the grand dame earth science programs in the United States.

Garrett Barmore is the Curator at the W. M. Keck Earth Science and Mineral Engineering Museum at the University of Nevada, Reno. Barmore is an alumnus of UNR and received his Master’s in Museology from the University of Washington. Garrett has worked as the curator of the Keck Museum for over 10 years and has given hundreds of presentations and tours about UNR and Nevada’s mining history. The museum’s collection tells the story of mining and earth science education in Nevada.



CONSIDER HRPS IN YOUR GIVING

RENO ARCH TURNS 100

by Amy Burton

Happy birthday to the Reno Arch! The city's gateway is 100 years old. To celebrate, HRPS will host a reception in October, the month the arch was dedicated in 1926. Stay tuned for details via our website, newsletter and social media and enjoy the October 11 Speaker Program on the arch by HRPS' own Deb Hinman and Cindy Ainsworth.

In the meantime, test your knowledge of this Reno icon with seven trivia questions:

1. What was first written on the arch?
2. The arch dedication coincided with what annual Reno event?
3. What does California have to do with the arch's motto?
4. How many arches have graced downtown Reno, and how many still stand?
5. Why did the arch's lights go out for a year?
6. What is former President Ronald Reagan's connection to the arch?
7. What was the original arch used for in a Reno park before it was restored, and who restored it?

1. What was first written on the arch? Reno was spelled out in incandescent bulbs on top of the arch between two stylized torches. The second line read Nevada's Transcontinental Highways Exhibition. Below that was the exhibition dates: June 25-Aug 1, 1927.

Reno's arch was not erected to welcome visitors to the city, rather to celebrate completion of the Lincoln and Victory highways (US 50 & 40). These transcontinental highways were some of the first paved roads designed specifically for automobiles. They linked New York City with San Francisco, and they converged in Reno. The arch was part of the state's elaborate exhibition held in Idlewild Park. (The arch and California Building are the sole remnants of that event.) Like the railroad before it, being along the coast-to-coast highway route was an economic boon for Reno providing access to the evolving auto tourism trade.

2. The arch dedication coincided with which annual Reno event?

The arch was dedicated on October 23, 1926, after being transported from San Francisco where it was designed and constructed. The celebration coincided with the University of Nevada homecoming events. Thousands lined the parade route from Powning Park on Virginia Street to the arch. Nevada and California Shriners marched with Reno Kerak Temple members and a large band was featured.

3. How many arches have graced downtown Reno? There has long been discussion of how many arches Reno has had. Were there three, or were there seven? For this discussion, we state there were three basic frameworks upon which different designs were placed: the 1926-1963 arch, the 1964-1987 arch, the 1987-present day arch.

The 1926 arch was only meant to serve the Transcontinental Highway Exposition, but it was so popular with Renoites it



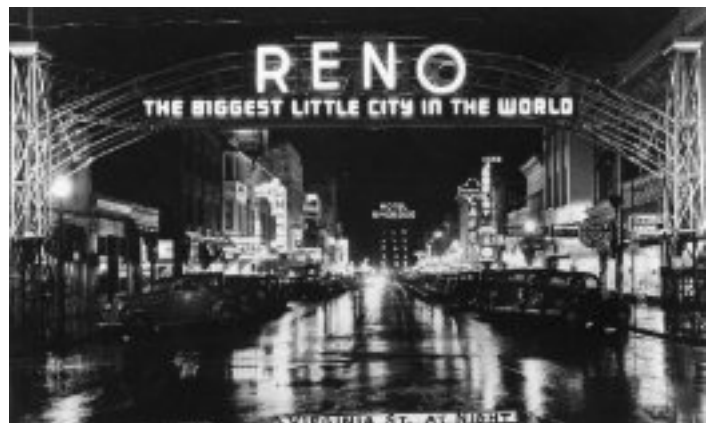
The original arch was for the Transcontinental Highways Exposition on October 23, 1926 on Virginia Street.

Postcard courtesy of Gordon Foote.



The post-Exposition arch with its new slogan, installed in 1929. This arch was more impressive with light on at night.

Photo Courtesy Nevada Historical Society.



The 1935 redesign replaces the lights with art deco neon, using the 1926 framework.

Courtesy Cindy Ainsworth.

survived until 1963 with some modification. In 1935, to modernize the arch, the torches and slogan were removed, and the word Reno was featured in neon. Renoites objected, and the slogan was returned.

The 1964 arch replaced it when it was deemed not bright and showy enough to compete with the new club marquees downtown. The Reno Chamber of Commerce and gaming establishments led by Harolds Club erected a new arch designed by Ad Art and dedicated on New Years Eve 1963 at midnight. It featured plastic panels, a rotating star and an inverted arch. Consistent electrical problems caused by pigeons roosting in it led to its replacement.

The 1987 arch that still stands today at Virginia Street and Commercial Row was paid for by the downtown gaming and hotel establishments. It uses 2076 light bulbs which were changed to LED in 2009, and the color scheme was changed to blue and silver in 2018.

4. How many arches still stand in Reno? Two, the 1926 arch at Lake Street near the National Automobile Museum and the 1987 arch at Virginia Street and Commercial Row. The 1964 arch was donated to the city of Willits, California, where it was modified and still serves today.

5. Why did the arch's lights go out for a year? During the Great Depression the city council could not afford the \$30 a month cost to light the arch, so its lights went out in November 1932. Luckily, hotel owner Rose Morgan convinced fellow business owners to pay part of the cost due to its advertising value. The arch's 2000+ lights were relit in April 1933.

6. What is former President Ronald Reagan's connection to the arch? In 1940, Hollywood stars posed under the arch as publicity for the Warner Brothers' movie premiere of *Virginia City*. The celebrities included Ronald Reagan, Errol Flynn and William Boyd sitting atop horses in cowboy dress.

7. What was the first arch used for in a Reno park before it was restored? Who restored it? The 1926 arch was moved to a city park where it was used as a children's jungle gym. When it deteriorated and became dangerous it was moved to the city's storage yard. It sat abandoned until 1994 when Hollywood returned it to downtown. It was restored and moved to Fourth Street as a prop in the movie *Ty Cobb* starring Tommy Lee Jones. After filming, the city installed it on Lake Street where it remains today.

Information for this article came from California Building/ Reno Historical by Mella Rothwell Harmon and Alicia Barber, Historic Reno Arch/Reno Historical by Cindy Ainsworth, Lincoln Highway (1913-1928), Fourth Street/ Prater Way History Project, Online NV Encyclopedia, Nevada Humanities; Reno Now and Then by Neal Cobb and Jerry Fenwick, Tales of the Biggest Little City in the World by Patty Cafferata, The Reno Arch Through the Years, Reno Gazette Journal online news post, Feb. 26, 2026; Transportation and Reno's Arches, PowerPoint by Carol Coleman.

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



The 1963 arch with modifications to prevent problems with birds. The arch was given to Willits, California in 1990.

Postcard courtesy of Cindy Ainsworth.



The 1926 arch, converted to neon, has moved several times and is now located on Lake Street near the National Automobile Museum.

Photo courtesy Amy Burton.



The current Reno arch is on Virginia Street and Commercial Row, installed in 1987. In 2018, the colors were changed to blue and silver in honor of the University of Nevada, Reno.

Photo courtesy of www.nevadamax.com.

A Message From Your HRPS President - Fall 2026

Dear HRPS Members,

We know you'll be excited to see this year's collection of unique homes and hope you enjoy the experience. Our Harvest of Homes Tour is more than an opportunity to view beautiful older homes. The Tour began and remains a fundraising effort to support our Reno Heritage Fund grant programs, where we provide matching funding to property owners to make exterior repairs and renovations in keeping with the historic character of the building. HRPS feels it is important to encourage the maintenance and upkeep of these older buildings. When you buy a ticket to the Home Tour, you are supporting preservation at a local level.

Even as we make the final preparations for this year's tour, we are looking ahead to 2027 to secure homes for next year. If you would like to be part of our home search team, or if you have a home you would consider having on the tour, or if you know someone who does, please contact me at president@historicroeno.org. It's not too early!

Pending Changes to Section 106

There looms a threat to historic preservation that you may have begun hearing about – changes to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation recently advanced a proposal for sweeping changes to Section 106 that has preservation organizations up in arms! The potential effect on local, state, and tribal historic buildings and cultural sites is significant. Please read ZoAnn Campana's article below on the potential impact.

Fall Speaker Programs

We have three great programs lined up for our Sunday series this fall and I hope you can attend. As a reminder, programs will continue to be held at the South Valleys Library for the foreseeable future, as long as the downtown library remains closed on weekends.

Of special note is our October program on "Becoming the Biggest Little City – the Story of the Reno Arch," presented by Debbie Hinman and Cindy Ainsworth.

October 23, 2026 marks the centennial anniversary of the Reno Arch, now located on Lake Street between the Renaissance Hotel and the National Automobile Museum. We plan to hold a commemoration that afternoon at dusk. We'll have more details in our October digital newsletter, but do save the date!

Thank you to Walking Tour Attendees, Tour Guides, and Volunteers

We had over 700 attendees at 28 neighborhood Walking Tours this year. Thanks to all who attended, and special thanks to our dedicated crew of talented Tour Guides and volunteers who set up equipment, check people in, and serve as cabooses for each tour. The enthusiasm and camaraderie is infectious, and we are deeply grateful for your participation. Thank you! If you have any comments on this year's walks or suggestions for next year, send them to our Administrator, Peggy Boni – admin@historicroeno.org.

Joy Orlich
president@historicroeno.org
775-544-0686

CALL TO ACTION: Defend Our Historic Places!

by ZoAnn Campana

Imagine having a picnic in Idlewild Park when a bulldozer rolls up and begins destroying the surrounding grounds and structures. You ask what's happening, and the operator replies that it's a federal project. You don't remember any public notification about this, no news items, no community meetings to gather feedback about the project, or to identify concerns for the century-old park during construction. This could be our future.

On Friday, July 24, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) voted to advance a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that will fundamentally revise the regulations that implement Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Section 106 (36 C.F.R. Part 800) is

the federal review process that ensures consideration of cultural and historic resources in federally funded, permitted, and licensed projects.

This puts our treasured historic places at risk, as well as our shared cultural heritage as Americans. Under the current regulations, any project with a federal hook – funding, ownership, or involvement – is required to undergo the 106 process. It requires the federal government to notify and consult with state, local, and Tribal governments, as well as the public, before the undertaking may begin.

Section 106 rarely stops a project from going forward, but it ensures that impact to historic properties is avoided, minimized, or mitigated. It also involves the public and solicits their feedback. Under the new rules,

no public notification or consultation with state, local, or tribal governments would take place. The relevant federal agency would unilaterally determine project impacts, which will invite legal action and result in project delays. It's a losing proposition for everyone: citizens, developers, state and local governments, Tribes, and federal agencies.

The public will have an opportunity to submit formal comments soon. Please consider speaking up against the dismantling of our heritage. For information and updates, visit the following websites and social media channels: National Trust for Historic Preservation, National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, and Cultural Heritage Partners.

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Your annual HRPS membership includes the following benefits:

- Spring and Fall Speaker Programs
- Monthly Digital Newsletter to keep you informed of news and events
- Quarterly *FootPrints* publication: Articles of historic interest on local people, places, and events by local researchers and historians
- Discounted Neighborhood Walking Tours (\$10 Members; \$20 Non-Members)
- Discounted Harvest of Homes tickets (\$40 Members; \$50 Non-Members)

Are You A...	
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| ☐ \$35.00 Individual | ☐ \$500.00 Business: Your logo on HRPS website, in <i>FootPrints</i> , and Monthly Newsletter |
| ☐ \$35.00 Individual (Auto-Renew) | ☐ \$1,000.00 Champion: 1-2 People, no charge for Walking Tour/Home Tour tickets |
| ☐ \$60.00 Dual/Family: 1-2 People | ☐ \$2,500.00 Lifetime Member (1-time payment): 1-2 People, no charge for Walking Tour/Home Tour tickets, name listed in <i>FootPrints</i> , invitations to hosted Lifetime Member events |
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| ☐ \$150.00 Supporting: 1-2 People, no charge for Walking Tours | |
| ☐ \$150.00 Supporting (Auto-Renew): 1-2 People, no charge for Walking Tours | |

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

You may join online with a credit card at historicro.org, or complete this form and mail with your check to **Historic Reno Preservation Society (HRPS), P.O. Box 14003, Reno, NV 89507.**

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directly to Reno Historical



Contact HRPS

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email:
Board@historicreno.org

Phone:
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775 747-4478

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RHF Administrators:
ZoAnn Campana, Jack Hursh

Webmasters:
Derek Partridge, Peggy Boni, Deedee Pace

Reno Historical Editor:
Dr. Alicia Barber

Email Newsletter:
Joy Orlich

FootPrints Managing Editor:
Carol Coleman, 775 849-3380

Editorial Staff:
Deb Hinman, 775 762-5864
Amy Burton, Brett Banks,
Jill Richardson

Photographer: *Vacant*

Graphic Design:
Double Click Design · dcdreno.com

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