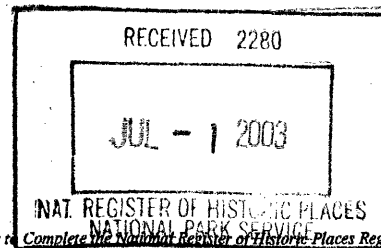


75B

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 any 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 Austin Cemetery
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number N. & S. sides of US 50 near jct. w/ NV 305 N/A not for publication
city or town Austin N/A vicinity
state Nevada code NV county Lander code 015 zip code 89310

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally X statewide ___ locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Ronald [Signature] STAPO 6-26-03
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or 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 commenting or other official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this 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):

[Signature]
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
Edson H. Beall 8/14/03

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	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	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

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category	Subcategory
FUNERARY	cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category	Subcategory
FUNERARY	cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

No Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	N/A
walls	N/A
roof	N/A
other	N/A

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 a 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 fifty years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ART

ETHNIC HERITAGE: ASIAN

ETHNIC HERITAGE: EUROPEAN

Period of Significance

1863-1953

Significant Dates

1863

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Architect/Builder

Stewart Iron Works (fencing)

Wellis & Co. (fencing)

National Wire & Iron Co. (fencing)

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:

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property approximately 5 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing	
1	11	492730	4372180	3	11
2	11			4	11

___ 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	<u>J. Daniel Pezzoni</u>	date	<u>June 1, 2003</u>
organization	<u>Landmark Preservation Associates</u>	telephone	<u>(540) 464-5315</u>
street & number	<u>6 Houston St.</u>	zip code	<u>24450</u>
city or town	<u>Lexington</u> state <u>VA</u>		

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name	<u>Lander County</u>		
street & number	<u>315 S. Humboldt St.</u>	telephone	<u>(775) 635-5195</u>
city or town	<u>Battle Mountain</u> state <u>NV</u>	zip code	<u>89820</u>

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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Austin Cemetery, Austin, Lander County, Nevada

Section 7 Description

Summary

The Austin Cemetery is located in Austin, Lander County, Nevada. Austin is situated in Pony Canyon near the northern end of the Toiyabe Range and near the geographic center of the state. The town lies in the watershed of the Reese River, a tributary of the Humboldt River, and it is served by US Highway 50. The Austin Cemetery is located about a mile northwest of the built-up part of town on the north side of the lower end of Pony Canyon at an elevation of just over 6,200 feet above sea level. US Highway 50 runs through the cemetery east to west and the junction of US 50 and Nevada Highway 305 is located a short distance to the east. The nominated area is actually comprised of four cemeteries (listed east to west): the Masonic and Odd Fellows sections on the north side of US 50 and the Calvary (Catholic) and Citizens cemeteries on the south side of US 50. A fifth cemetery, the Indian cemetery, is located west of the Citizen's section. It is not included in this nomination due to ownership constraints.

The cemetery is distinguished by the range of gravemarker types, materials, and styles represented within it. Finely sculpted white marble monuments, often incorporating crosses, are concentrated in the Calvary section and are associated primarily with the graves of Irish and other Catholic Austinites. A few fieldstone markers have been observed in the various sections; many more are known to have existed in the past. Many family and individual plots are enclosed by fences of ornamental cast-iron manufactured outside the state, local wrought-iron, and wood palings. Approximately 125 metal fence enclosures and nearly twenty wood paling enclosures survive, mostly in the Calvary section. Approximately thirty-five wooden headboards and footboards have been counted, the deteriorated remnants of what were likely many more historically. Markers fashioned from concrete, metal, and other materials are found, and grave goods are present. The majority of marked burials date to the period of significance. There are probably many burials that are no longer marked, especially in the potter's field section of the Citizens section. The Calvary, Masonic, and Odd Fellows sections have decorative steel gates. No historic funerary structures such as mausoleums are present, although a small metal-sided storage shed that probably dates to the third quarter of the twentieth century is located near the southern boundary of the Calvary/Citizens section.

Gates and Fencing

The Calvary, Masonic, and Odd Fellows sections are entered through ornamental gates of

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

Austin Cemetery, Austin, Lander County, Nevada

Section 7 Description, continued

galvanized steel. The Calvary gate has a wide center archway for vehicles flanked by narrower openings for pedestrians, and it is ornamented with filigree and net-like metalwork, star designs, gilded lettering, and a cross. A bronze plaque notes that the gate was dedicated by Mary E. Walsh on May 30, 1930 (Walsh was a major contributor to Austin's Catholic parish, St. Augustine's Parish). The Masonic and Odd Fellows gates are relatively simple archways.

The metal fences, which enclose single burials or family plots, are varied in form and ornament. The fanciest were manufactured at metalworks such as Wellis & Co. of Pittsburgh, the National Wire & Iron Co. of Detroit, and the popular Stewart Iron Works of Cincinnati. A number of iron fences were locally crafted; some of these have posts fashioned from iron pipe with decorative brass or black-painted wooden finials and connected by loops of chain. One of the locally made iron fences incorporates a triple-lobed sheet-iron inscription plate that identifies the remains of Mrs. A. D. Burchfield (ca. 1845-1887). The wooden fences, also known as palings, typically feature pickets (pales) with decorative tips, square-section corner posts with chamfering and moldings, and cut-nailed mortise-and-tenon construction.

Stone Monuments

The majority of the cemetery's surviving stone gravemarkers are professionally carved marble and granite monuments in the form of headstones, footstones, obelisks, crosses, and statuary. There are several sculptural white marble monuments of high quality. The grave of Mrs. L. W. Compton (ca. 1844-1900) is marked by a nearly life-size angel in the form of a woman writing in a book. The monument is inscribed with prayers, poetry, and place of birth (County Limerick, Ireland), but as with most (perhaps all) of the cemetery's marble monuments, the sculptor is not identified. A second, smaller angel in the form of a praying child marks the graves of two infants, Michael David Malloy (d. 1913) and Walter Louis Malloy (d. 1919). Other marble sculptures of note mark the graves of Marjorie May Walsh (1913-14) and Elizabeth Crescenzo (1846-92), a native of Switzerland. The Walsh monument depicts a child seated in front of a rustic cross and dropping flowers into its lap. The Crescenzo monument features a nearly life-size woman supporting herself against a rustic cross. A marble tree-trunk monument in the Masonic/Odd Fellows section marks the graves of Thomas Mitchell (1838-97) and G. W. Mitchell (1836-88), one or both of whom were natives of Scotland.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 3

Austin Cemetery, Austin, Lander County, Nevada

Section 7 Description, continued

Most of the iconography on the marble monuments is Victorian in character, with at least one exception: the tombstone of John Cassel (ca. 1833-1871), a native of County Wicklow, Ireland, has a bas-relief carving of a woman mourning at a monument under a willow tree, symbolism more typical of the first half of the nineteenth century. As noted above, crosses predominate in the Calvary Catholic section, and standing in the midst of the section is a tall wood cross, probably late nineteenth century in date, with chamfered extensions and molded finials. Imported black and gray granite gradually replaced marble for the more expensive monuments in the early twentieth century. Local granite was used for fieldstone markers, and also for the crudely shaped obelisk of Mrs. David Todd (ca. 1817-1890), a native of Wales, who according to the 1870 census kept house for her miner husband and their family.

Wooden Gravemarkers

The wooden gravemarkers date from the early years of settlement through the present. The wooden markers have various forms, but most common historically, at least as represented by surviving examples, are markers with rounded tops, usually with small shoulders. Many modern wooden markers are in the form of crosses; some of these appear to have been intended as temporary memorials. Some wooden markers are set directly into the ground, whereas others have socketed granite bases to which they are attached with iron fasteners.

Several headboards bear trace inscriptions with raised letters. The letters were not carved this way; instead, the elements and ultraviolet light have etched away surrounding surfaces that were not protected by the paint of the inscription. Some headboards were relatively artistically painted. For example, the matching side-by-side headboards of Charles Davenport Spires (1834-1881), a Kentucky native who served as Lander County Recorder in 1870 and later as the county sheriff, and L. H. Spires (born and died in 1877), have traces of black-painted borders and well-composed inscriptions. The Spires headboards are mounted to the rails of a wood paling.

Other Materials, Grave Goods, and Landscape Features

Many gravemarkers are crafted from concrete. In the Calvary section are a number of small concrete cross markers. A row of these mark the graves of Chatelle family members who died in the 1910s and 1920s and are decorated with chunks of agate and obsidian and plates of purple-

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 4

Austin Cemetery, Austin, Lander County, Nevada

Section 7 Description, continued

tinted glass. Metal is another common material. Sheet iron was used to form cross markers and a bedstead-like monument. The grave of LeRoy John Bernd (1898-1915) in the Calvary section is marked by an ornamental manufactured metal cross of a style that is common in ethnic Catholic cemeteries in the Midwest. A zinc or "white bronze" obelisk with faux rockfaced surfaces and an urnlike finial embellishes the grave of Anna M. Peterson (1831-1902) in the Masonic/Odd Fellows section. The grave of Mariana Escobar (1856-1922) is indicated by a manufactured coffin-shaped metal marker provided by Austin funeral director Humphrey A. Kearns (according to Nevada chronicler Herman Albert, Kearns "kept a comprehensive record of the approximate measurements of all potential candidates for his ministrations" [Albert, *Odyssey of a Desert Prospector*, 174]). Small metal funeral home markers are common on mid-twentieth century and later graves, sometimes in lieu of permanent memorials.

Grave goods, objects placed on the grave or monument, survive on a number of graves. They are more commonly seen in association with recent graves that are being tended by relatives, although many grave goods may be assumed to survive underground in an archaeological context. Historic grave goods include white rocks and sea shells scattered on a grave in the Calvary/Citizens section that is also marked by an early twentieth century wooden headboard. Clustered around the grave of a four-month-old infant who died in 1982 are concrete animal figurines including fawns, raccoons, a rabbit, and a snail.

The cemetery is interspersed with indigenous pines and other evergreen trees, especially in the Calvary and Citizen sections. Some appear to have been deliberately planted over graves, whereas others may be volunteers. A photograph from the mid-1880s that shows the cemetery at a distance, does not appear to show any mature trees. The cemetery was surveyed in early spring before many flowers and other potential landscaping plants were evident; however, a number of graves appears to have been planted with shrubs and flowers, and there are reference to such plantings during the early twentieth century. Water that could be used for maintaining plantings was supplied by a tank-fed pipe in the 1890s.

Integrity Statement

The Austin Cemetery possesses good integrity from the period of significance. Although many impermanent historic gravemarkers have presumably been lost, the cemetery retains a diversity of

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7, 8 Page 5

Austin Cemetery, Austin, Lander County, Nevada

Section 7 Description, continued

gravemarker types, materials, and styles characteristic of its development from the 1860s onward. The cemetery also preserves historic grave fencing and three historic gates. The marble monuments are exceptionally well preserved, a testament to the lack of acid rain in central Nevada. The area's aridity has contributed to the survival of wooden gravemarkers and palings, as has probably the durability of the wood species chosen, although as a class the wooden features are in poor condition. Overzealous graveyard maintenance resulted in the loss of fieldstone markers in the past, but the cemetery is virtually free of damage or loss from vandals. Modern (post-1953) dated monuments are interspersed throughout the cemetery, but the ratio of historic gravemarkers to modern ones is high. The cemetery retains its historic peripheral location relative to Austin, that is, modern development has not engulfed it. Its high desert setting remains unspoiled, except for the erection of a prefabricated metal building to the west of the Masonic/Odd Fellows section.

Section 8 Statement of Significance

Summary

The Austin Cemetery is intimately associated with the development of Austin, one of Nevada's most important early mining towns. The cemetery--actually four adjoining cemeteries--mirrors the ethnic diversity of the historic community with the graves of American-born whites, Irish, Chinese, and many other ethnicities represented. Austin's religious outlook, its socioeconomic structure, and the cultural attitudes and artistic tastes of its citizens are also evident. The first known burials date to 1863, and by the late 1860s fencing and other improvements were in place. The cemetery's memorials include stylish imported marble and granite monuments, some with statuary; ornamental metal fences and wood palings; wooden headboards, some with traces of painted inscriptions; and vernacular concrete, stone, and metal gravemarkers. The extensive and well-preserved cemetery affords dramatic views of the Reese River Valley and surrounding mountain ranges.

Applicable Criteria

The Austin Cemetery meets Criterion A and is eligible in the ethnic heritage area of significance for its association with the Austin, Nevada area's European and Asian communities. The property is also eligible under Criterion C in the art area of significance for the variety of gravemarker types, materials, and methods of fabrication and for the artistic interest of certain monuments and fences.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 6

Austin Cemetery, Austin, Lander County, Nevada

Section 8 Statement of Significance, continued

The period of significance extends from the date of the first burials in 1863 until 1953. (The cemetery is not proposed for exceptional significance for the period after 1953.) The cemetery is eligible at the state level of significance for its intimate association with Austin, one of the state's most significant early mining communities. The Austin Cemetery is located in the Austin Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1971. Information in support of eligibility appears throughout this section.

Acknowledgments

A number of organizations and individuals assisted in the preparation of this report. The nomination was sponsored by Lander County (the property's owner) and the Austin Historical Society with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding from the Nevada Commission of Economic Development, and it is one of ten nominations prepared for prominent historic landmarks in Austin in 2003. Assistance was provided by Allen D. Gibson, Deputy District Attorney, Lander County; Christy Caronongan, Administrative Assistant, Lander County Executive Director's Office; Ray H. Williams Jr., Ray and Irene Salisbury, Phillip "Poncho" and Joan Williams, and Joy Brandt with the Austin Historical Society; Ray H. "Ramey" Williams III, Austin; Dee Helming and Herbert Wallace "Wally" Trapnell, The Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce; and Mella Rothwell Harmon, Architectural Historian/National Register Coordinator, Nevada State Historic Preservation Office.

Historic Context

Silver was discovered in Pony Canyon in May 1862 and within a year the population of the nascent community of Austin and its immediate vicinity stood at nearly 1,000. The Comstock Lode boomtown of Virginia City provided a staging area for the settlement of Austin and in many respects served as a template for Austin's economic, demographic, and architectural development. Austin was made the seat of Lander County on September 2, 1863, and in November 1864 the town's population was reliably estimated at approximately 6,000, briefly making Austin the state's second largest community. Austin rapidly passed through the three incipient developmental stages identified by the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office as characteristic of the state's mining towns: the settlement stage (provisional architecture and haphazard organization), the camp phase

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 7

Austin Cemetery, Austin, Lander County, Nevada

Section 8 Statement of Significance, continued

(more permanent frame buildings and town platting), and the town phase (masonry construction, public buildings, established infrastructure, and stylistic sophistication).¹

By the end of 1866 Austin boasted two substantial brick churches (Austin Methodist and St. Augustine's Catholic), several banking houses, the *Daily Reese River Reveille* newspaper, the International Hotel (moved from Virginia City), and hundreds of brick, stone, wood, and adobe mining structures, commercial buildings, and dwellings. American-born whites constituted the majority of the population; Chinese, English/Welsh, Irish, and "civilized Indians" were important groups as well. Austin also experienced, to a degree, a fourth phase of Nevada mining town development: partial abandonment, as the silver played out and the town's economy and population contracted at the end of the nineteenth century. Austin's status as a trade center for central Nevada prevented it from becoming a ghost town, but the town's population declined to 702 by 1900 and stands at about 300 today.²

The first death (of a European) reported for the Austin area was of Nicholas Feriano in early June 1863, but the place of interment was not stated. On July 22, 1863, Calvin Bryant of Jacobsville died and was taken to "the Clifton burying ground," and in November John H. Shepard was buried in the cemetery "on the road to California." These are references to burials at the location of the present cemetery, which occupies a ridge above the vanished community of Clifton on the main road leading westward from Austin. Clifton developed essentially contemporaneously with Austin in 1863 but it was quickly abandoned when Austin secured the county seat the same year.³

¹ Neu, "Austin Historic District;" Abbe, *Austin*, 56; Hulse, *Silver State*, 79; and Harmon, "How to Prepare Nominations," 8-9. One authority claims a peak Austin population of 10,000 in the summer of 1863 (Nevada State Historical Society, *Nevada*, 259). Another suggests a peak population of approximately 8,000 (Smith, "Austin, Nevada," 7).

² Neu, "Austin Historic District;" Abbe, *Austin*, 58-59; and Harmon, "How to Prepare Nominations," 9.

³ *Reese River Reveille*, June 3, July 25, and November 18, 1863; Hall, *Romancing Nevada's Past*, 75.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 8

Austin Cemetery, Austin, Lander County, Nevada

Section 8 Statement of Significance, continued

In the November 18, 1863 issue of the *Reese River Reveille*, two individuals, Waltemath & Keefer, announced the creation of the Cedar Hill Cemetery. Their advertizement reads:

The undersigned having taken up and duly surveyed all of that section of land on the north side of Clifton, for the purpose of converting the same into a burial place, offer their services as sextons . . . Proper record will be kept of the location of graves.

Little is known about the success of Waltemath & Keefer's enterprise, however, and ownership of the cemetery remained murky. In June 1871 the *Reveille* reported that land including the cemetery had been surveyed by the government and opened for settlement. To prevent the cemetery from passing into private hands, the paper urged the Austin city government to take action to "place this hallowed spot beyond all risk of desecration." The area where burials had been made was estimated to comprise forty acres. "The city could subdivide this," the *Reveille* suggested:

Among the various orders and religious denominations who choose to have a separate burying ground, which would bring the cost of the public grave yard to a nominal sum. Every one of us has a direct interest in this question, for there are few who have not some one dear to them reposing in that spot, to say nothing of the possibility of any of us reposing there at any moment.⁴

Austin's fraternal organizations had taken the initiative well in advance of the paper's suggestion. By the end of 1867 the Masonic Cemetery was in existence, cared for by the Cemetery Committee of Lander Lodge No. 8. On November 1, 1867 the Committee reported that it had completed a fence around the cemetery using 1,600 feet of lumber donated by Brother James Lacher and whitewash donated by Brother F. V. Drake. Construction of the fence cost the Mason's \$279.01, which was covered by the proceeds of a Masonic Ball with \$12.50 left over to be expended "in the erection of head Boards of the graves." The I.O.O.F. or Odd Fellows Cemetery appears to date to the same period, since an 1886 cemetery plan and burial roster lists burials in 1867 and 1868. The plan, drafted by Swedish-born Charles Lund (1833-87), depicts the cemetery's rectangular form

⁴ *Reese River Reveille*, November 18, 1863, and June 12, 1871. The name L. W. Wallemath is associated with a silver ledge discovered near Clifton in 1863; perhaps this was the Waltemath of the cemetery project (*Reese River Reveille*, July 29, 1863). The 1871 estimate of the size of the burial area appears to have been a considerable overestimate.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 9

Austin Cemetery, Austin, Lander County, Nevada

Section 8 Statement of Significance, continued

with a wide "Main Avenue" running north-south through the center and narrower subsidiary avenues paralleling the main one on the east and west. Burial plots measuring seven and a half feet in length occupy the strips between the avenues, and the plan shows a perimeter fence with south (front) and north gates. Lund himself lies under a marble obelisk in the Odd Fellows section. Like Austin's burial ground, Virginia City's cemetery developed in a composite fashion during the 1860s, with sections specified for Masons, Odd Fellows, and other fraternal organizations.⁵

A photograph of lower Austin taken in the mid-1880s shows the Austin cemetery in the distance and indicates that it had more or less attained its present size. The cemetery reflects the ethnic diversity of Austin and surrounding areas during the historic period. Land of birth is noted on many gravemarkers, and other sources supplement the inscriptions. Ethnicities represented include American-born whites, Basque, Chinese, Danish, English, French, Irish, Italian, Hispanic, Portuguese (Azores), Scottish, Swedish, and Welsh.⁶

A black granite marker in the northwest corner of the Citizens section identifies the grave of Lee Kee (1824-1931). Kee, a veteran, was highly regarded by Austin's white community, and the only Chinese grave in the Austin Cemetery presently identified by a marker. His epitaph reads (phrasing altered to stanza form):

Here lies a good old Chinaman
Who had a heart that was a nugget of gold
For many a hungry man he fed
Before his body became cold.

Whether Kee's grave is unique or one of many Chinese burials in the Austin Cemetery is unknown. Early issues of the *Reveille* noted the presence of Chinese graves in the vicinity of Austin, and there is some indication that the Chinese graveyard was located below town, perhaps within or in the general vicinity of the Austin Cemetery. On festival days Austin's Chinese decorated their graves "with roast pigs, cups of tea, rice, confections, and other Chinese delicacies." The *Reveille* also

⁵ Lander Lodge No. 8 Record of Minutes, 239; Lund, "I.O.O.F. Cemetary [*sic*];" and Francke, "Silver Terrace Cemeteries."

⁶ Paher, *Nevada Ghost Towns & Mining Camps*, 168.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 10

Austin Cemetery, Austin, Lander County, Nevada

Section 8 Statement of Significance, continued

made reference to the shipment of Chinese remains to China, a common practice among the Chinese of the American West. Perhaps the Chinese graveyard served for temporary interment until the deceased could be returned to their villages of origin.⁷

An Austin Cemetery Association existed by 1894, and improvements and general maintenance appear to have increased in the 1930s. A writer with the Works Progress Administration visited the cemetery in the late 1930s, and the WPA Nevada guidebook that resulted commented on the cemetery's place in Austin's community identity:

Large cemeteries with old-fashioned epitaphs are also reminders of the many who once made this city their home. Former inhabitants who have wandered far like to be assured that they will lie here in the end--a form of devotion that Virginia City also attracts, sure proof that the old camp had more than transient glory.

In June 1939 the *Reveille* commented on that year's Memorial Day cemetery decorations under the subhead "Our People Make Beautiful Demonstration of Touching Remembrances":

Austin's beautiful cemetery on both sides of the Lincoln highway . . . was in excellent condition to receive its hosts of visitors, having been recently put in good order, and, owing to adequate rainfall, the grass, trees, shrubs and many ornamental and flowering plants all looking their best. An incredible number of shipments of flowers from Reno, San Francisco and other florists arrived in Austin by the Hiskey Stages and trucks on Monday and Tuesday and many out-of-town visitors brought their supplies of flowers with them.

The article also praised the beautification of the adjoining Indian section. The Austin Cemetery has been maintained by local authorities in recent decades and has benefitted from periodic clean-ups, and a group working under the auspices of the Church of Latter Day Saints recently compiled a register of known interments.⁸

⁷ Lewis, *The Town that Died Laughing*, 116, 118, 120. Kee was one of the last Chinese to live in Austin. Late in his life Kee and a partner, Harry Nakashima, ran the cafe in the International Hotel (Estelle Shanks personal communication).

⁸ Lander County Deed Book 48, p. 624; Nevada State Historical Society, *Nevada*, 261; *Reese River Reveille and the Austin Sun*, June 3, 1939; and Ray H. Williams Jr. and Ray H. "Ramey"

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Austin Cemetery, Austin, Lander County, Nevada

Section 8 Statement of Significance, continued

Material Culture Analysis

The material culture of the Austin Cemetery is as varied as the ethnicities and socioeconomic standing of the persons buried in the graveyard. Large, professionally designed, marble and granite monuments reflect the wealth of certain Austinites, or the desire on the part of some, regardless of means, to commemorate their loved ones with the most impressive monuments they could afford. Austin's Catholic population in particular seemed to regard the ornamentation of graves with costly memorials and metal fencing as important (wooden headboards and palings are found throughout the cemetery but are absent or nearly absent in the Calvary section). Unlike Austin's Catholic section, Virginia City's Catholic Cemetery has numerous paling graves.

One curious aspect of Austin's professionally carved monuments is the fact that few if any are signed by their makers. Signing was common in the East as a way to advertize the work of the sculptor or marble yard. Little is known about the source of Austin's marble monuments, but a reference to marble for a different purpose has come to light. In 1877 an Austin grocery contained a slab of Italian marble used for cutting meat. The slab was "cut and polished to [grocer] George Lammerhart's order in San Francisco." San Francisco is also a likely source for Austin's marble funerary sculpture. Or the point of origin may have been the Carrara area of Italy, a possibility that could explain the anonymity of the carvers.⁹

A number of the cemetery's wooden headboards preserve evidence of painted inscriptions. Inscribed headboards are prevalent in the West, in contrast to the Southeast, another region where wooden gravemarkers are common but where inscriptions do not survive and were apparently rarely attempted. This may relate to the more varied ethnicity, greater mobility, and higher level of education among Austinites and other western mining community residents, compared to the more homogenous and pre-literate character of traditional Southeastern communities. Some of Austin's headboards may have been made by undertakers, a linkage that was common in the East. Austin's undertaking trade is relatively well documented, beginning with Forsyth & Dougherty, who moved to Austin from Sacramento in 1864, followed by the English-born Richard Pearce (b. ca. 1827), the

Williams III personal communication.

⁹ *Reese River Reveille*, May 22, 1877.

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Section 8 Page 12

Austin Cemetery, Austin, Lander County, Nevada

Section 8 Statement of Significance, continued

town's carpenter-undertaker during the later 1860s and early 1870s, and William Schwin, a carpenter-undertaker active in the late 1870s.¹⁰

The Austin headboards with their rounded tops appear to be modeled on conventional headstones of the late antebellum period. They are considerably plainer than some of the headboards in Virginia City's cemetery which have shaped sides in emulation of post-bellum Victorian headstones, and which retain traces of lavish inscriptions and decoration that appear to be the work of sign painters. The crude character of the area's earliest gravemarkers is illustrated by an October 1865 *Reveille* account of a grave 35 miles east of Austin:

At the head of the grave there is a round pine stake three inches in diameter, and three feet high, across the top of which is nailed the cantle board of a saddle, upon the face of which has been rudely cut with a knife this inscription: "Ralph M. Lozier and John Applegate, killed by Indians, May 21, 1860."¹¹

Alternative materials, those other than stone and wood, were used almost from the beginning in the Austin Cemetery. Iron memorials, hand-made fences, and monument accessories attest to the town's mining-based ironworking industry. It is possible, as in other communities with iron industries, that iron memorials were made for the deceased relatives of ironworkers. Concrete came into general use in the early twentieth century, and the affordable and moldable material appealed especially to the less affluent residents of the area. The Indian section (not included in the nomination) has some especially creative historic concrete monuments. For example, the gravemarkers of Dummy Bill (1893-1945) and Dugan Snook (d. 1943) are decorated with horse figurines molded from pink-tinted concrete and framed with painted featherlike designs in red, yellow, and black.

¹⁰ Ibid., May 24, 1864, June 24, 1872, and December 22, 1877; Pezzoni, "Virginian to the Grave," 66.

¹¹ *Reese River Reveille*, October 6, 1865.

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Section 10 Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated area corresponds to the approximately 5-acre area contained in the Calvary, Citizens, Masonic, and Odd Fellows sections of the cemetery, as demarcated by fences, and including an intervening section of US Highway 50.

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Section 10 Page 15

Austin Cemetery, Austin, Lander County, Nevada

Section 10 Geographical Data, continued

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated area correspond to the present boundaries of the Calvary, Citizens, Masonic, and Odd Fellows sections of the cemetery.

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Austin Cemetery, Austin, Lander County, Nevada

Section 9 Bibliography, continued

PHOTOGRAPHS

1. 1. Subject: Austin Cemetery (same for all photos)
2. Location: Lander Co., Nv. (same for all photos)
3. Photographer: J. Daniel Pezzoni (same for all photos)
4. Photo date: March 2003 (same for all photos)
5. Original negative archived at the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office,
Carson City, Nv. (same for all photos)
6. Description of view: Calvary section. View looking west.
7. Photograph number appears at beginning of entry (same for all photos)
2. 6. Cemetery as viewed from road leading to Stokes Castle showing storage shed
(small, light-colored, box-like building). View looking northwest.
3. 6. US Highway 50 as it passes through the cemetery with east edge of Calvary section
and Calvary gates on left (south) side of road and Odd Fellows and Masonic
section gates on right (north) side. View looking west.
4. 6. Malloy family plot in Calvary section. View looking south.
5. 6. Mrs. L. W. Compton memorial, Calvary section.
6. 6. Lee Kee memorial, Citizens section.
7. 6. Headboards and paling of Charles D. and L. H. Spires, near boundary of Calvary
and Citizens sections.