



THE PRESERVATION PULSE

Issue 6, February 2025



From NPF's Executive Director Dr. Figanbaum

Preserving Nevada's history is both a privilege and a challenge, as seen with the impending loss of the Southern Pacific Railroad machine shop in Sparks. While we celebrate our victories in preservation, moments like this remind us of the ongoing work needed to protect

our state's architectural and cultural heritage. NPF remains committed to advocating for historic sites, supporting communities in their preservation efforts, and creating meaningful opportunities to engage with our shared past. From projects like the Gerlach Economic Development Strategic Plan to upcoming events such as the Historic Westside School Walking Tour and Lei'd In Las Vegas: A Vintage Luau

Experience, NPF remains dedicated to its mission of preserving and celebrating Nevada's history.



PRESERVATION SPOTLIGHT

Southern Pacific Railroad Machine Shop

The Southern Pacific Railroad machine shop, built in 1904, will soon be demolished, marking the loss of yet another historic structure in Northern Nevada. Despite preservation efforts, Union Pacific Railroad has opted to remove the building to accommodate growing operations. Advocacy groups like Preserve Nevada continue to emphasize the importance of protecting historic railroad sites, including the American Railway Express Agency building and the Southern Pacific Freight Depot.

Sparks City Councilman Donald Abbott and local preservation advocates have expressed disappointment over the decision, recognizing the machine shop's historical significance to the city's railroad legacy. However, in a gesture to the community, Union Pacific and the City of Sparks are salvaging bricks from the building for public collection.

Brick Pickup Dates:

February 24 – April 5

Location:

East lot of Cottonwood Park,
777 Spice Islands Drive

A commemorative plaque will be placed at the site to honor the machine shop's legacy. As historic structures continue to disappear, preservationists remain focused on advocating for the protection of Nevada's rail history.



Photo: Sparks Museum & Cultural Center

NPF'S LEGACY: PAST PROJECTS

In August 2018, the Nevada Preservation Foundation (NPF) collaborated with Better City, Bunnyfish Studios, and CFA Reno to develop an **Economic Development Strategic Plan for Gerlach, Nevada**, a rural community with deep historical ties to ranching, railroads, mining, and agriculture. Over time, economic shifts and the closure of the Empire Mine led to a significant population decline, prompting Washoe County and the Gerlach Economic Development Committee to seek strategies for revitalization. As part of this effort, NPF played a key role in identifying historic

structures and districts eligible for preservation and heritage tourism opportunities that could stimulate local growth. The study proposed initiatives such as an annual historical tourism event, self-guided tours, and zoning strategies to ensure new development complements Gerlach's historic character. Additionally, it emphasized entrepreneurship, workforce development, and infrastructure investments to create sustainable economic opportunities. By integrating historic preservation into economic planning, NPF helped lay the groundwork for revitalizing Gerlach while protecting its history for future generations.



U P C O M I N G P R O G R A M M I N G

Historic Westside School Walking Tour

Saturday, February 22nd 10am
\$10

Tickets at nevadapreservation.org

Take a Saturday stroll around the Historic Westside school campus, Las Vegas' oldest remaining school and the official headquarters of Nevada Preservation.

This walking tour explores the school's unique architectural style and the recent restoration that preserved it as well the important role it played as a cornerstone to the African American community during the height of segregation.

Find out about the role the school played in a community that was at the center of the Civil Rights Movement, how city leaders are working to preserve this important piece of our architectural history and how it still serves as a community campus today. Don't miss this unique opportunity for an up-close look at the intersection of history, architecture, and activism, showcasing the lasting significance of this school.





VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT



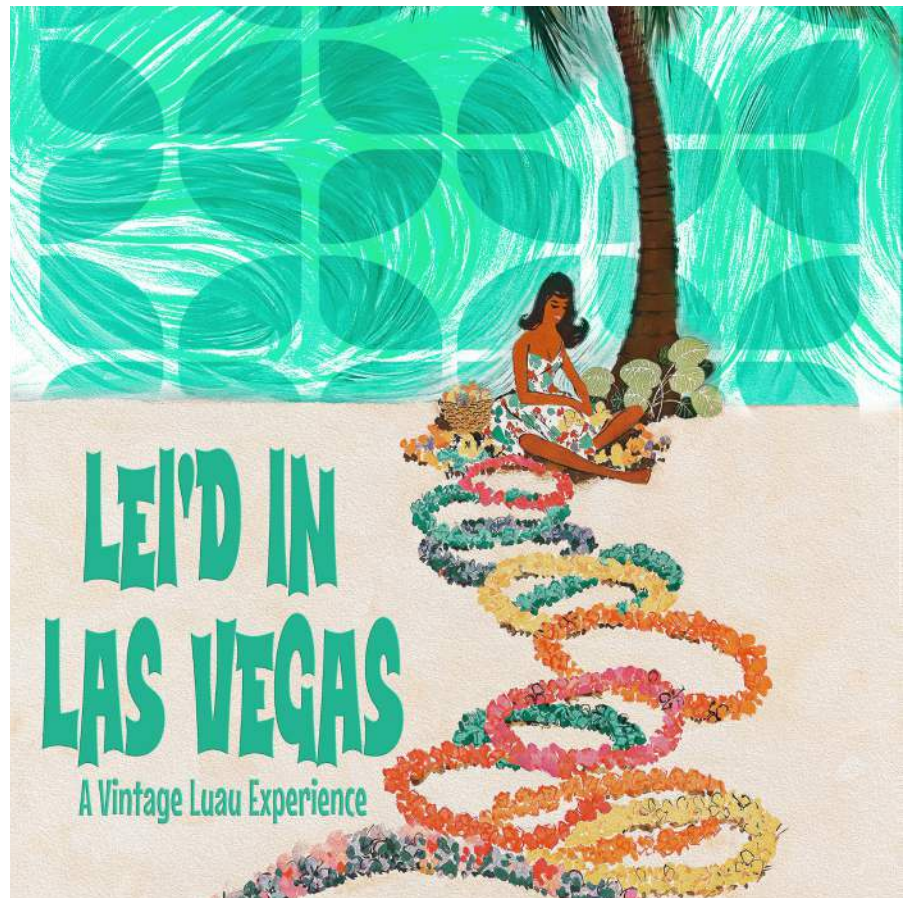
After retiring as a Compliance Auditor for the Federal Government, Delise wanted to give back to her community through volunteering. Even before moving to Las Vegas five years ago, she had heard about the Nevada Preservation Foundation (NPF) and soon became an active participant in walking tours. Her passion for history led her to become a dedicated volunteer, especially during Home + History Las Vegas, where she enjoys engaging with the community and sharing her knowledge.

Beyond her work with NPF, Delise also volunteers at the Nevada State Veterans Home in Boulder City and the Clark County Museum in Henderson, further demonstrating her commitment to preserving and honoring local history. Her contributions help ensure that the stories of Las Vegas and Clark County remain alive for future generations. Thank you, Delise, for your dedication to historic preservation!

A LOOK AHEAD

Get ready to celebrate mid-century modern style at **Lei'd In Las Vegas: A Vintage Luau Experience**, the ultimate Friday night event during Home + History! With island flavors, tropical cocktails, live entertainment, and a dazzling 1963 Mid Mod home, this is one retro getaway you won't want to miss!

Tickets at nevadapreservation.org



nevadapreservation.org