

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUL 16 1981  
DATE ENTERED AUG 27 1981

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC MARZEN HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON Big Meadow Ranch House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

*S of house*

CITY, TOWN

Lovelock *vic.*

VICINITY OF

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
Nevada-at-large

STATE

Nevada

32<sup>CODE</sup>

COUNTY  
Pershing

CODE  
027

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" 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 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 Pershing County

STREET & NUMBER  
Pershing County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Lovelock

VICINITY OF

STATE  
Nevada 89419

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Pershing County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Lovelock

Nevada STATE 89419

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
N/A

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR  
 DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE 1981

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

The Big Meadow Ranch House, an 1875 Italianate structure is a two-story symmetrical house topped by a low pitched hipped roof and decorated with ornate jigsaw cutout window moldings and cornerboards.

The vacant house was recently moved one-and-one-half miles from its original site to the edge of the Big Meadow Ranch to allow for its reuse as a county museum. The house remains in a rural setting at the edge of the town of Lovelock and is now accessible to the public. The original landscaping will be recreated with a simple lawn outlined by several trees.

The formally balanced exterior is sided in shiplap originally painted white. The exterior is decorated with stilted segmental arch moldings surrounding double-hung wooden windows. The vertical windows have one over one lights with rounded edges on the top of the upperlight. The window moldings and the cornerboards are decorated with jigsaw cutout patterns. The main entrance consists of ornate Victorian double doors and a transom above, both with frosted glass surrounded by cutout molding.

The five-bay facade is covered the full length of the first floor by a screened-in porch. The porch has square columns decorated with brackets and fretwork along the cornice.

A one-story addition (20'x30') with shiplap siding and a hipped roof has been added to the building in the rear.

The 30'x40' house has a symmetrical floor plan with a central hallway and stairs running the length of the house from the front door. Each floor is divided into four large rooms. The interior of the buildings has skillfully wood-grained doors, gold-leafed and wood-grained moldings, plaster ceiling medallions, and a marble fireplace.

The building is in good shape with only minor changes and minimal deterioration. Two windows have been altered and are being restored to their original configuration.

# 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      1875                                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT                                      Unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Big Meadow Ranch House is significant as an Italianate style residence, as the most prominent ranch house in the Lovelock Valley, and for its association with Colonel Joseph Marzen.

The house is an outstanding example of the Italianate style of architecture in Nevada. It is representative of the style in that it is a two story rectangular building with a characteristic vertical emphasis. It has a formal balance accentuated by pronounced window moldings, cornerboards, and other details. The building has the typical low pitched hipped roof with wide eaves supported by large double brackets.

This ranch house is one of the finest houses built in rural central Nevada during the late 1800s. While most ranch houses were very functional, the Marzen residence is a spacious, elegant, and highly stylized piece of architecture. It reflects the fact that Colonel Marzen was one of the most prosperous ranchers in Nevada.

Colonel Joseph Marzen built the Big Meadows Ranch House in 1875 as his residence and developed the surrounding area into a large and prosperous ranch. Joseph Marzen (1828-1916) came to Nevada in 1863 and took up the trade of butcher in Virginia City. The year 1873 marked his first visit to the Lovelock Valley when he drove in several thousand head of cattle. He returned two years later to purchase land in the Big Meadows area and build a home. Marzen irrigated the land using the nearby Humboldt River and created rich fields of alfalfa, wheat, and pasture out of what was once only sagebrush. At the same time, Marzen built the finest residence in the valley for his home.

By 1905, Marzen owned 3,580 acres in the valley; over 1,500 in alfalfa, 100 in wheat, and the balance in pasture. A prize-winning herd of Shorthorn cattle as well as 30 dairy cows grazed the pastures. Marzen gained prominence as a rancher and a live-stock breeder in Nevada. He was known throughout the State for his excellent breeds in cattle and horses.

Marzen was also a stockholder in and President of the Lovelock Creamery, the most important industry in the valley. He served as Colonel in the State National Guard, thus gaining his title, and in 1885, Marzen was appointed by the Governor to the first State Board of Agriculture.

The ranch and the house has been owned by several prominent people since Colonel Marzen including Louis Aloys Friedman, the Baldwin estate, and Raymond Lewis Knisley.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Bragg, Allen C., Humboldt County 1905, Winnemucca, Nev., Humboldt Printers, 1976, pp 99  
 Angel, Myron(ed.). Reproduction of Thompson & West's "History of Nevada". 1881.  
 Berkeley: Howell-North, 1958. Pgs. 455 & 670.  
 Scrugham, James Grave(ed.) Nevada/Chicago: American Historical Society, 1935.  
 Vol. 1, pps. 330 & 372. A Narrative of the Conquest of a Frontier Land.  
 Wren, Thomas (ed.) A History of the State of Nevada, Its Resources & People.  
 New York, Chicago, The Lewis Publishing Company 1904.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY -1.0 acres  
 UTM REFERENCES

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

A	1, 1	3, 7, 3, 8, 5, 0	4, 4, 4, 7, 5, 5, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

That area bounded by a 10 foot outreach beyond the perimeter of the house.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Ana Beth Koval, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION Historic Preservation & Archeology

DATE 6/22/81

STREET & NUMBER 201 So. Fall St.

TELEPHONE (702) 885-5138

CITY OR TOWN Carson City

STATE Nevada 89710

# 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 6/23/81

### FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*Beth Groves*  
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
 ATTEST *Patrick Adams*  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 8/27/81

DATE 8/24/81