

**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 Churchill County Courthouse

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

**2. Location**

street & number 10 Williams Street  not for publication

city or town Fallon, Nev.  vicinity

state Nevada code NV county Churchill code 001 zip code 89406

**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  
Signature of certifying official/Title

8/12/92  
Date

Nevada Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology  
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): \_\_\_\_\_

for Signature of the Keeper  
Antoinette Allee

Date of Action  
9/23/92

**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	
one	three	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
one	three	Total

**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**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Government/Courthouse

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Government/Government Office

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals/

Classical Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Weatherboard

roof Asphalt

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)

Politics/Government \_\_\_\_\_

Architecture \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1903 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1903 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Ben Leon \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**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:

\_\_\_\_\_

Churchill County Courthouse  
Name of Property

Churchill, Nevada  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre (.85 acres)

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1   1	3   4   6   8   3   0	4   3   7   0   8   1   0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

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 Ronald M. James, SHPO and Kathryn M. Kuranda, Architectural Historian

organization Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology date April 23, 1987

street & number 123 West Nye Lane, Room 208 telephone (702) 687-5138

city or town Carson City state Nevada zip code 89710

### 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 \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**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.

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The Churchill County Courthouse is a two-story, frame building constructed in 1903 according to plans designed by Reno architect, Ben Leon. Built by W.B. Wyrick, the courthouse adopts a simple, Neo-Classical design defined by a monumental, pedimented portico supported by paired Ionic capitals. The courthouse is in good condition and retains its historic integrity. The building served as the Churchill County Courthouse from its construction until 1973; it is currently used for county offices.

The county courthouse occupies a prominent corner site in downtown Fallon. Oriented along a north-south longitudinal axis, the building provides a north terminus for Fallon's original main street commercial development. The building is located on a county-owned parcel of land which includes, from west to east along Williams Street, the Volunteer Fire Department (1960), the County Telephone Building (1966), and the Search and Rescue Building (1910). The Volunteer Fire Department and County Telephone are one- and two-story cinderblock structures, respectively, and are non-contributing buildings to this nomination. The Search and Rescue Building is a two-story stone building, and may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places; however, this structure does not contribute to the significance of this nomination.

The courthouse is supported by a masonry foundation and rises to a hipped roof covered in asphalt shingles. A hipped roof cupola incorporating stylized fan lights is centrally located above the projecting, pedimented entry portico. The portico possesses a porch at the second floor. The eave line is slightly extended and marked by a simple board cornice. The three-bay building is sheathed in narrow weatherboarding with simple cornerboards at the corners. The double-hung one-over-one light windows are enframed by simple surrounds with slightly projecting sills.

The interior of the building incorporates a first story, central hall flanked by offices. The central hall includes a simple open stair providing access to the second story.

This building retains its historic integrity.

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The Churchill County Courthouse is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A for its association with the historical development Churchill county and the City of Fallon and under criterion C for the architectural significance of the Courthouse. The Courthouse has continuously housed county government offices since 1903. The simple Neo-Classical style, public structure is one of the most substantial buildings in Churchill County and is one of two surviving frame courthouses in Nevada.

The Nevada Territorial government established Churchill County on November 25, 1861. In 1864, La Plata, a mining camp in the southern foothills of the Silver Hill Range became the county's first seat as it organized its government. Its courthouse was a dwelling acquired for seven hundred dollars. By 1867, the La Plata mining boom was played out and the county seat was moved to Stillwater. There, in 1869, the county erected a two story structure in Stillwater. Unfortunately, officials failed to gain clear title to the land. In 1883, the rightful property owner evicted the county which was forced to building another courthouse in Stillwater.

Like La Plata, Stillwater failed to live up to expectations. Throughout the later part of the nineteenth century, the county suffered a steady decline in population. In 1890s, the town's importance to the future of the region was overshadowed by the federal government's plan under the Newland's Project to reclaim two hundred thousand acres of desert in the Lahontan Valley for agricultural use. In response to this, the Churchill County seat was moved in 1903 from Stillwater to Fallon.

There, the County Commissioners immediately initiated plans for the construction of a new courthouse. They accepted the design of Reno architect Ben Leon. W.B. Wyrick of Fallon constructed the frame structure for \$7,300.

The Stillwater courthouse, as will all previous Churchill County courthouses, was demolished. The Churchill County courthouse in Fallon is, therefore, the oldest surviving courthouse in Churchill County. It is also one of two frame courthouses to survive in Nevada: the other in Ely (White Pine County) has been altered for use in a hospital complex. It is the only frame courthouse in Nevada which continues to serve county administrative offices. It is also the only frame courthouse ever built in Nevada based on an architect's design and which follow a well developed architectural program.

The Churchill County courthouse is significant as the oldest surviving center of County government and as a well designed application of Neo-Classical style architecture to frame construction in a public building.

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Angel, Myron F., History of Nevada with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of its Prominent Men and Pioneers (Oakland, California: Thompson and West, 1881; reprint by Berkeley: Howell-North, 1958).

de Braga, Marcia, Dig No Graves: A History of Churchill County (Sparks, Nevada: Western Printing and Publishing Company, 1964).

Edaburn, Sharon L., "County Seats on the Move," unpublished (Churchill County Museum, Fallon, Nevada).

Paher, Stanley W., Significant County Seat Controversies in the State of Nevada (Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada, Reno, unpublished M.A. Thesis, 1969).

Townley, John M., Turn this Water into Gold: The Story of the Newlands Project (Salt Lake City, Utah: Publishers Press, 1977).

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# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

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The APN is 001-124-01

The boundaries of the county-owned property encompass the land historically associated with this building.