

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 an 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 The Green Shack

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 2504 East Fremont  not for publication

city or town Las Vegas  vicinity

state Nevada code NV county Clark code 003 zip code 89104

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 4/29/94  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State of 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 certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  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:) \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H Beall Signature of the Keeper Entered in the Date of Action  
National Register 6/3/94

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Green Shack

Name of Property

Clark County, Nevada

County and State

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.)

Table with columns for Contributing and Noncontributing resources, listing counts for buildings, sites, structures, objects, and a Total row.

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: restaurant, bar, casino

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: restaurant, bar

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and early 20th century American Movements

Other: barracks construction

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete, walls stucco/clapboard

roof asphalt shingle

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.)

- 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 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)

Commerce

**Period of Significance**

1932-1943

**Significant Dates**

1932

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the 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:  
Nevada State Museum & Historical Society  
700 Twin Lakes, Las Vegas, Nevada 89107

The Green Shack  
Name of Property

Clark County, Nevada  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	1	1
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6	6	9	6	0	0
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4	0	0	2	9	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3 

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Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Frank Wright, Curator of History

organization Nevada State Museum and Historical Society date May 20, 1993

street & number 700 Twin Lakes Drive telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Las Vegas state Nevada zip code 89107

#### 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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Jim McCormick

street & number 2504 East Fremont Avenue telephone \_\_\_\_\_

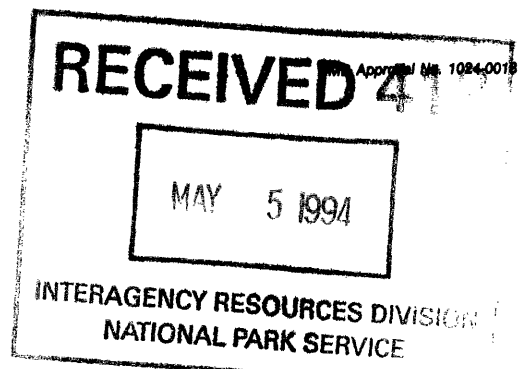
city or town Las Vegas state Nevada zip code 89104

**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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet



Section number 7 Page 1

The Green Shack, Clark County, Nevada

### Narrative Description

The Green Shack, consisting of two parts, is of very simple construction. The front section, which was the original building moved to the site about 1932, is of simple, rectangular barracks construction with a gable roof. It is of stuccoed wood frame construction. The original dimensions of this building were about 32' by 22'. During remodelling, probably in 1939, eight-foot extensions with shed roofs were added to the northeast (front) side and to the northwest. The extensions feature large single-pane windows. The original entrance, which was on the northeast side facing the highway, was removed during the remodelling and the entrance moved to the northwest. Other significant alterations to this portion of the building are the covering of the original open-truss construction with a lowered ceiling, the carpeting of the original hardwood floor, and the addition of a large stone fireplace and brick exterior chimney on the southeast side. About 1960, a wood frame storeroom was added to that side. A semi-circular neon-lighted sign attached to the front gable dates from the early 1940s.

A rectangular wood frame building of similar dimensions (25' by 40') was added circa 1935, but possibly as late as 1939. The gable roof line continues that of the original structure. The exterior siding of this part of the building is clapboard. As befits the name, both parts of the building are painted a bright green. This section, which has served as bar, gambling area and lounge since the 1930s, features a stone fireplace and brick exterior chimney virtually identical to that in the front portion. Interior walls in both parts are wood panelling. Except for carpeting, a lowered ceiling and decorations, the interiors of both portions of the building appear as they did in the 1930s. A canopy which extends over the entrance along the northwest side dates from 1960.

The building, maintained as it has been since its opening by members of one family, has been kept in excellent repair and appealing appearance. The restaurant is separated from part of its parking lot on the northwest side by a very short and little-used street. Applications to have the street vacated are underway. The property is also occupied by two disconnected sheds and a small brick building which serves as the owners' home and office.

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Statement of Significance

The Green Shack Restaurant is historically significant under Criterion A because of its association with the rapid growth era of Boulder Dam construction in southern Nevada. It is significant also because, unlike the few other establishments of the time, it provided a comfortable, rural, and egalitarian environment which ideally suited it to serve as a social center for dam workers, the city's political and legal elite, young people, various civic and fraternal groups, and the populace at large. It serves as a reminder of the years of the Great Depression when, paradoxically, Las Vegas was growing and optimistic and was yet to experience the great transformation of the tourism and gaming boom which followed World War II. Still operated by members of the family which opened it, it retains the ambience, perhaps better than any other single Las Vegas building of its kind, of immediate pre-war Las Vegas

From its founding in 1905 until about the time that Mrs. Mettie Jones started her restaurant activities in Las Vegas, the city was a very small town centered almost wholly on the railroad which was the cause for its existence. In 1928, Congress passed the Boulder Canyon Project Act which assured the construction of Boulder (Hoover) Dam. While actual construction did not begin until 1931, the area experienced considerable growth in the early years of the Great Depression in anticipation of the opening of construction jobs. The official census for 1930 shows Las Vegas as having a population of just over 5,000.

Mrs. Jones and her husband had been involved in real estate in Taft, California. She came to Las Vegas following the death of her husband in 1928 and purchased a considerable amount of desert property in the Las Vegas area. Probably in 1929 (the exact date is uncertain) she opened the Colorado Restaurant at a location then considered far out of town on what amounted to a dirt trail leading to the Colorado River. From a window in her residence she sold orders of fried chicken and bootleg whiskey. During the years of prohibition, there were many establishments ringing the city which sold illegal whiskey.

Construction on a new highway to the dam site began early in 1931 and the road was opened for traffic by that August. During that period, scores of new establishments along the highway, many of them selling liquor, had stirred controversy in Las Vegas. By late that year or in 1932, Mrs. Jones had relocated her operation a short distance to the west side of the new highway just inside the city limits. For her new restaurant she purchased (from the Union Pacific Railroad, according to family information) a green barracks-style building, and had it hauled to the new site. The building suggested the name, and the Green Shack Restaurant has operated at the same site by members of the same family ever since.

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The original barracks constitute the main part of the present dining room. The northeast and northwest walls were removed and an additional eight feet of space was added to those two sides of that section in 1939. Large single-pane windows replaced the small barracks windows. Following the repeal of prohibition, the portion of the building which houses the present bar and lounge was built onto the rear of the original building, probably in 1934 when the sale of beer was permitted. The present owner's father, Frank McCormick, who was a nephew of Mrs. Jones, was asked to operate the bar. According to family lore, Mrs. Jones received Clark County liquor license number 1 after the repeal of prohibition.

Few other alterations have been made except for the addition of a storeroom to the southeast side in 1960 and small, disconnected outbuildings. The original hardwood floor is still in place, though carpeted, in the main dining room, and wall paneling was added about thirty years ago. Stone fireplaces, one in each of the building's main sections, are not original, but a newspaper reports that at least one of them was added during remodeling in 1939. Since the interior stonework and the exterior brickwork of the chimneys on the barracks and bar addition are similar, these almost certainly date from the same year.

Mrs. Jones, who had done most of the cooking with a long-time friend, died in 1967. Frank McCormick died three months later. Frank's wife Elaine managed business thereafter. Between 1980 and 1985, the Green Shack was sold, reclaimed, leased for a brief period and then closed. Since 1985, James McCormick, son of Frank and Elaine, has operated the establishment with his wife Barbara.

The Green Shack is additionally significant because of its location beside the highway which carried many dam workers to and from their jobs. Indeed, the establishment was a particular favorite of dam workers of the era. While there were a few other restaurants during the 1930s, the comfortable rural atmosphere of the Green Shack, featuring large fireplaces and easy chairs, made it unique. There was a hitching post where nearby residents could tie their horses. (The present hitching post is not original.) During the years when the population shrank in the late 1930s, the establishment added regular entertainment, dancing and gambling tables in the cocktail lounge section. In a city where easy marriage was a trademark, weddings were a common occurrence at the Green Shack. Western movie star Hoot Gibson, who owned a divorce-oriented dude ranch in Las Vegas, was a frequent visitor.

The Green Shack was also a favorite "hangout" for the local political and legal fraternity. Its regular patrons included one local lawyer who became a Nevada Supreme Court justice and another who became Lieutenant Governor. The present owner, who has lived on the property since 1939, recalls that many legal disputes were resolved at the Green Shack before going to court. Other informants recall that it was a favorite place for young

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National Park Service**

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people to go after school dances, graduation ceremonies, etc. Through the years, the restaurant has also hosted meetings of numerous civic and social clubs.

Though quite a few Las Vegas residences and public buildings remain which date from the period of rapid growth associated with Boulder Dam construction, the special significance of the Green Shack derives from its location beside the highway which carried dam construction workers to and from their jobs. It is the only remaining such roadside establishment to retain its structural integrity along the 25-mile highway associated with that event of momentous significance to the entire region.

Major Bibliographical References

Las Vegas Review-Journal, various articles, 1934-51.

Peterson, Brad. "'Chicken' Shack was Place to Be in '30s." Nevadan (Review-Journal), December 11, 1988.

Mrs. Al Bruns, personal interview, May 1993.

Mrs. Jack Hanson, personal interview, May 1993.

James McCormick, personal interview, May 1993.

Verbal Boundary Description

Legal parcel numbers 020-814-004-90 and 020-813-002-90

Verbal Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcels historically associated with the restaurant.