

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAY 27 1975
DATE ENTERED JUN 10 1975

**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 Nevada State Capitol

AND/OR COMMON
Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 101 North Carson Street

CITY, TOWN Carson City *vicinity of* VICINITY OF Nevada

STATE Nevada CODE 32 COUNTY Carson City CODE 025

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME State of Nevada

STREET & NUMBER 101 North Carson Street

CITY, TOWN Carson City VICINITY OF Nevada

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, Nevada Secretary of State
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

STREET & NUMBER 101 North Carson Street, Capitol Building

CITY, TOWN Carson City STATE Nevada

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey (NEV-13-5)

DATE August, 1972 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS National Park Service

CITY, TOWN Washington, D.C. STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The "Act to provide for the erection of a State Capitol" was signed into law on February 23, 1869. The capitol building plans, by Joseph Gosling, called for a two-story building in the form of a Grecian Cross, compounded of the Corinthian, Ionic and Doric. The building measured 148 feet in length and 98 feet in width, the footwall is 8 feet thick at a depth of 5 feet below surface, the first story walls are 3 feet thick, and the second story walls are 2 feet 6 inches in thickness. The building is surmounted with a cupola 30 feet in diameter and 120 feet above ground level. The building is constructed of native building stone, quarried from the State Prison quarry. The first floor contains 14 rooms, including the Governor, Attorney General, Controller, and Treasurer. The second floor contains 12 rooms, including Assembly and Senate Chambers, plus the Supreme Court and State Library. The interior finish includes windowpanes of 26-ounce French crystal, double arched sashes, vaulted columns, and chandeliers hanging from ornate scrolled centerpieces. Alaskan marble was used for wainscoting, arches, and the floors of the capitol building, and remains to this day. The original decorative frieze remains in an excellent state of preservation. It depicts the many industries and resources to be found in the state of Nevada. Measuring 3 feet wide and more than 400 feet in length, the upper border is designed with pine cones, representing the northern part of the state, and the lower border is designed with grapes, representing the southern part of the state - from "Pines to Vines."

The center frieze aspect shows festoons, emblematical of the fruits of the earth, suspended from mine picks. Between each miner's pick is a sheaf of wheat, representing the agricultural industries of Nevada, and running in a continuous scroll is listed 21 of the leading minerals produced in Nevada. Intermittently dispersed along the length of the frieze are six different emblems, five of them typifying the principal industries within the state. Cattle raising is represented by a bull's head, the sheep industry by a ram's head, agriculture by a sheaf of wheat, and mining by miner's boots and a jackass. The sixth emblem is the Great Seal of Nevada and is located above nine of the principal office doors.

In 1875 an expenditure was authorized for repairing and repainting the capitol. This authorization also included a sum for the erection of an iron fence, with gates, around the capitol grounds. This fence remains nearly intact to this date.

In 1905, the erection of an extension to the capitol to provide for the expanded needs of the State Library was authorized. This addition was annexed to the east side of the capitol building. The addition was constructed in the same style and of the same material as the original capitol building.

The capitol building was enlarged to its current size by extension of the north and south in 1913. This addition provided larger chambers on the second floor for the Senate and Assembly, and provided additional agency

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 type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1871 - present BUILDER/ARCHITECT Peter Cavanaugh & Son, builder/
Joseph Gosling, Architect

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Considering the remoteness of the territory at the time of initial design and construction of the state capitol, this structure displays outstanding qualities of regionalism, or territorialism. The overall design concept is a territorial adaption of a renaissance edifice with strong Italianate characteristics. Heavily rusticated quoins and window surrounds, together with strongly classical trim detailing identify the capitol with the popular renaissance revival of that period.

The architectural expression of the facades is strongly masculine, with handsome, well-scaled sandstone masonry units. With its elegant proportions, the capitol nevertheless displays an air of robust history.

The center motif and primary statement is a rather classical portico with a colonnade of fluted doric columns. The entire building is girded with a dominant entablature with paneled frieze and a pronounced cornice, supported by heavily articulated corbels. Above the central main entrance and portico protrudes a massive pediment, with rake cornice, enclosing a plain tympanum of sandstone.

Along the lower edge of the roof a wood railing of turned balusters and paneled buttresses highlights the classical character of the facade, and provides a transition to the eight sided cupola surmounting the capitol above the intersection of the two main axes of the building plan. This windowed cupola with dome and pinnacle flagpole culminates with strong verticality the two-story state capitol.

There is an overwhelming simplicity and graceful charm in the uncomplicated, logical expression of the building facade. Materials are plain and warm. The building displays two colors only, the light earthen brown of the native sandstone, and the antique white of the painted woodwork and trim. This simple statement is contrasted by the deep green of the surrounding lawns and the tranquility of a multitude of towering trees. The entire complex, as a design entity abuts the life of the city at the original, and well preserved, wrought iron fence. The changing foliage of the trees enhances the elegance of the capitol in every season.

From a standpoint of architectural composition, the Nevada state capitol may be regarded as having extremely pleasing proportions, not only in its overall design of the major masses, but equally in the interrelationship

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Gale, Fredrick C.; The History of the Capitol Building and Governor's Mansion, State of Nevada; 1968

Thompson and West; History of Nevada; 1881

Mordy, Brooke D., and McCaughey, Donald L.; Nevada Historical Sites; 1968

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3.67

UTM REFERENCES

UTM on HR

A | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 4 | 0 | 0 |

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

D | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

N/A

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

Constance S. Sparbel

ORGANIZATION

Nevada State Park System

DATE

March 6, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

201 S. Fall St., Nye Bldg., Room 221

TELEPHONE

702-885-4370

CITY OR TOWN

Carson City

STATE

Nevada

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Constance S. Sparbel

5-13-75

TITLE

Nevada State Park System Administrator
State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

AK Winters

DATE

6/10/75

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

[Signature]

DATE

July 11 1975

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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office space on the first floor. As with the previous addition, the materials and architectural style was compatible with the original structure.

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of all other elements: the window penetrations and their spacing, the entablature and cornice relationship, the influence of the cupola in balance with the gable roof and building mass, and finally the placement of the capitol within the landscaped grounds. Significantly, the capitol has maintained its character and scale perfectly, as no competing developments have influenced its intended architectural impact on its surroundings. The comment has been made that this state capitol because of its unpretentious, yet commanding design, may well be one of the most sensitively proportioned public edifices in the United States.

Apparently, native materials were used almost exclusively for the structure. Highly significant for the time period, there is evident a basic and intuitive acknowledgment of seismic considerations. The architect, knowingly or instinctively, massed the building in such a manner as to create shear wall capabilities in opposing directions. It can be assumed that this system may be credited with having prevented damage to the building as a result of earthquakes in the past. Recently, engineering studies have been completed aimed at strengthening the structure in compliance with current building code requirements.

The building interior is based on a logical plan serving a bicameral government. Both chambers are now arts and archival display areas, although there are also housed several prime government functions, such as the Executive offices and those of the Secretary of State.

Conspicuously, this historic building embodies values and qualities relating to the spirit of the time; an emerging state in a bonanza era, colored with rough and ready vitalism, sophistication as an inevitable result of newfound wealth, and pioneering courage peculiar to a people determined to succeed.

To the people of Nevada, and the streams of visitors fascinated by this historical era and monument, the state capitol symbolizes, architecturally, a legacy of self-reliance, good government, and state pride.