

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

NOV 08 1979

DEC 17 1979

DATE ENTERED

# 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 HAWKINS HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON SIERRA NEVADA MUSEUM OF ART

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 549 Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Reno

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
Nevada-at-large

STATE

Nevada

CODE  
32

COUNTY

Washoe

CODE

031

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input 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
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Sierra Nevada Museum/Nevada Art Gallery

STREET & NUMBER  
549 Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Reno

VICINITY OF

STATE

Nevada 89501

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Deed No. 578611; book No. 1343, page 135.  
Recorder's Office County Court House

STREET &amp; NUMBER

75 Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Reno

STATE

Nevada 89501

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

none

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

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

---

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The present physical appearance of the Hawkins mansion and the surrounding property are in fine condition and remain unchanged in the 70 years since the house was built. Photographs from 1915, 1920 and 1922 document the unaltered state of this property. Please see photocopies attached.

The 2 1/2 story house was constructed in 1911 on a bluff overlooking the Truckee River in the fashionable Newlands Heights area (so named because the first house in this area along the bluff belonged to Senator Newlands, author of the Reclamation Act of 1902). The property stretching from Court Street to the Truckee River retains much of the original landscaping and fine trees.

The Hawkins House, one of the first to be constructed in Newlands Heights, takes full advantage of the location above the river. The house was designed in the Georgian tradition in red brick with handsome architectural trim in wood painted white. The facade is enhanced by an imposing portico with doric columns. The house is built in a square plan around a central open staircase connecting the main floor reception rooms with the second floor living area. The third floor attic contained servants' quarters.

Plan - rectangular with long axis running east/west.

Basement - full basement with light well windows.

Structural System - wood on masonry (brick) bearing walls.

Walls - brick laid in Flemish bond with mortar tinted dark gray / a brick water table delineates foundation from walls.

Front Porch - wood composite order columns support roof porch with full entablature / second level of porch features railing and posts which support an arbor frame.

Windows - first level windows are generally two types: (a) single hung, paired windows with 6/1 light arrangement, brick sills, no surrounds and cast, curvilinear lintels with an ornamental "keystone" and (b) round headed windows on the north facade which feature semi-circular fan lights with 5 panes each. Second level windows similar to first level except for the absence of cast lintels and presence of radiating brick voussoirs. Also, the north (rear) wall feature a central two storey bay window.

Main Entry - trabeated with pilasters, entablature and "keystone" / five lights each side of paneled door / a flattened elliptical fan light surmounts door.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES construction date 1911 BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown/Elmer Grey (1871-1963)

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In addition to architectural importance, the Hawkins Mansion is of significance on the basis of its historic ownership, location, and current use. The building was commissioned by Prince A. Hawkins in 1911 from Elmer Grey, a prominent Los Angeles architect whose major projects included Henry Huntington's San Marino estate (now the Huntington Library & Art Gallery), the landmark Beverly Hills Hotel and the Pasadena Community Playhouse. Grey's work was known nationally, and he served on the United States' Art Advisory Board for the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis. The property where the Hawkins home would stand was part of the Newlands Heights district, situated on the bluffs overlooking the Truckee River, adjacent to the home of Senator Francis G. Newlands.

Grey's plans for the Hawkins home evoked traditional forms, with a brick exterior in a Georgian style, and a commodious, centralizing floor plan. The home had the most modern heating and plumbing systems, with a vast kitchen complex, basement storage, and third floor servants' area. The plan was a felicitous combination of features suitable both to the Reno climate and the dramatic site overlooking the river.

The Hawkins family owned the home until it was purchased by the Museum in 1978, and preserved in the family papers were Grey's original plans, along with the original designs for landscaping. It is of extraordinary historical value that these plans are extant. The plans permit us to document that virtually no major alterations have been performed on the original structure, save updates of plumbing, wiring systems and the like. Moreover, the drawings document a major re-landscaping project in the 1930's by a San Francisco firm which was never executed, as the existing plantings and garden conform to Grey's plans.

The Newlands Heights district was developed in an era of rapid growth in Reno, fueled by the wealth of the Tonopah and Goldfield mining areas. It was the most fashionable district of Reno, and many prominent families built new homes there. The Hawkins family is one of the first families of Nevada, prominent in Nevada's business and banking circles for over a century. Following the death of Prince Hawkins, his son Robert lived in the Court Street mansion. Robert Ziemer Hawkins was married to Katherine Mackay, grand-daughter of Clarence Mackay, owner of the famous Virginia City mines bearing his name, founder of International Telephone & Telegraph Corporation, and

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Beautiful Homes of Reno, 1915  
 Nevada Newsletter, Jan. 10, 1920, p. 37.  
 Nevada Newsletter, Feb. 18, 1922, p. 43.  
 Sherwood Anderson, "So This is Reno", Nevada Newsletter, April 5, 1924, p. 21  
 "Elmer Grey", National Cyclopedia of American Biography, p. 220.

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 35,300 sq. ft. 3/4 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>11</u>	<u>2</u> <u>57720</u>	<u>4</u> <u>378300</u>	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The County Assessor's identification of this property is Parcel No. 11-141-01. The shape is irregular but roughly rectangular with a frontage of 105.0 feet on Court Street; 349.7 feet on its easterly side; distance undetermined along the south bank of the Truckee River and 359.5 feet along the westerly side returning to Court Street. The average width is 100.0 feet.

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

Suzanne M. Loomis Director June 8, 1979

ORGANIZATION

Sierra Nevada Museum of Art/Nevada Art Gallery

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

549 Court Street

TELEPHONE

(702) 329-3333

CITY OR TOWN

Reno, Nevada

STATE

89501

# 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Mimi Rodden*

TITLE

Administrator - SHPO

DATE

18 October 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*Carol O'Shull*

DATE

12-17-79

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST

DATE

12-13-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	NOV 08 1979
DATE ENTERED	DEC 17 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

East Door - door features upper half glazed with 6 lights/bottom half is paneled / a three light transom above door.

Roof - of low pitch with three dormers / eaves feature modillions and a wide frieze/gable roof / two brick chimneys at ridge which differ in size.

Interior Features - central hall with stairway on east side of entry foyer/paneled wainscoting in foyer, hall and along stair run/hardwood floor with 2" width boards/ sliding pocket doors on first level/fireplaces with classical motif ornamentation/ attic level is fully open to form one room.

Present use as an art museum takes advantage of the spacious, elegant nature of the house without requiring major internal changes. Any conversion which has been accomplished is of a reversible nature. Architectural details and the integrity of this handsome property have been preserved.

All of the original architectural and landscaping plans and drawings are in the possession of the current owners.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	NOV 08 1979
DATE ENTERED	DEC 17 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

local philanthropist. Katherine Mackay Hawkins made her own unique contribution to the history of the home, bringing from Paris the contents of her grandfather's apartments with included, in addition to the period furniture, the hand screened 19th century wallpaper, sections of which remain on the second floor of the home.

For its new usage as the headquarters of the Sierra Nevada Museum of Art, the City of Reno accorded the Hawkins property the city's first historical landmark status. This recognized not only the significance of this major architectural commission in Reno, but also the fact that the Museum would preserve the building, providing a stabilizing element in an important architectural district imminently threatened by care-less commercial usage. Located only four blocks from central Reno, the fine home and extensive grounds are an asset to the City. The preservation of this architecturally unique section of Reno cannot help but have economic as well as aesthetic benefits for the community, and also provide the initiative for further preservation and recycling of other architecturally interesting and important buildings in Reno.