

# NYE COUNTY HISTORIC PROPERTY SURVEY

## PROPERTY NAME:

<i>Historic</i> Stone Jail Building and Row House
<i>Common</i>

<i>Township/Range/Section</i>	<i>Inventory No.</i> TON-142
<i>Quad/County Map</i>	<i>Classification</i> Building

## LOCATION:

<i>Street Address</i> Water Street	
<i>City</i> Tonopah	<i>County</i> Nye

## CURRENT BLACK & WHITE PHOTOGRAPH



## CURRENT OWNER:

<i>Name</i> Frank J. Murnane c/o Robert Milovich		
<i>Street Address</i> P.O. Box 1007		
<i>City</i> Tonopah	<i>State</i> Nv.	<i>Zip</i> 89049

## FORM PREPARED BY:

<i>Name</i> Janus Associates	<i>Date</i> Sept. 1980
<i>Street Address</i> 2121 S. Priest Suite 127	<i>Phone</i> 967-7117
<i>City</i> Tempe	<i>State</i> Arizona
	<i>Zip</i> 85282

## PROPERTY INFORMATION:

<i>Historic Use</i> City Jail and Brothel	
<i>Current Use</i> Vacant	<i>Acreage</i> less/one
<i>Architect/Builder</i>	
<i>Construction/Modification Dates</i> Built 1903, 1908	

<i>Photo By</i> Jim Woodward	<i>Date</i> July 1980
<i>View</i> Jail-Oblique, looking north	

## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The two adjacent buildings located near Water Street are both stone structures although constructed in a different manner and with slightly different materials. The jail building is a single story rectangular structure measuring 20 by 25 feet and enclosed with a double pitched corrugated metal roof. The walls are constructed of uncut random stone with chink and mortar bonding. It was penetrated originally on the north by a steel doorway which has since been removed and the opening enlarged to accommodate the buildings use as a garage. A portion of the gable wall which was removed at that time has been enclosed with board and batten siding and the enlarged doorway contains two wooden doors. A window opening centrally located on the west wall still contains the original steel bars. A shed roof addition on the south side c.1908, has been removed, but the plastered south stone wall of the jail reveals its configurations. The building is vacant and in a deteriorated condition. The adjacent row house is built of cut white granite and is rectangular in plan, and is covered with its original sloping asphalt roof. The rear or west wall of the row house abuts the east wall of the jail. The structure is divided into three bays, each containing a single room and accessible through separate doorways along the east facade. Each door is complemented by a double hung window. The original doors still remain and are detailed with a multiple light window and three moulded panels. Although somewhat deteriorated and lacking maintenance, the original integrity of this structure remains unaltered.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Although constructed at different times and originally for separate functions, the two stone buildings located near Water Street are intimately tied to the early social and cultural development of Tonopah. The stone jail building is important as one of the oldest local examples of stone construction and as the earliest remaining structure specifically built for use as a jail. The second building, constructed adjacent to the jail is a three room row house or "crib" which served as one of many brothels located along Water Street in historic Tonopah's "Tenderloin District." The jail building, a relatively simple structure and unrefined in its workmanship, was constructed in the summer of 1903. It replaced the original frame city jail building which was erected in July, 1901. The location of the stone jail building is in an area most historically associated with the "Red Light District" of Tonopah. The site for the building was selected by county commissioner Egan and district attorney Richards, possibly in an attempt to segregate this necessary function from the more visible portions of the community. However, in 1907 a substantial jail addition was built on the 1905 Nye County Courthouse and the jail building on Water Street was converted for use as a residence. In 1908 the three room stone row house was built and both structures were in use as places of prostitution. This pair of stone structures depicts both historical social and cultural attitudes and local methods of construction. The jail is important for its role in the early justice system of Tonopah and later function more directly asso-

ciated with its location. The stone row house remains today as one of the best preserved brothels in Tonopah.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Tonopah Bonanza, 1901 1903

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

A portion of Block K, Richardson Survey, 1907

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPH

Photo By  
Jim Woodward

View  
Three room row house  
looking west (jail is be-  
hind structure)

Date  
July 1980

