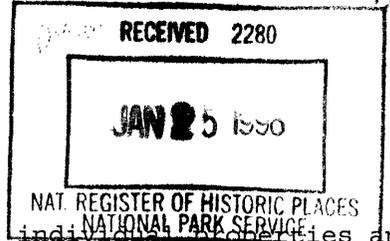


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historical name Boulder Dam Park Museum
other names/site number Lost City Museum

2. Location

street & number SR 169, P.O. Box 807 not for publication
city or town Overton vicinity _____
state Nevada code NV county Clark code 003
zip code 89040

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination _____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally statewide _____ locally. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Ronald M. Jones, SHPO 3 January 1995
Signature of certifying official Date

Nevada State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

____ LATE 19TH and EARLY 20TH CENTURY _____
____ REVIVALS: Pueblo _____

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE _____
roof WOOD _____
walls ADOBE _____

other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====
8. Statement of Significance
=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

____ CONSERVATION _____
____ EDUCATION _____
____ ARCHITECTURE _____

Period of Significance ____ 1934-35 _____

Significant Dates ____ 1934-35 _____

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

=====
Additional Documentation
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Nevada State Museum

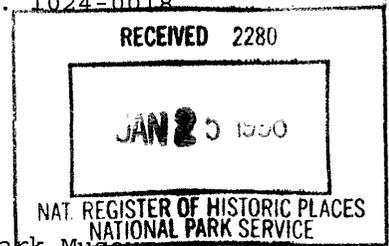
street & number 600 N. Carson St. telephone (702) 687-4811

city or town Carson City state NV zip code 89710

=====
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Boulder Dam Park Museum
name of property
Overton, NV
county and State

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Description

The Boulder Dam Park Museum, now known as the Lost City Museum, is an adobe brick building, constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1934-35. It sits on a hilltop 1/4-mile south of the town of Overton, Nevada. The CCC erected the building, originally known as the Boulder Dam Park Museum, as part of the effort to recover and store artifacts excavated from Pueblo Grande de Nevada, also known as the Lost City, an Anasazi settlement. This site was discovered in 1924. Excavations continued into the 1930s to document and save as much as possible from the ancient city, most of which was eventually flooded by Lake Mead, created by the construction of Hoover (Boulder) Dam. A chain-link fence completely encloses the museum grounds. Surrounding desert vegetation includes creosote bush, bursage, Joshua trees, mesquite, palo verde, yucca, century plant, and a variety of cacti. Introduced flora include Italian cypress, Washingtonian palm, date palm, Russian olive, and pomegranate trees. Bermuda grass covers the grounds to the north, northwest, and south of the museum building. In addition to the museum itself, the site encompasses a six-room ruin, now enclosed in the 1981 addition to the museum, a seven-room Puebloan dwelling, and a Basketmaker pit house, all reconstructed by the CCC in 1935.

The CCC built the museum of handmade, sundried adobe brick (11"x7"x4") in the Pueblo Revival style. The building is a rare example of this style in Nevada. The bricks are laid three wythes deep in common bond. The 25-inch-thick walls rise from a foundation of sandstone cobbles extending 14 to 18 inches above the ground. Cut sandstone sills and tamarisk log lintels frame the window openings. The windows themselves are either single or double casement. Smaller windows are divided by one horizontal bar and one vertical bar into four lights. Larger double-casement windows, contain four lights each, divided horizontally. The original doors were handmade with vertical wood planks. All these doors have been removed or replaced. The current main entrance door has ten raised panels. Iron grills, secured to the inset lintels, cover the windows.

The flat, stepped roof is enclosed by a sandstone-capped parapet, 18 inches high. Wooden and ceramic canales extend from the roof through the parapet. Exposed vigas are supported by vertical posts along the recessed wall at the southeast end of the building, forming a small porch. The roof located over the southwest entrance to the original restrooms also has vigas supported in this way, creating another small porch. A third porch, which stood along the northeast wall of the museum, was removed in 1973 for a new addition.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7

Page 2

Boulder Dam Park Museum
name of property
Overton, NV
county and State

=====
Description (continued)

The interior contains two exhibit rooms, three small storage rooms, and the caretaker's quarters with an attached garage. Large sandstone slabs make up the floor in the museum section of the building. The floors in the residence and garage are poured concrete. Plaster covers the interior walls. Exposed planks supported by two-by-four-inch joists and beams (9 1/2"x15 1/4"), running perpendicular to the joists, create the ceiling. All walls and ceilings are painted white.

The two exhibit rooms have display cases set up in 1973. These wall and floor cases contain objects removed from the Lost City, displaying the remains of a prehistoric southeastern Nevada site. Stone tools, ceramic vessels, articles of personal adornment, and numerous other artifacts represent the material culture of the Anasazi people. Other displays include photographs of the original Lost City excavations and the construction of the museum itself.

The original adobe museum, containing 1990 square feet, has gained three additions over the years. In 1973, two additions were built. One wing, located on the southeast end of the original building, added 2000 square feet to the museum, and contained an exhibit area, information office, laboratory, and two restrooms. Its buff-colored concrete block walls were intended to resemble, but not match, the adobe of the original structure. A small addition to the caretaker's residence on the northeast side of the museum contains a bedroom, bathroom, and hallway. This section is also built of concrete blocks.

In 1981, the second wing was constructed east of the original building, enclosing the 1973 wing. This wood-frame addition added 4000 square feet to the museum. Its exterior walls are covered with stucco, colored to blend with the rest of the museum exterior. This wing includes an exhibit area, the centerpiece of which is the reconstructed six-room prehistoric house ruin, which had previously been exposed to the elements. It also provides space for a curator's office, archaeologist's office, laboratory, storeroom, and darkroom.

Although these sections have added a significant amount of space to the museum, the original adobe brick building retains its historic integrity. In addition, the removal of the northeast porch and the replacement of the original doors has not significantly altered the building's historic appearance or condition. A new vinyl membrane roof was installed in 1989 and

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 3

Boulder Dam Park Museum
name of property
Overton, NV
county and State

=====
Description (continued)

is hidden by the museum's parapet. Narrow metal flashing currently caps the parapet around the entire building. The structure is in sound condition.

A six-room pueblo ruin, now contained inside the museum, was reconstructed by the CCC in 1935. Its walls stand about 6 inches to 12 inches high. Layers of adobe make up the walls. The footprint of the structure creates a semicircle. The ruin is now contained by a low wall and railing and is used as an interpretive exhibit. Archaeological tools and signs describe the process of excavation and the possible uses of the rooms once inhabited by the Anasazi.

Two outdoor archaeological exhibits also reconstructed by the CCC in 1935 remain on the museum grounds: the Basketmaker pit house and the seven-room pueblo containing living spaces and storage rooms.

The subterranean Basketmaker pit house stands in front of the museum to the west. The CCC constructed it as a replica of an Anasazi pit house of the Basketmaker Period (300 B.C.-600 A.D.). It measures approximately 20 feet across. A dome-shaped wood frame built outside and over the pit forms the roof. The frame is covered with hardpacked dirt and is not visible. From the outside the structure looks like a large round dirt mound. Sandstone slabs lead up to the rectangular opening in the center of the house. This entrance is framed by rough-hewn logs. A wood pole with notches in it serves as the ladder into the pit house. The interior is a large open room with a domed ceiling and stuccoed walls. Wood sticks (latillas) resting on the frame form the ceiling. Landscaping, designed in the 1980s, has added a surrounding sidewalk and low stone wall at the base of the pit house.

The pueblo structure, also reconstructed by the CCC, contains attached one-story living spaces and storage rooms of varying heights arranged in a sort of semicircle. The CCC constructed it on Anasazi foundations uncovered during excavations. The pueblo stands to the east of the museum building. Layers of adobe mud plaster over a wood and brush understructure, with irregularly shaped boulders inserted into the masses of adobe at random, make up the walls which are 12 inches to 24 inches thick. These walls run approximately two feet below ground level. Flat slabs of sandstone top the parapets. Wooden beams (vigas) project through the walls, revealing the roof structure of the building. Rough-hewn logs form the vertical supports and lintels of the openings. Steps lead down from the entrances into the rooms. The dirt floors of the rooms are sunk below the ground at depths of one

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 4

Boulder Dam Park Museum
name of property
Overton, NV
county and State

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Description (continued)

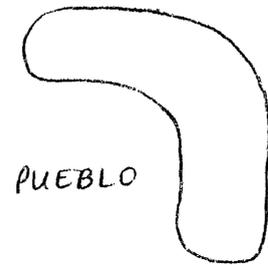
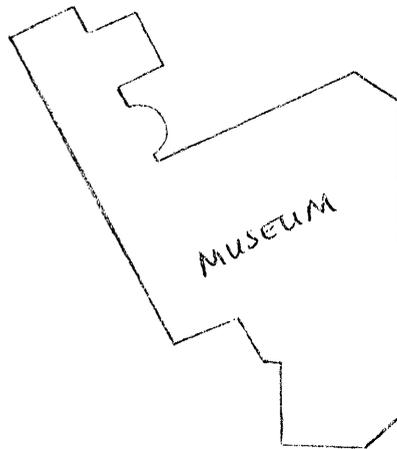
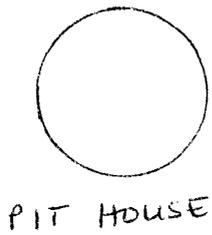
foot to two feet. The interior finish of the walls is rough stucco, like the exterior walls. Narrow wood sticks (latillas) laid close together on the vigas form the interior ceilings.

All the CCC reconstructions are in good condition and have hardly been altered since their construction.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5



SITE PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

United States Department of the Interior
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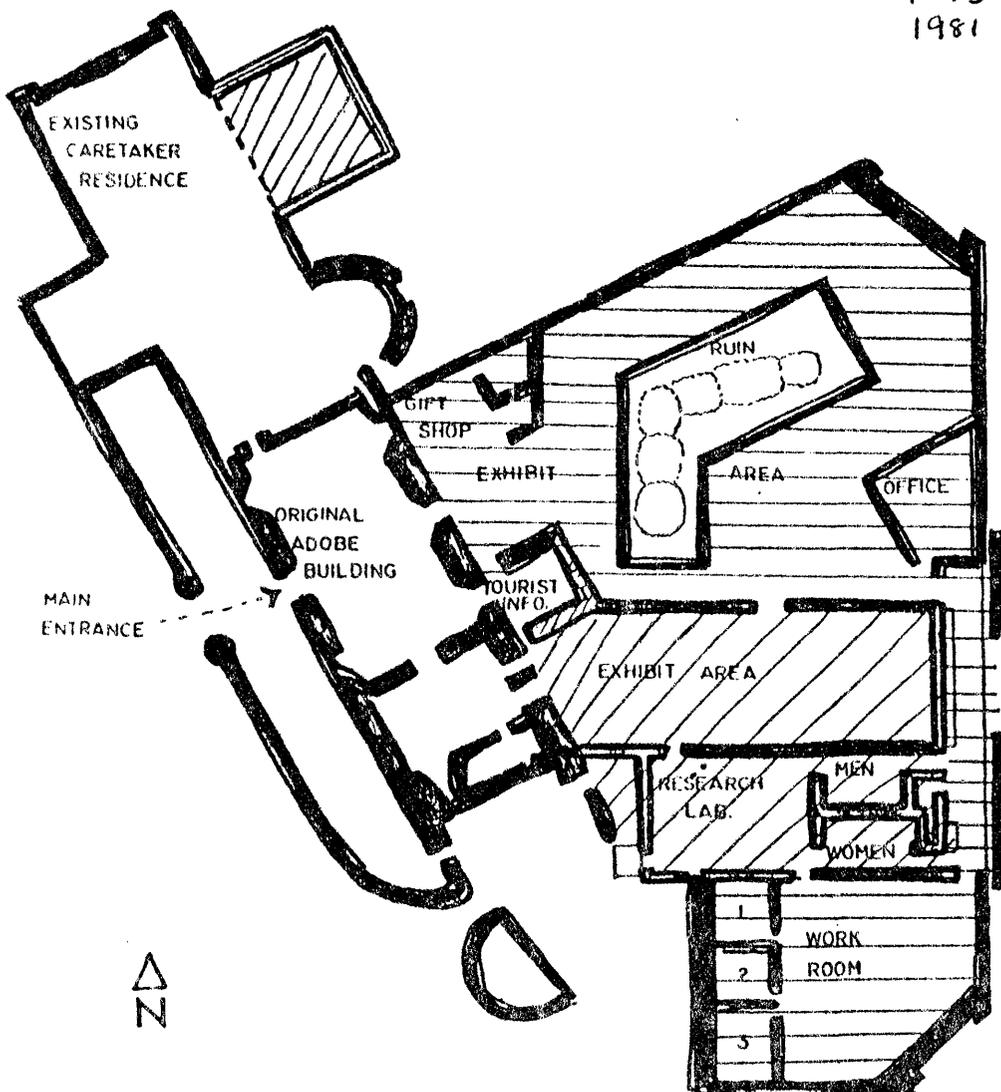
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Boulder Dam Park Museum
Clark County, NV

Description (continued)

1935	
1973	
1981	



1- STORE ROOM
2- PHOTO LAB.
3- OFFICE

FLOOR PLAN

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 7

Boulder Dam Park Museum
name of property
Overton, NV
county and State

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Statement of Significance

The Lost City Museum of Overton, Nevada, is significant under Criterion A for its association with the Lost City (Pueblo Grande de Nevada) archaeological excavations performed in the 1920s and 1930s. It is also significant under Criterion C as a vernacular adaptation of the Pueblo Revival style of architecture, constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and rarely seen in Nevada.

Historical Background and Significance (Criterion A)

The Lost City played an important role in the development of archaeological research in the state. The ancient city was an early center of population in what is now Nevada. Archaeologist M.R. Harrington began excavations there in 1925. These excavations continued sporadically into the 1930s. The site received national publicity when it became clear that Lake Mead, created by the construction of Boulder Dam, would flood most of the prehistoric city. The National Park Service, encouraged by the state of Nevada, began a salvage program to dig as many sites as possible. Intensive excavations continued until 1938, when the lake inundated much of the site. These excavations were among the earliest government-sponsored archaeology projects in Nevada and predated the Historic Sites Act of 1935, which provided for federal funding of archaeological and preservation work.

The CCC participated in both the excavations at the Lost City and the construction of the museum itself. The Franklin D. Roosevelt administration created the CCC as part of its New Deal to pull the United States out of the Great Depression in the 1930s. The Civilian Conservation Corps Reforestation Relief Act, which was enacted into law on March 31, 1933, established a program to provide conservation service jobs for unemployed single men during the depression. This act represented the federal government's effort to promote the welfare of American society. It authorized the CCC to offer work for 250,000 male citizens, aged 18 to 25, in reforestation, road construction, prevention of soil erosion, flood control projects, and national park and forest projects under the direction of army officers. The CCC established work camps; participating youths received \$30 per month, part of which went to dependents. Four government departments (War, Interior, Agriculture, and Labor) cooperated in administering and implementing the program. The CCC had as many as 500,000 men on its rolls at one time; by the end of 1941 it had employed over 2,000,000 young men.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 8

Boulder Dam Park Museum
name of property
Overton, NV
county and State

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Statement of Significance (continued)

The CCC worked on a number of public works projects in Nevada, most notably constructing ranger stations for the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service (NPS), and reconstructing Fort Churchill (built in 1860) in Lyon County. CCC workers became involved in the Lost City project as part of the NPS's development of Boulder Dam State Park. The museum served as the centerpiece of the park. During World War II, the NPS used the museum building as its Overton headquarters. The federal government ran the site until 1952, when the state of Nevada assumed control of the property. The museum became part of the Nevada Department of Museums and History in 1979. The Lost City Museum continues to play a significant role in southern Nevada by educating the public about the Anasazi culture, the early twentieth-century excavations of Pueblo Grande de Nevada, and the CCC project to construct the museum itself.

The Lost City Museum is also significant for representing the early twentieth-century interest in Native American cultures and artifacts. In the late nineteenth century, with the loss of a significant number of North American Indian tribes, many Americans, particularly collectors and artists, began acquiring Native American artifacts as a means to preserve these disappearing cultures. By the 1920s and 1930s, numerous artists including the painter Georgia O'Keeffe and the photographer Paul Strand, had traveled extensively through the Southwest, seeking what they considered to be pure American objects and forms to inspire their art. Although the Lost City Museum was founded as an archaeological and anthropological institution, it reflected a broader enthusiasm for Native American arts and culture. The exhibits of baskets, pots, and tools present the artifacts in an artistic as well as an anthropological context.

Architectural Significance (Criterion C)

The museum reflects the early twentieth-century popularity of Native American art and culture. The decision to construct the museum building in the Pueblo Revival style, is significant, not only as an attempt to reconstruct pueblos at the Lost City, but also as an excellent example of an architectural style popular at the time. With the interest in Southwestern Indian cultures and crafts, the architecture of pueblos also became popular as a building form for the early twentieth century. Like Native American baskets, pots, and tools, pueblos represented a pre-contact American culture that had excelled in creating handmade objects and structures. By creating a Pueblo Revival style, architects and builders could construct buildings which demanded rounded edges and rough surfaces, emphasizing the architectural craftsmanship favored in earlier movements such as the Arts and

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 9

Boulder Dam Park Museum
name of property
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Statement of Significance (continued)

Crafts and the Craftsman buildings of Gustav Stickley and Charles and Henry Greene. According to Pat Olson, Assistant Curator at the Lost City Museum, M.R. Harrington, the chief archaeologist working on the Lost City excavations, conceived the idea of using the Pueblo Revival style for the museum, and Dan Hall, an architect in San Francisco, drew up sketches. However, the final blueprints for the museum and reconstructions of the pueblos and pit house were drawn by Ed Sweeting, an engineer with the National Park Service. The Civilian Conservation Corps erected the structures.

The CCC's construction of the Lost City Museum from scratch attests to the importance placed on using the materials at hand as the Anasazi had done hundreds of years earlier. CCC workers made the adobe brick from local sand, silt, and clay dried in wooden forms. They also used local wood, such as the osage-orange tree (a transplant from the southern United States and known locally as "beau d'arc"), to create the vigas for the buildings. The Pueblo Revival was considered an appropriate style to use for the museum, since the structure was designed to house the artifacts of pueblo dwellers.

The two other CCC reconstructions on the site--the Basketmaker pit house and the seven-room Puebloan structure--are also significant as representations of prehistoric building forms. These reconstructions demonstrate the two building types from the two major Anasazi periods: the Basketmakers (300 B.C.-600 A.D.) and the Puebloans (600-1150). In addition, they provide examples of 1930s interpretations of Anasazi sites and culture. At this time, reconstructing prehistoric and historic sites was a common and accepted means of interpreting the past. The CCC attempted to construct a faithful recreation of prehistoric structures rather than leave the ruins as they were found. The CCC reconstructed another set of ruins, that of a six-room pueblo foundation, now enclosed by the 1981 wing of the museum.

The Lost City Museum is one of only two known examples of the Pueblo Revival style in the state of Nevada. The only other example is the Mesquite Museum and Library (originally called the Desert Valley Museum) constructed by the National Youth Administration in 1941 in Mesquite, Nevada. The architecture of this structure appears to be derived from the nearby Lost City Museum. The Mesquite Museum and Library building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. As a rare example of this type of architecture in the state, the Lost City Museum possesses considerable architectural significance. That it continues to function in its original capacity as a museum, attests to its cultural significance as well.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

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				name of property
				<u>Overton, NV</u>
				county and State

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 11

Boulder Dam Park Museum
name of property
Overton, NV
county and State

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Verbal boundary description

That portion of the SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 24, Township 16 South, Range 67 East, M.D.B. & M. more particularly described as follows: Beginning at a point, the intersection of the north line of said SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 24 and the southwesterly right of way line of the St. Thomas branch of the Union Pacific Railroad, from whence the northeast corner of said SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 24 bears N 89-69' E, 847 feet; thence S 89-59' W, 489 feet along the north line of said SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 24 to the northwest corner of said SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 24; thence S 00-43' E, 240 feet along the west line of said SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 24 to a point; thence S 87-05' E, 391.2 feet to a point; thence S 74-35'E, 143.5 feet to a point; thence N 68-00' W, 308.7 feet along said right of way line to the place of beginning and containing approximately 3.5 acres.

Verbal boundary justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the museum.