LIGHTS, CAMERA, LAUGHTER - It's Retro at the Trocadero!

Sunday, November 28, 1999
by Wayne Melton
Reno Gazette-Journal

The clock turned back more than 61 years for 130 people, many dressed in '30s- and '40s- style attire for the "Retro at the Trocadero" party November 17. They jammed the Trocadero room downtown Reno's historic El Cortes Hotel. The second annual event hosted by the Historic Reno Preservation Society is part of the non-profit organization's effort to make the public aware of local historic sites.

Last year's festivities were held at a Basque restaurant. This time, people crammed a bar area near the Trocadero Room entrance during a no-host cocktail reception just before the dinner. Washoe District Judge Peter Breen was among those getting plenty of laughs near the bar.

Before the dinner started, at least 20 people on a stand-by waiting list were turned away because there wasn't enough room. And 1990s-style memorabilia throughout the bar room made a sharp contrast to old attire worn by about half the guests. Today's University of Nevada, Reno, Wolf Pack logos seemed out of place with Depression-era clothes.

"Just try to pretend you're in 1937," Joan Dyer said, as we entered the Trocadero room with her husband, Lloyd. Palm fronds adorned both sides of the stage.

The Erica Gocka Trio cranked out old-style swing tunes to help set an authentic mood.

Among board members sitting near the dance floor was Charlotte Jones McConnell, believed to be the only person at the gala who ever "lived" in the El Cortez; she was accompanied by her husband, Dick. McConnell and her family stayed in the hotel more than 40 years ago while a movie was being filmed in their Reno home.

The crowd sang "Happy Birthday" for the society's newsletter editor, Sharon Adler Walbridge, who was celebrating her 60th birthday.

more pictures inside!
NEWS ABOUT FRIENDS

The Heritage Tourism Coalition has progressed from an idea to accomplishments in less than a year. HTC has developed, published, and distributed 80 copies of the Heritage Tourism Directory, which is already in its second edition. This first ever publication is an attractive 8.5 by 11 spiral booklet featuring entries from 28 organizations in the Truckee Meadows engaged in cultural tourism. It is available in public places for review and/or copying.

Currently, HTC has a grant application pending to fund the design and printing of 50,000 copies of a map of the Truckee Meadows that features historic and cultural sites. This will be a large, attractive, foldout map for use of those on foot as well as those touring by automobile.

Exciting News in the Historic District:

The Sierra Arts Foundation Board of Trustees has approved a new partnership with Artspace Projects, Inc. to own and develop the Riverside Hotel.

"The Riverside project implements a number of different goals outlined in the Reno Redevelopment Agency's River Corridor Action Plan," said Mayor Jeff Griffin. "It brings commercial development, housing, and arts to the river, and restores an historic structure in the heart of Reno. And, this will provide a base for a new arts district, further developing Reno's reputation as a burgeoning art town."

According to Sierra Arts Executive Director Jill Berryman, the Riverside project is targeted for completion by September 2000.

One Region, One Vision — The vehicle of the Forum for a Common Agenda is moving ahead with their project to define a common vision for the Reno-Sparks-Lake Tahoe region.

HRPS and HTC recently joined 22 other organizations as co-sponsors. HRPS member Mella Harmon, also a member of the city's Historic Resources Commission, joins Scott Gibson, Charlotte McConnell, and Sharon Walbridge in indicating a willingness to work with the Economy Committee — specifically with the Arts & Culture sub-committee representing the viewpoints of preservation and cultural tourism.

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HRPS Thanks the Pincolini Family for making the Trocadero Room available at no charge.

Clockwise, from lower left: Al & Nancy Pagni, State Historic Preservation Officer Ron James and his wife, State Archivist Guy Rocha and his wife, and Nancy & Buzz Kwapil

From left to right: Pam & David Ginsberg, and Ginger & Pete Salcedo

HRPS President Cindy Ainsworth and her husband, Tom.
The National Trust for Historic Preservation is celebrating its' 50th anniversary during 1999. The Trust highlighted 50 years of work with a gala and conference in Washington D.C. last October. As Trust President Richard Moe noted in Preservation, the magazine of the National Trust, "Anniversaries offer an opportunity for reflection as well as celebration. On the occasion of the National Trust's 50th anniversary, a look back over the years shows how far we've come since 1949—and how profoundly preservation has influenced the love and livability of American communities."

HRPS' own Mark Taxer attended this historic conference. The following are his impressions:

How appropriate it is that the 50th anniversary conference of the National Trust for Historic Preservation was held in our nation's capitol. This seat of history and power is visually dominated by displays of both. Nearly everywhere one looks there are monuments and buildings attesting to centuries of the American experience.

The entire experience fascinated me, from the conference workshops and classes, to the many field sessions and walking tours. Of course, I have a particular leaning to walking tours because I lead one for HRPS in the Wells Avenue neighborhood, and enjoy going on those led by other docents.

My biggest surprise during the trip came on the Chevy Chase, Maryland tour. Chevy Chase has a Nevada connection. On the short bus ride to the suburbs, our tour leader told us of the various land speculators of a century ago, including two United States senators from Nevada; William M. Stewart and Francis Newlands. Stewart purchased land in what is now the Dupont Circle area. Newlands invested in land further out, in the area just north of D.C.

In addition to his senatorial chores, Newlands was also a bit of a developer, creating large parts of Chevy Chase with its narrow lanes, green spaces, and modestly sized colonial styled homes. The Chevy Chase Land Development Company, which he started, is still in existence and run by a direct descendant. The company still owns land in the area that may yet be developed.

Walking through the Senator's "eastern" neighborhood, I couldn't help but notice that even with the different architectural style and setting, there was a familiar feeling that reminded me of the Senator's "western" neighborhood; Newlands Manor in Reno.

Editor's Note: The Reno Gazette-Journal reported on November 30, 1999, an historic agreement between the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe and two federal agencies regarding Truckee River water. Senator Newlands, author of the Newlands Project, which was the first reclamation project in the west, has figured in many long, tortuous, water disputes. His influence went well beyond neighborhoods, and has kept opposing sides in court for years.
HOW ABOUT A MICROBREWED RENO?

by Sharon Adler Walbridge, Editor

Last September, during the Great Basin Book festival, Renoites were treated to a thought-provoking address by David “Mas” Masumoto, co-chair of the California Humanities Council.

Two tables of HRPS members responded enthusiastically as Masumoto spun a story of “cultural tourism,” traveling to a specific place to hear the place’s story. “It’s about places that have stories to tell – the power of memory in the experience,” he said. “It’s what sets you apart from other places.”

He used the analogy of microbrewing in beer making to help the audience understand his concept of giving tourists alternatives to destinations that pump out entertainment like commodities. Microbrews offer unique regional flavors, he said, and places can too. Think of the quality of our sky, our mountains, our river. We are not, thank goodness, Las Vegas, Orlando or Atlantic City. There’s a lot more to Reno than glitzy entertainment. And while I’m not a beer drinker, I began thinking about beer.

Not long after that luncheon, I came across an article about beer that I wouldn’t have read if it hadn’t been for Masumoto. In the article entitled, “Sweet winter stouts: These have nothing in common with Bud” Ken Stroebel, of the Gannett News Service, reviewed six different stouts, differentiating them with phrases like “mild fruitiness; strong, peppery nose; smooth and amazingly brandy-like; deep brown color, thick head, hearty coffee-malt flavor with hints of figs and raisins.” The article was interesting, and I was almost motivated to find a couple of these stouts because Stroebel made them sound so good. It was then that I understood why Masumoto’s ideas about sensory imagery wouldn’t leave me alone.

To gather the sensory images from a place, you need to experience it, you need to go walking there. Who gives walking tours of historic neighborhoods in Reno? Who created and spun off the Heritage Tourism Coalition (HTC)? HRPS! Who wants newcomers, old timers, and tourists to know what is unique and memorable about our community? HRPS and HTC.

We, in HRPS and HTC are working hard to let people know why “We Love This Place,” as the new slogan declares. Publications are being developed by both organizations for use in cultural tourism. The authentic, descriptive voice of those who know and love our region would be wonderful additions to these and future publications. What microbrewed ideas and feelings do you have about this place? What words can you find to describe The City of Trembling Leaves?

I invite you to think about the place we call home and send your “microbrewed” words to Sharon Walbridge, Editor, 1205 Greensburg Circle, Reno, 89509. Perhaps you’ll have the pleasure of seeing those words in publications read by thousands of people and knowing that they will view this place through your eyes.

HRPS PRESERVATION PROJECT:
HRPS PRESERVATION AWARDS

This year the first annual HRPS Preservation Awards will be presented at our Annual Meeting, Wednesday, May 24th at the historic Bartley Ranch Regional Park. Help HRPS reward those in our community who commit to preservation. Send your nominations to Historic Reno Preservation Society, P.O. Box 33444, Reno, 89533 no later than Friday, March 31, 2000. Selections will be made by the Board. The following information is required:

1. Address of the property or, if it is a special project, such as preservation of a Native American site, a site description must accompany the nomination
2. Name of the individual or organization responsible
3. Description of property or project
4. Your explanation of why you think the property or project is worthy of your nomination
5. Include a photo of your nomination
6. Be sure to include your name, address, and phone number

Editor’s Note: Try using your “microbrewed” vocabulary to describe your nomination.
Your Input Is Needed Now!

By Mercedes de la Garza

Reno has been a regional center for well over a hundred years. It began as a staging area for the Comstock mines, as well as a place for rest and resupply before trips over the mountains or across the desert. Shipments of goods and natural resources were hauled to Reno from the north and south to the transcontinental road or railroad. The townsit was strategically located and well watered: as commerce grew, so did the population. Eventually the state located its university here. Reno was, and is, the regional center for Northern Nevada; it is the city that provides goods, services, education, and culture to a vast territory.

Today's city leaders are committed to maintaining Reno's role as a regional hub in the 21st century. That role presents the community with many challenges. How will we respond to the pressures of growth and aging while preserving what it is we cherish about our quality of life? It is the charge of the citizens of this city to actively participate in government; to inform leaders of the directions we would like them to take. What is a busy citizen to do, and when should that citizen allocate scarce time to action? A complete explanation of the process involved in updating our city is quite cumbersome and technical, a brief explanation of the political layering follows. We begin with The City of Reno Master Plan which affects the Land Use Designations. Following this you have the effect of the Land Use Designations on the specific local Zoning and Codes. And lastly you have the influence of the local Neighborhood Plans, which if handled properly, are intended to override all of the above in specific instances. So remember, its

- Neighborhood Plans
- The City of Reno Master Plan
- Land Use Designations
- Zoning and Codes

Neighborhood Plans differ from the Master Plan in that they cover a limited geographic area (a defined neighborhood) and may or may not address the full range of issues covered in the Master Plan. Neighborhood plans are more specific than the Master Plan and may go into great detail on land use proposals, infrastructure needs, or other issues of concern to the neighborhood.

In early 1997, the City of Reno Planning Staff was tasked with bringing the zoning for the city into compliance with the Master Plan. To accomplish this challenging task, a group called the Ad Hoc Zoning Committee was created. Planning Manager, Laura Tuttle, staffs this committee. Its membership is diverse and representative of the community. It includes business owners, professional engineers, landscape architects, planners, and at large citizens. Their task has been a
tedious one, reviewing each division of the zoning guidelines, from signage to lighting, to housing types, and adjacencies. Their deadline is at the end of 1999 at which time Ms. Tuttle will summarize the work of the committee before sending its report to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will review the Ad Hoc Committee’s product and will either adopt or reject revisions made to the previous Zoning Codes.

How does this affect you? An involved citizenry is essential in determining what the city will be like in the future. The system is designed for citizen participation. What your community will look like will depends on the concerns you express. This is our chance to the pro-active rather than re-active. City staff is crafting proposals for city leaders to review next year.

Perhaps for the Historic Preservation Community, the task at hand should be the implementation of current and substantial neighborhood plans. These neighborhood plans are the key to preserving the historic neighborhoods. The city has already identified a number of existing Neighborhood and Sphere Plans. Neighborhoods recognized by the city and having a historic component are Newlands, Northeast, Plumas, West University, and Grove Street.

What can you do? Look around you. Find what needs improving in your city, in your community, and in your neighborhood. Make a list, take photos of what you like and dislike, and scribble down what it is that needs improving.

For example, early last year a small group of citizens from the Newlands Neighborhood came before a joint meeting of the Ad Hoc Zoning Committee and the Planning Commission. This group suggested a solution be reviewed regarding the quality of life for those living in proximity to and within the alleys of this neighborhood. The group wanted the Committees to focus primarily on six issues: aesthetics of neighborhood preservation; issues of density, safety, access and infrastructure; as well as addressing design to allow for a more harmonious blend of people and buildings. The citizen group also presented the Committees with visual example of “good design” and “bad design.” The Committees expressed great appreciation to the group for their singular effort and articulated their desire for this kind of citizen involvement.

The time for action is now. The next time you can influence such important policy making decisions as these zoning and planning decision could be in another 50 years. The next couple of months are crucial. Your photos and comments can be sent to:

Cindy Ainsworth  
c/o HRPS  
P.O. Box 33444  
Reno, NV 89533

These will be presented to the Ad Hoc Committee and/or the Planning Commission as a package from HRPS. Together we are stronger than we are singly. We can make a difference!

The Nevada Land Conservancy will be presenting a program at the January 26th HRPS meeting, and many of these issues will be addressed. Mark your calendar now!

This structure at the corner of Lander and St. Lawrence shows how, with proper foresight and attention to surrounding structures, a newer building can blend into the surrounding neighborhood. Proper zoning laws are a way to help guide developers to follow this line of thinking!
WALKING TOURS A BOLD SUCCESS

by Leanne Stone

Over 400 Reno residents and visitors have enjoyed HRPS walking tours during 1999. Our enthusiastic tour guides; Mark Taxer, Mercedes de la Garza, Scott Gibson, Tracy SOLiday, Joan Collins, Gaye Canepa, Ron James, and Pat Klos are marvelous. Special thanks to them for sharing their time and talents during Historic Preservation week in May; Uptown, Downtown, ARTown in July; and Architecture Week in conjunction with the American Institute of Architects Northern Nevada Chapter in September.

Tour guides tell me they often glean as much as they share on these walks. It seems it's not unusual for participants to step forward, disclose they live or lived in the neighborhood, and contribute wonderful stories about real people living real lives in a real neighborhood. Guides also find that current residents, curious about a group of strangers trooping through their neighborhood, come out to investigate, and before long are sharing their stories. These stories are as much a part of the neighborhood as the built environment. Wouldn't it be fun if the stories could be preserved? That's more difficult in this era of mobility, but little sparks of recollection are being lighted all over town because of these tours. Who knows? Perhaps some of these recollections will become written or oral histories - for family, for friends, for community. (See information on Archiving Classes at right.)

There are neighborhoods yet to be explored, histories yet to be revealed. Find out how you, too, can be a tour guide. Attend a workshop, Saturday, February 12th from 9:00 to 12 noon. (Location to be announced.) This workshop will highlight presentations and handouts by several of the guides mentioned above, and tips on how each developed his or her tour. There will be a video on housing styles, slides of Reno buildings and homes, and a guide to additional source materials.

If sharing Reno's past with others, therefore helping to preserve it sounds like fun to you, please call Leanne Stone by February 4th and sign up for a fun, workshop morning. You may reach Leanne evenings at 322-1638.

ORAL HISTORY WORKSHOP PART OF HRPS EDUCATIONAL SERIES

by Cindy Ainsworth, HRPS President

One of HRPS many success stories this year came out of the Oral History Workshop we sponsored. Sixteen enthusiastic participants took the workshop last June. Many wanted to record their family histories while others were planning to use their new skill in the workplace or to detail special travel experiences.

Former Nevada State Treasurer Patty Cafferata found it reassuring that she was doing the right things. She is currently interviewing her mother, former U.S. Congresswoman Barbara Vucanovich, for a book.

Workshop presenter, Victoria Ford, offered a concise and jam packed seven hour course. From how to organize the interviews using a matrix, to the legal ramifications of publishing, Ms. Ford's experience and knowledge helped us all. The mock interviews and critiques at the close of the class were definitely highlights of the workshop.

HRPS would like to offer another
CENTURY ENDS WITH RENO HISTORY CLASS

by Pat Ferraro Klos

For over 100 years, Reno students have explored every angle of the Comstock Lode and related Nevada history, but never have they zeroed in on the history of their city. On September 22 in the Swope Middle School Library, 40 Washoe County teachers put an end to that by attending the HRPS inservice class “Reno History.” The teachers viewed Neal Cobb’s remarkable slides of old Reno, walked the Truckee River historic corridor along Riverside Drive, explored the UNR campus Historic District, and walked the Sinclair and Lake Streets section with City Planner Christine Fey.

Class participants built a Reno History notebook with handouts, articles, biographical sketches, and suggested lesson plans from their walks, a living history program with Jane Lake (Mrs. Myron Lake, Reno’s founder), film and video clips viewed at Channel 5, and finally an afternoon with Judge Peter Breen at the Washoe County Courthouse, Reno’s most important historical structure.

“Reno History” was designed by five HRPS members who are also teachers: Caroline Asikainen, Pat Klos, Donna Lage, Susan Lombardi, and Francie Terras. Each participant turned in “A Good Idea” for use in the elementary and middle school classrooms. The steering committee will review the ideas and send a packet to each of the participants in the first ever “Reno History” class.

HRPS 1998-1999 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The increase in the number of people reached through our walking tours
- The growth in the number of trained walking tour docents
- HRPS integration with other community groups
- The History of Reno class for WCSD elementary teachers
- The net growth in membership to a new high of 312
- Initiated and spun off The Heritage Tourism Coalition
- Presented a wide variety of knowledgeable speakers producing quality programs
- Published three newsletters, each growing in size and quality. Obtained underwriting for one issue from Heritage Bank.
- Enjoyed the highly successful day trip, “Trailing the Donners” with Frank Mullen, Jr.
- Presented a very successful oral history workshop.

Editor’s Note: The stated mission of HRPS is “Dedication to preservation of Reno’s Past through Education and Leadership.” For an organization that was merely an idea in June of 1996, the above list of accomplishments is not only notable for its breadth, but also for the diversity of the people involved in the process of achieving our mission. This organization seems well launched.

HRPS GOALS FOR 2000

- Enhance historic walking tours by:
  - Increasing the number of neighborhoods toured
  - Training additional docents
  - Increase the number of new participants
- Develop additional educational programs for children and adults
- Build and maintain a strong, informed membership
- Provide timely and interesting programming
- Build a base of working information with the newsletter and workshops
- Increase the membership by 25% annually
- Develop a walking tour publication
- Inform HRPS members of historic preservation issues within the Truckee Meadows and the nation through timely programming
- Build partnerships between HRPS, the City of Reno Historic Resources Commission, neighborhood councils, ethnic groups, and other preservation-oriented groups
- Recognize and reward historic preservation projects:
  - Solicit nominations through the newsletter
  - Accept nominations from the Board of Directors
- Establishment of a HRPS office in the downtown corridor.
INTRODUCING NEW BOARD MEMBERS

HRPS is proud to introduce new board members Joan Dyer, Sierra Arts Liaison, and David Ginsburg, Community Liaison.

Together, they bring broad experience in community service to our board, and have already made a mark in HRPS planning and activities.

Welcome aboard!

HRPS Renewing Members: Our Strength

Dean Bradt
Sue Boderdorf
Trudy & Dean Brussard
Diane & David Buckman
Craig Chapman
Suzette Dietel
Harry & Fritsi Ericson
Don & Kay Fowler
Kay Gadda Frankfurt

Toni Harsh
Dorothy Huffey
Dr. Robert Johns
Marilyn Johnson
Debra Perry Lockwood
Ann McCarty
Helen Hardy Mills
Edda Morrison
Mary Olds

Toni Payton
.nanette Pepe-Roehr
Robert Shoemaker
Anne & Donald Simone
Tracy Soliday
June Stansbury
Carolyn Strunge
Thomas Swart
Gerald Takano

Fran & Terry Terras
Hillary & Francisco Velázquez
Robert Wexler
Gayle Whitaker
Glee Willis
Sally Zanjani

We Welcome New Members

Bobbie Anderson-Hubbard
Jonnae Botsford
Dan Bailey & Kaki Brown
Tom & Phyllis Cates
Neal Cobb
Cheryl & Mitch Cohen
Joan Collins
Megan Condon

James Devine
Anna Sig & Gary Drummond
Frances Ann Edmonston
Tim & Joan Elam
Jackie, Steve & Michael Frady
Dwight Harbaugh
Perry Hayden
Suzzette Hooper

Beverly Hubbard
Bob Klein
Steve & Donna Lage
Olivia Martin
Steve & Teri Norman
Beverly Olesek
Al & Nancy Pagni
Marilyn Paradis

Bert & Jennifer Pincolini
Carrie Porter
Duane & Carol Rasmussen
Suzanne Sexton
Zona & Bob Therkelsen
Sally Wander

Reminder: Don’t let your membership expire! Check your mailing label on your newsletter.

Membership Application

☐ Yes, I want to become a member of the Historic Reno Preservation Society. Annual membership includes:

• HRPS newsletter
• Walking Tour brochure
• Free participation in walking tours

☐ Student ..................................$8.00
☐ Individual .................................$10.00
☐ Family (children 18 and under) …$15.00
☐ Supporting .................................$100.00
☐ Additional Donation ..............$____

Please make checks payable to: Historic Reno Preservation Society

☐ New Member
☐ Renewal

Name(s) ________________________________

Address ________________________________

City ___________ State ____ ZIP ______

Telephone ______________________________

Best time to call ________________________

Please detach and return to: Historic Reno Preservation Society, P.O. Box 33444, Reno NV 89533
Be sure to mark your calendars for the following HRPS meetings and events:

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

January 26:
Nevada Land Conservancy Program

February - April:
HRPS & SNCAT Archiving Workshops
See the story in this newsletter about this fantastic series of workshops. Cost of each workshop is $40.00. For information or details, please call SNCAT at 828.1211.

February 14:
HRPS Tour Guide Workshop
HRPS Walking Tour Coordinator, Leanne Stone, will lead a workshop in learning how to be a Tour Guide for our popular Historic Walking Tours. To register or to find out more, call Leanne during the evening at 322-1638. Registration deadline is February 4th.

February 23:
“Dispelling Myths”
Guy Rocha
Nevada State Archivist

March 22:
“The Chinese in Nevada”
Sue Fawn Chung, Ph.D.
UNLV Humanities Scholar

April 26:
“Reno’s Urban Forestry Program”
Jim Ross, Urban Forester
Leanne Stone, Former Chair
Urban Forestry Commission

May 24:
“An Evening at the Bartley Ranch”
Annual business meeting and barbeque. This is it podner; good grub, great setting. Election of officers.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**