



THE PRESERVATION PULSE

Issue 8, April 2025



From NPF's Executive Director
Dr. Figanbaum

Hello friends of preservation!

As we celebrate **10 years** of storytelling, tours, and tenacity, this month's issue of *The Preservation Pulse* is about the very heart of what NPF stands for: honoring the past to inspire the future.

From the national recognition of the Black Springs Volunteer Firehouse to our deep-rooted connection with the Historic Westside School, we're proud to uplift the stories that define Nevada's cultural legacy. These places aren't just buildings—they're reminders of strength, resilience, and the communities that shaped them.

We've also got exciting things ahead! **Alan Hess** returns for a can't-miss

keynote at **Home + History Las Vegas**, and our ever-popular **Oral History Happy Hour** is back this June—so get ready to laugh, learn, and maybe even share your own vintage Vegas story.

Here's to preserving the past and celebrating every step forward. Thank you for being a part of our journey.



PRESERVATION SPOTLIGHT

Black Springs Volunteer Firehouse Earns National Recognition

The Nevada State Historic Preservation Office recently announced the official listing of the **Black Springs Volunteer Firehouse** on the **National Register of Historic Places**—a significant milestone for one of Nevada's most historically resilient communities.

Built in 1970 through community efforts, the firehouse served as the headquarters for Black Springs' volunteer fire department until the mid-1980s. It stood as a beacon of self-reliance and solidarity in a neighborhood born out of adversity, where Black Nevadans could build lives amid widespread housing

discrimination in nearby Reno and Sparks.

Now home to the **Northern Nevada African American Firefighters Museum**, the building continues to tell the story of perseverance, civic pride, and the legacy of leaders like Nevada's first African American Fire Chief, William "Bill" Lobster.

This national designation not only honors the firehouse's past but also opens doors for its future through preservation funding and tax incentives. The listing ensures that this symbol of community and cultural heritage will be protected and celebrated for generations to come. Be sure to visit the Northern Nevada African American Firefighters Museum during your summer road trip through Nevada!

Photo: Alicia Barber



NPF'S LEGACY: PAST PROJECTS

As NPF celebrates 10 years of tours, events, and storytelling across Southern Nevada, we're reflecting on the places that have shaped our mission—and few are as meaningful as the **Historic Westside School**.

Opened in 1923 with just two classrooms and two teachers, this Mission Revival-style schoolhouse—designed by Southern California architects Allison & Allison—is the oldest remaining school building in Las Vegas. Over the decades, it expanded to serve grades K–8 and remained the only school available to children in the Westside community until 1952.

The campus evolved alongside the community it served, with additions like the 1948 wing designed by prominent Las Vegas architect A.L.



Worswick. It became a beacon of learning during segregation, led by notable figures including Dr. James Pughsley, the school's only Black principal.

Though it closed as a school in 1967, the building remained a center for community. Thanks to a \$12.5

million restoration, it now houses nonprofits like NPF, supports cultural programming, and stands proudly as a symbol of resilience, civic pride, and the enduring value of preservation.

NPF is honored to share a lasting connection with this extraordinary place in Las Vegas history.

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

Mid-Century Modern Las Vegas: A Keynote with Alan Hess

Saturday, May 3, 2025 at 6PM \$65

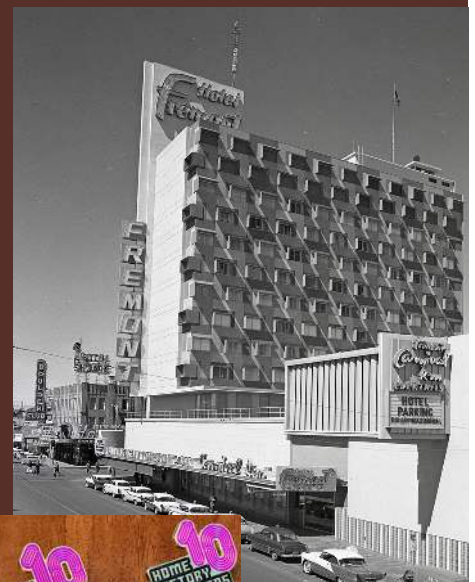
Tickets at nevadapreservation.org



Celebrate 10 years of Home + History Las Vegas at the iconic Fremont Hotel & Casino with a keynote presentation by renowned **architectural historian Alan Hess**. Enjoy a glass of wine or a cold brew in this historic casino while we dive into the lasting impact of mid-century design on Las Vegas.

Built in 1956 and designed by Wayne McAllister, the Fremont Hotel introduced modernist design and Strip-style luxury to downtown Las Vegas. NPF is honored to welcome back Alan Hess, an architect, author, and advocate for twentieth-century architectural preservation. Hess played a pivotal role in the inaugural Home + History Las Vegas festival, kicking off the very first Vintage Vegas Home Tour in 2015. Now, a decade later, he returns to reflect on Las Vegas' architectural transformation, the lasting impact of mid-century design, and the legacy of Wayne McAllister. His keynote will highlight the importance of preserving historic buildings and their role in shaping the city's identity.

Raise a glass, connect with fellow enthusiasts, and celebrate the architectural heritage of Las Vegas! Plus take home our 10th Anniversary pin!



Above Photo: LVCVA Archive



MEET TEAM NPF



Jacki, an enthusiastic transplant to Las Vegas, is the Marketing Director for Nevada Preservation Foundation and Home + History Las Vegas. After restoring a Palm Springs condo designed by architect Barry Berkus, Jacki and her husband Mark moved into a home that thankfully didn't need any renovations in the Historic Beverly Green neighborhood—at least at first! She connected with NPF when answering a crowdsourcing call for photos of midcentury properties to be included in NPF's *Las Vegas: Uncommon Modern* publication. After revealing she was in marketing and design, her firm Vivitiv was asked to brand and promote Home + History in 2018, and has been on the team ever since. She truly enjoys working with this small but mighty group and is constantly learning fascinating tidbits about Nevada's history.

When she's not having a laugh creating content for social media, she loves visiting museums, watching 1970s films, and playing Pokemon Go. (yes, she stills plays that.)



A LOOK AHEAD



Back by popular demand, **Oral History Happy Hour** is making its triumphant return this June—and this time, we're diving into the stories of those Born and Raised in Las Vegas!

Were you a local kid growing up in the neon glow of the 1960s, '70s, or '80s? We want to hear from you!

Help us capture the memories, moments, and mischief of vintage Vegas childhoods.

If you've got a story to share (or know someone who does), drop us a line—your tale could be featured in our next session!

Stay tuned for more details... and get ready to raise a glass to the past!

