

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH 0693529

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED DEC 10 1979
DATE ENTERED 11 9 1979

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC G. W. G. FERRIS HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON
SAME

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
311 West 3rd Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Carson City

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Nevada-at-Large

VICINITY OF

STATE
Nevada

CODE
32

COUNTY CODE
Carson City 025

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Residence-Office

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Barbara K. Levy

STREET & NUMBER
73 San Carlos Avenue

CITY, TOWN
Sausalito

VICINITY OF San Francisco

STATE
California

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Carson City Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER
101 North Carson Street

CITY, TOWN
Carson City

STATE
Nevada

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE
1972 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN
Washington, D. C.

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Presently (1978) this one-and-a-half story, late nineteenth century house is undergoing a complete inside and outside restoration to bring the structure in line with the original plans.

Alterations, over the years, changed the outward appearance somewhat. A side porch had been hidden (enclosed); a garage added, windows enclosed. New owners are restoring original verandas and sleeping porches and opening boarded over window areas. Interior details are being restored; the upstairs modified for office purposes. Otherwise, a recent description is best presented by Harley J. McKee, Supervisory Architect, National Park Service in his 1972 report prepared for the Historic American Buildings Survey and included in "The Architecture of Carson City, Nevada". Quoted from his report:

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: This one-and-a-half story, late nineteenth century house has attractive interior features and significant historical associations.
2. Condition of fabric: Fairly good. Recently some rooms have been refurbished.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: Approximately 60' x 60'. The plan is complex being roughly a T with various offsets and projections.
2. Foundations: Large squared sandstone blocks form a low foundation below a wooden water table.
3. Walls: The walls are covered with beveled siding between corner boards.
4. Structural System: The frame is of rough sawn, dimension timber.
5. Porches: At the north front a square distyle entrance porch occupies in part the angle between the front wall and a large bay window, beyond which it projects. Two unfluted columns with angular Ionic capitals having large volutes similar to those of the Temple of Appollo at Bassae. Two pilasters serve as responds. The Greek Ionic-type entablature contains a dentilled cornice. The porch has balustraded railings, narrow pine floor boards and a half hipped roof. Secondary porches are located on the west elevation toward the rear, and on the east elevation in a re-entrant angle.
6. Chimneys: Three brick chimneys are located at or near the roof ridge.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and Doors: The main (north) entrance is set within a paneled reveal trimmed with an architrave. The door, which appears to date from the 1890's, is glazed with single pane of diamond pattern pressed glass. Below is a small horizontal moulded panel and a nearly square panel ornamented with a wreath of applied composition.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1869 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Not known/Not known

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance is well described by S. Allen Chambers, Jr., Architectural Historian, in his report to the Historic American Buildings Survey published in "The Architecture of Carson City, Nevada". We quote directly from his report:

"George Washington Gale Ferris, Sr. came to Nevada with his family from Galesburg, Illinois in 1864. According to tradition he, Mrs. Gale and their children crossed the plains in a carriage, not in a covered wagon. The family settled first at a farm in Carson Valley. In addition to the usual farm products, Ferris planted trees of many varieties, to the extent that he was singled out for particular mention in the following passages from Thompson and West's History of Nevada:

"A prominent feature of the agriculture of 1871-72 was the attempt, or the beginning of planting and raising shade, ornamental and forest trees. The most prominent man in connection with this was G.W.G. Ferris, who imported a great number of eastern forest trees, such as hickory, black walnut, chestnut, etc."

"What is home without fruit trees - apple, pear or orange, or grapevines, as the case may be? He who plants fruit trees is intending to stay. In Ormsby County were 125 walnut trees, 125 elms, 300 box-elder, 1,000 white maples, presumably the property of G.W.G. Ferris, who had manifested a commendable enterprise in the planting."

The Ferris family remained in Carson Valley for several years but by 1869 had moved to Carson City. The 1868-69 Nevada Directory shows that Mr. Ferris was still primarily interested in agriculture in listing the occupant of the house at 3rd and Division Streets as "Ferris, George W., farmer".

George Washington Gale Ferris, Jr., who was to become the most prominent figure associated with the house, was a young boy when the family moved to town. He was born in Galesburg on February 14, 1859, came with the family to Nevada in 1864 and after 1869, spent his youthful years in the house herein discussed. He later graduated from a military academy in Oakland, California, and 1881 graduated in engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

After a short period in which he was associated with railroad and coal interests in West Virginia, he began to become primarily involved in bridge building. He also became expert in testing and inspecting structural steel and organized the firm of G.W.G. Ferris and Co. of Pittsburgh, to conduct such work in shops

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Davis, Sam. P., ed. The History of Nevada, Reno: The Elms Publishing Co., 1913
- Johnson, Allen, & Malone, Dumas, eds. Dictionary of American Biography, New York: Chas. Scribners' Sons, 1931. Vol. VI
- McKee, Prof. Harley & Chambers, S. Allen Jr., "The Architecture of Carson City, Nevada", 1973
- Thompson, Thomas H., & West, Albert A., History of Nevada, Berkeley: Howell-North, 1958

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY - 1.0 Ac.

QUADRANGLE NAME Carson City QUADRANGLE SCALE 7.5

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 1	2 6,0 8,0,0	4,3 3,8 2,4,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION *Lot 2, 3 & 4 of Block # 6, Carson City, Nevada, bounded by the city of Carson City, Ormsby Co. to the South, the Carson City Public School District to the South, and the Carson City Public School District to the South.*

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Barbara Levy, Owner and Wilbur Wieprecht, Historian

ORGANIZATION Division of Historic Preservation & Archeology DATE November 27, 1978

STREET & NUMBER 201 So. Fall Street TELEPHONE 702/885-5138

CITY OR TOWN Carson City STATE Nevada

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL XX STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE *Janet Crowell*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer DATE November 27, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *Charles A. Johnson* DATE 2-9-79
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

W. Ray Vree DATE 12/20/78
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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- b. Windows: A number of windows appear to be original and have plain trim with moulded caps. The double-hung, one over one light sash may be replacements.

In each gable a small "pointed" window, a two-centered pointed arch, with plain trim has one over one light sash.

Three first floor windows, one on the east elevation and two on the west, appear to have been installed in the 1890's. The horizontally rectangular openings have high sills, plain trim and moulded caps. Each contains beveled plate glass in a geometrical pattern, consisting of elongated vertical hexagons between diamond-shaped pieces.

The bay window which appears to be of original construction, on the north front is rectangular in plan, with a double front window a single side window. The openings have semicircular heads and double-hung, two over two light sash. Between the openings and at their sides, are round-headed panels. Below the moulded string course of the sill are moulded panels. The roof of the bay window is continuous with the north porch roof and has a matching cornice.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape and Covering: The main roof is gabled and is covered with wood shingles. However, the porches have half hipped roofs.
- b. Cornice: A boxed cornice having a small covetto bed moulding is completed with a cyma recta crown moulding. The cornice has returns at the gable ends, and extends up the rakes. A wide frieze board is below the bed moulding. There are no gutters.
- c. Dormers: One shed dormer on the west elevation breaks the eaves.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans

- a. General: A number of original features remain in the north bay window, the large room containing the principal stair, and at the second story. The first-story rooms of the north front, and the principal stair, appear to have been almost entirely remodeled with the use of Georgian Revival details popular in the 1890's. Some rooms at the south end of the first story have had still later alterations, but some, such as the kitchen, still contain early

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trim. The flooring is of five-inch pine boards, under modern carpeting.

- b. Entrance Hall: The entrance door is at the north end, and a high horizontal window of leaded beveled plate glass is on the east wall. A door is at the south end and a flat arched opening is on the west side connecting the front living room. Door and window openings have architrave trim, the mouldings are very delicate in scale and some are enriched with egg and dart and bead and reel. Each opening has a cap with a dentil course and small mouldings. Some architraves have two fascias, others have three. Picture moulding extends around the dentil course.

In the flat arched opening, are two unfluted columns on paneled pedestals. The column capitals are angular Ionic with an enriched low relief anthemion band as necking. Above the pedestals, is a narrow opening between each jamb and the adjacent column. This woodwork is now painted white. Originally, it may have been varnished as is the outside face of the front door.

- c. Front living room: On the east wall is the columned opening. A fireplace is centered on the south wall and a doorway adjoins it to the east. On the west wall a high horizontal window is similar to the entrance hall window. On the north side the central portion opens to a rectangular bay window. The head of this opening is a semi-elliptical arch with a keystone supported on consoles above paneled pilasters. Extending around the three sides of the bay is a window seat above paneling. The fireplace is located on a projecting chimney breast. Around the firebox is a fascia of brick and a wooden architrave, Doric colonettes support a mantel shelf. The brick hearth may be a replacement. The remaining trim in this room is similar to that of the entrance hall.
- d. Room containing the principal stair: This room is divided into two unequal areas by a wide, moulded ceiling beam. The eastern area, which is the larger, has two windows on the east wall and a doorway on the south wall near the east corner, all with older type architrave trim. The door has four moulded panels.

The western end contains a stairway whose lower flight and landing are centered on the west wall. Above the landing is a horizontal window like the entrance hall window. Several steps lead to the landing, above which the stair ascends along the west wall and turns, with winders, to land near the middle of the north wing at

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the second floor. The soffit and the low wall under the stair are wood, treated with very small moulded panels. The open string has turned balusters, and ornamental step ends. Newels at each angle are square in plan in the lower paneled portion, round and moulded in the central portion, square and paneled above, and completed with finials above the railing.

e. Southern Rooms: There have been alterations in plan in this part of the house. Wainscoting with vertical matched and beaded boards remains. The kitchen retains four-panel doors and architrave trim, as well as wooden wainscoting.

f. Second-story rooms: Some openings have plain trim, and four-paneled doors, unmoulded but with raised fields in the panels. Other openings have architrave trim and four panel doors.

3. Wall and Ceiling Finish: The plaster on lath is painted.

4. Notable equipment: A number of old brass electric wall sconces remain which originally may have been gas fixtures. Between kitchen and breakfast room large hinges provide for a double swinging door.

D. Site and Surroundings:

The house on level terrain faces north onto Third Street with Division Street at the west side. A wooden picket fence is similar to the one shown in the 1916 photograph. At the south there was an artesian well, of which no trace remains."

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and foundries throughout the country.

While the value of Ferris' contributions in these fields is undisputed, it was a more dramatic work that made his name become a household word.

In 1892, Daniel M. Burnham gave a challenge to American engineers. He asked that they produce something for the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 which would rival the Eiffel Tower, erected for the Paris Exposition. Ferris rose to the occasion with his gigantic wheel. The wheel cost \$390,000 and took some six months to fabricate. It was built in Pittsburgh, taken down, and reassembled in Chicago. Although Ferris had received little encouragement on his invention, it soon became one of the major attractions at the fair.

Literally and figuratively, Ferris' wheel lived on after him. The original wheel was taken down after the Chicago fair, and was erected again nine years later for the St. Louis World's Fair of 1904. It was then dismantled, and the parts sold for scrap. Its progeny, though usually much smaller than the parent, are found in countless fairs, carnivals, and circuses throughout this country and abroad.

Family tradition has it that Ferris conceived the idea of his wheel from his early days in Nevada, where he would watch the waterwheels on the Carson River which were used to crush the ore from Virginia City.

In 1890, the elder Ferris, who had moved to California, sold the house, (and all of Block 28) to his daughter, Mary Ferris Ardery. Mrs. Ardery, who lived in the house until the early 1920's, was married to Alexander M. Ardery on September 29, 1880. Ardery, born in New York State in 1850, had come west in 1861 with his parents. In 1870, he was employed by the Virginia and Truckee Railroad as a telegraph operator and assistant dispatcher. In 1881, he became chief dispatcher, and in August 1883, Master of Transportation. In 1909, he became Vice-President and General Manager, replacing Henry M. Yerington, who had died the previous month (see HABS No. NEV-13-18, H.M. Yerington House). After his death, his widow continued to live in the house until 1922, when it passed out of the hands of the Ferris family.

The original "Ferris Wheel" was 250 feet tall, had thirty-six cars, each holding some forty passengers, and took twenty minutes to make a full revolution. The daring of its design, the precision of the machine work involved in its construction, and the accuracy of its movements, as well as its huge size, won for the wheel the admiration of engineers and the hearty approval of fairgoers.

Ferris returned to Pittsburgh from the Fair, and died there in 1896 at the age of thirty-seven. He was survived by his wife, Margaret Beatty."

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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

historic name: Sears-Ferris House
other names/site number: Formerly listed as the G.W.G. Ferris House

2. Location

street & number 311 W. Third Street not for publication N/A
city or town Carson City vicinity N/A
state Nevada code NV county Carson City code 510 zip code 89703

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Ronald M. Jones, SHPO Date 29 June 2000
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 _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register February 9, 1979
- See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
- See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register

other (explain): additional documentation approved

for Arnold D. Pope Signature of Keeper Date of Action 7/27/00

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: Single Dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Mixed (Greek, Gothic, and Classical Revival)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Sandstone blocks

roof Wood shingles

walls Beveled wood siding

other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See 1979 nomination.

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)

- 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.
- 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.)

Property is:

- 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)

Community planning and development
Agriculture, conservation, invention

Period of Significance 1863-1890

Significant Dates 1863, 1868

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) Gregory Alvin Sears, G.W.G. Ferris, Sr., G.W.G. Ferris, Jr.

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown / Gregory Alvin Sears

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1.0 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>11</u>	<u>260800</u>	<u>4338240</u>	3	___	___
2	___	___	___	4	___	___
	___	See continuation sheet.				

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)
See 1979 nomination.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)
See 1979 nomination.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Amendment by Mella Rothwell Harmon / Guy L. Rocha
organization State Historic Preservation Office / Nevada State Archives date 7-15-00
street & number 701 N. Stewart Street telephone 775-684-3447 / 775-684-3317
city or town Carson City state NV zip code 89701

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 Augi Moran
street & number 1523 Evergreen telephone Unknown
city or town Carson City state NV zip code 89703

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 8 Page 1

Sears-Ferris House, Carson City, NV

Amendment

8. Statement of Significance

The subject property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the G.W.G. Ferris House on February 9, 1979. The registration forms in use at the time did not allow for clear identification of the criteria under which a property was being listed, but it seems to have been intended to include Criterion A for its association with agriculture, conservation, and invention, and Criterion B for its association with G.W.G. Ferris, Sr., and G.W.G. Ferris, Jr., the inventor of the Ferris Wheel. Also, it was originally nominated at the state level of significance.

In 1972, the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) studied several buildings in Carson City, Nevada, including the G.W.G. Ferris House. The survey attributed the construction of the house to G.W.G. Ferris, Sr., in 1869. This information was the basis for the original nomination. Nevada state archivist, Guy Rocha, recently uncovered material that identifies the original owner/builder as Gregory Alvin Sears, who constructed the house for his family in 1863. Mr. Sears was a prominent Carson City citizen in his own right, contributing to the development of Carson City. This nomination seeks to amend the listing to change the historic name of the property to the Sears-Ferris House, the period of significance to 1863 to 1890, significant dates to 1863 and 1868, and the significance statement to include the association with Gregory Sears. Additionally, the amendment is being submitted at the local level of significance.

The House at 311 West Third Street

When HABS conducted its survey of Carson City in 1972, it failed to trace the ownership of this building to its origin. Carson City was founded and surveyed during the latter part of 1858, by Abe Curry, Frank Proctor, John J. Musser, and William M. Ormsby, although no plat has ever been found. Gregory Sears, and his two brothers James and William, and a partner James Thompson, purchased much of southern Carson City in August 1859 from William Ormsby. The first known plat of Carson City was recorded in February 1860 as the Sears, Thompson, and Sears Addition. Once the subdivision was accomplished, the Sears brothers and Thompson began selling their real estate.

Gregory Alvin Sears retained several lots in the addition including the two lots in Block 28 on which he built his home. The first territorial assessment rolls for Ormsby County¹ in 1862-1863 show that Gregory Sears paid taxes on the bare land. The next assessment year shows that Sears' tax bill for his property in Block 28 included an improvement with an assessed value of \$2,000. This valuation represented a fairly substantial

¹ Historically, Carson City was located in Ormsby County, but in 1969 city and county governments consolidated as Carson City.

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Sears-Ferris House, Carson City, NV

Amendment

8. Statement of Significance, continued

improvement. The 1866 tax rolls identify the improvement on lots 2 and 3 of Block 28 as a dwelling house, and in 1867 it was recorded as a residence. That this was the house later known as the Ferris House is confirmed by the 1862 city directory, which lists Gregory Sears residing on the southeast corner of Ormsby (now Curry Street) and King streets, where he owned a brick store. In 1863, the city directory lists him and his family on "Third near Nevada." The final proof that Sears was responsible for the Ferris House comes from a quote in the April 29, 1870 edition of *The Daily Appeal*. The story was about G.W.G. Ferris' "splendid lot of fruit trees," which "may be seen on the premises of Mr. G.W.G. Ferris, Third Street—the old Sears place."

Based on this variety of documentary evidence, it becomes clear that the house now standing at 311 W. Third Street (lots 2 and 3 of Block 28 of the Sears, Thompson, and Sears Addition) was built by Gregory Alvin Sears between the 1863 and 1864 assessment years, or between March 1863 and January 1864. Ormsby County Deed Books indicate that G.W.G. Ferris, Sr. purchased the property on Block 28 on March 10, 1868. Ferris first appears on the assessment rolls for this property in December 31, 1868. He is assessed for his land "with dwelling house." The story of G.W.G. Ferris and his famous son is presented in the original National Register nomination for the house at 311 West Third Street, but Gregory Alvin Sears was a prominent person in his own right and his association with this historic house is notable.

Gregory Alvin Sears

Even before Gregory Sears built his home on Third Street he was a major participant in the development of Carson City, the Nevada territorial capital.² Sears was born February 17, 1827 in Ithaca, New York, although nothing is known about his childhood or early adulthood. By 1853, Sears was living in Michigan, where he married Mary A. Wheaterall on June 9th of that year. A daughter, Lillie, was born the following year, and at some time between 1854 and 1859, Gregory Sears and his family came west, settling as early pioneers in Carson City. It is also not known how his two younger brothers, James and William, came to Carson City, but by August 1859, the three brothers were collaborating in real estate investments.

Establishing the first addition to the brand new town of Carson City was not the only contribution Gregory Sears made to the community. Sears built an office building in 1861, out of which he operated his real estate business and served as "an entrepreneur capitalizing on the needs of the local and federal governments for housing" (Humphreys 1991). On November 6, 1866, Gregory Sears was elected Ormsby County Public

² Carson City remained Nevada's capital when it gained statehood on October 31, 1864.

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Sears-Ferris House, Carson City, NV

Amendment

8. Statement of Significance, continued

Administrator, a position he resigned the following year (Angel 1881:530). Sears and his wife were both actively involved in the Presbyterian Church. On May 19, 1861, a number of Presbyterians met in the stone school house in Carson City, where Reverend W. Brier encouraged the group to establish itself in connection with the Constitutional General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States. Gregory Sears was elected the first chairman of the Board of Trustees for the incipient congregation (the first Presbyterian congregation in Carson City), and he initiated the plan and specifications for a church building, which was completed in the spring of 1864 (Angel 1881:214). Gregory Sears remained on the Board of Trustees at that time, along with Orion Clemens, Secretary of Nevada Territory, and older brother of Samuel Clemens, who claimed the pen name Mark Twain while serving as a reporter for *The Territorial Enterprise* in Virginia City. Two humorous letters between Mark Twain and Gregory Sears, dated January 23, 1864, regarding a church fund-raiser are published in Volume I of *Mark Twain's Letters* (1988).

When Sears sold the house on Third Street to the Ferris family in 1868, he and his family, which now included three daughters, moved to a new house across the street on the northwest corner of Fourth and Division streets. Gregory Sears and his family left Carson City in late 1870 for Butler County, Kansas. By 1871, Sears was named Justice of the Peace, and he represented the 90th district in the 1881 session of the Kansas Legislature. Sears died at the age of 78 on October 16, 1905, at the El Dorado, Kansas home of his daughter Helen Gardner.

Summary

The earlier nomination of the G.W.G. Ferris House to the National Register of Historic Places failed to identify the original owner of the property, and builder of the dwelling, Gregory Alvin Sears. The correct construction date for the house is 1863, not 1869, as originally reported. Not only does this amendment serve to correct the construction date, but the property's significance is expanded to include the contributions Gregory Sears made to the development of Carson City. Sears' legacy is the Sears, Thompson, and Sears Addition, now the core of Carson City's historic district. Hence, the property at 311 West Third Street is as significant for its association with Sears, a Carson City pioneer, as for its association with Ferris.

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