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NEVADA COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission
P.O. Box 1014
Nevada City, California 95959
info@nevadacountylandmarks.com
530-274-7118

20 April 2018

Nevada County Board of Supervisors
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

Honorable Chair and Board Members:

At today's meeting of the Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend to the Board that the application for landmark designation of the Truckee Memorial Masonic Arch, located at 10142 Jibboom Street in Truckee, be approved and the building designated as Nevada County Historical Landmark NEV 18-01.

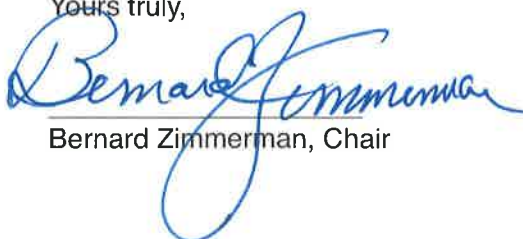
The Arch is all that remains of the historic Masonic Lodge # 200 building, built in 1909 and destroyed by fire and explosion in 1993. It reportedly was the only lodge to have had a chiseled, Sierra granite entrance-way, which was preserved after the fire. In 2007, the entrance-way Arch was reconstructed on the grounds of the Truckee-Donner Historical Society's Old Jail Museum. It has been a Truckee landmark for over 100 years. Its history is detailed in the enclosed application.

The Truckee-Donner Historical Society has provided a thorough level of research and documentation to accompany its application, which has been reviewed by the Commission for historical accuracy. The application and supporting documentation is enclosed.

If you approve the application, please forward the resolution and accompanying documents to the County Recorder.

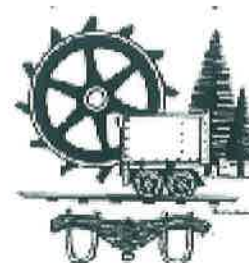
If you have any further questions do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Yours truly,



Bernard Zimmerman, Chair

cc: Chaun Mortier, President
Truckee-Donner Historical Society, w/o enc.





County of Nevada State of California

Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission Application for Registration of Historical Landmark

Name of proposed landmark: Truckee Memorial Masonic Arch

Location: 10142 Jibboom Street, Truckee, CA 96161

Name of applicant: Truckee-Donner Historical Society

Address: PO Box 893, Truckee, CA 96161

Home or work phone: 530-582-0893 cell phone: 832-969-7854

Name and address of landowner upon whose property proposed
landmark is located, if owner is not applicant:

Not applicable

I authorize the placing of a plaque or marker on site.

Chauvin Mordier, President
Landowner's signature

2-22-2018
Date

Brief history and description of proposed landmark:

(Attach additional sheets as necessary)

Please see attached article on the Truckee Memorial Masonic Arch.

Unique aspects or properties of proposed landmark.

The Truckee Memorial Masonic Arch represents one of the oldest Masonic lodges here in California. It is the only lodge to have had a chiseled, solid Sierra granite entranceway and has been a Truckee landmark for over 100 years. The rebuilt standalone arch frames the historical garden, located on the same property as the Old Truckee Jail Museum (Truckee Jail (Detail/P193) (P193) Point of Interest 5/19/1971 Truckee (NEV)). The Arch pays tribute to the early Masonic builders and pioneers who were instrumental in putting together the foundations of California, when we needed it most.

How will the landmark be protected and maintained?

The Truckee Memorial Masonic Arch will be maintained as part of the Truckee-Donner Historical Society and the attached Old Truckee Jail Museum. The Old Truckee Jail is one of the few surviving 19th century jailhouses of its kind in the West and one of the few remaining original buildings in Truckee. The old Bastille was used continuously from 1875 until May 1964 and has been able to withstand many fires that swept the town in the early days.

Bibliography. Cite or attach available books, records, articles or other materials pertaining to the proposed landmark. Books and articles:

Aguera, Joseph R. (Joe); Mason, Past Worshipful Master Truckee Lodge Number 200. Personal correspondences/interviews, January and February 2018.

Moonshine Ink.com, January 10, 2014

Office of Historic Preservation. Point of Interest. Old Truckee Jail Museum (Truckee Jail (Detail/P193) (P193) Point of Interest 5/19/1971 Truckee (NEV)). <http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/ListedResources/Detail/P193>

SierraSun.com, December 2, 1993

SierraSun.com/article/20071028/NEWS/71028004

SierraSun.com, September 4, 2007

SierraSun.com, Patrick McCartney, October 28, 2007

Truckee-Donner Historical Society, <<https://www.truckeehistory.org/>>

Truckee-Donner Historical Society Members (second edition editors) (1994). *Fire & Ice: a portrait of Truckee*. Truckee, CA: Truckee-Donner Historical Society. © 1981 by Truckee-Donner Historical Society, revised 1994 by TDHS, second printing © 1997

Truckee Lodge Number 200 (1994, September 10). *125th Anniversary Observance of the Founding of Truckee Lodge Number 200, F. & A.M., Instituted-May 5, 1869, Chartered-October 14, 1869, Northstar at Tahoe, Truckee, CA*

Whitsell, Leon O. (1950). *One hundred years of freemasonry in California*, Four Volumes. San Francisco, CA: Griffin Brothers, Inc. publisher Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons of California. © 1950, Grand Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons of California

Historical or civil records: (e.g., ownership, assessments, etc.)

Nevada County Assessor Parcel (19-102-04-000). Owner is Truckee-Donner Historical Society, P.O. Box 893, Truckee, CA 96160. <https://reports.nevcounty.net/property/rdPage.aspx?rdReport=parcel.ParcelReport&APN=1910204000>.

Other: (e.g. photographs, prints or drawings. Please list and attach separately)

(please refer to attached article and CD with all dates and citations)

- Truckee Knights of Pythias Hall (1869-1909)
- Truckee Masonic Temple (1910)
- Relocated and rebuilt Truckee Memorial Masonic Arch (2018)
- Close up of keystone at the top of the Truckee Memorial Masonic Arch (2018)
- Plaque at the Truckee Memorial Masonic Arch (2018)
- 1993 explosion of the Truckee Masonic Building (1993)
- Arch at 1993 explosion (1993)
- Google Earth identifying original location of Arch and new location of Memorial (2018)

Charm Morrison, President
Applicant's signature

2-22-2018
Date



This completed form and all related documents shall be sent to the:

Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission

Attn: Chairman

P.O. Box 1014, Nevada City, CA 95959

An application must be considered solely on its historic or architectural merits and not for commercial gain, political benefits, or other non-historical reasons.

An individual Commissioner can advise and counsel an applicant but all applications must be considered by the full Commission, meeting in regular session

Truckee's Historic Masonic Arch

By Judy DePuy

Carved by Masonic craftsmen at the dawn of the 20th century, you can find in old town Truckee a historic arch that signifies the influence and history of the Truckee freemasons. The chiseled stones once were part of the entry arch to the Truckee Masonic Lodge, the 200th and one of the oldest established lodges in the U.S. The white stone archway, with each stone weighing around 250 pounds and measuring 17" high by 12" wide, now resides next to the Old Truckee Jail Museum. The top stone archway, known as a keystone, is etched with the lodge's symbol of a square and a compass. The total arch is a 3000 pound Sierra granite tribute to the early Masons in Truckee.

To answer how and when the arch got here, you have to look back to the beginning of the Masons here in Truckee.

Many Masons have camped at what is now known as Truckee. In 1844, Dr. John Townsend, the first established doctor in California and a member of the Murphy-Townsend-Stevens Party helped bring the first wagons through the Sierra Nevada. Standing on what was to be Truckee's townsite, he prophesied that a railroad would pass this way some day. With him were Moses Schallenberger and John M. Murphy who were also members of the San Jose Masonic Lodge.

In 1869 Truckee was an important railroad station with two major historical occurrences:

- 1) On May 10, 1869, the golden spike was driven to join the rails from the East and West in Promontory, Utah
- 2) On May 15, 1869, a group of Truckee Masons were granted a dispensation by Charles March, Grand Master of Masons in California, to start a lodge. Five months later on October 14, 1869, Truckee Lodge No. 200 was given its charter.

The Truckee Lodge was named after an Indian chief and scout who had accompanied John C. Fremont on some of his expeditions in the West. The Indian scout

told the members of the Murphy-Townsend-Stevens party how to cross the Sierras following a certain river to its source at the lake in the mountains.

Due to the influence of the railroad on the town, the Masonic membership consisted of many transient railroad workers. A steady group of Truckee business and professional men kept the charter open and were recognized as respected, solid citizens of the community. The Masons not only helped build the Truckee community but also carried out the Masonic tradition of always endeavoring to make good men better.

An early Truckee Mason and a leading Truckee resident and publisher of *The Truckee Republican*, Charles Fayette McGlashan (who was also a school teacher and lawyer), was part of the Lodge (and served as its Master in 1874). McGlashan wrote the "History of the Donner Party" (published 1879). His infinite detail and personal interviews from the survivors of the Donner Party has had it accepted as the authentic version of the historical tragedy of our early settlers. The tragedy took place at both Donner Lake and Alder Creek just miles of what would later become the town of Truckee, CA.

From 1869 to 1909 Truckee Lodge No. 200 met at the Truckee Knights of Pythias Hall. [insert pix and commemorative pamphlet cover] In 1910 they moved to a new Truckee Masonic Temple that was an imposing 3-story addition to the town's skyline with the lodge meeting room on the top floor and a large ballroom and kitchen on the second (which also served as a theater, movie house and dance hall for the community). It was common during the heyday of the railroads that the opening of the lodge would be delayed until one of the trains arrived so the crew members, who were Masons, could fill the vacant officer's stations and confer the degrees.

In those days many Masonic Lodge's had arches to define the entry into the lodge. So in 1909 the Truckee Masonic arch was erected with the new building. The arch is unique in that it is chiseled from

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Echoes From The Past Newsletter

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Sierra granite and has been a landmark to the Town of Truckee for over 100 years.

On November 30, 1993 a terrible propane explosion occurred in the building. The explosion destroyed the building that had become a prominent fixture of the Town of Truckee and was always referred to as "the old Masonic building". [December 2, 1993 *Sierra Sun*, p. 1, "Downtown blast kills 1"; the building was constructed with a 2-3 foot layer of dirt between the floors as a fire deterrent which helped to keep the fire from moving to other buildings).]

The iconic archway was doomed for a landfill, along with the rest of the building's debris. But thanks to the Truckee Masons, the good people of Truckee and the Truckee-Donner Historical Society, the stones were saved after the 1993 explosion. Though they were "misplaced" for a while, the stones were re-located and stored at the old Truckee cemetery. Originally, the thought was to have the arch reconstructed at the cemetery but the Truckee-Donner Historical Society offered to have the 23-stone entry placed next to the Old Truckee Jail. This allowed the Arch to be just 63 yards (and only 6" off a straight beeline) from its original location. "It's a part of our history - the only remaining part of the old Masonic lodge" said Master of the Lodge Gary Miner. "To be able to erect the arch is like seeing the past - the old jail is the perfect place to view the history of Truckee." (*Sierra Sun*, September 4, 2007, p. 4)

Fourteen years after the explosion that destroyed the Masonic lodge, the arch was re-erected to its new location at 10142 Jibboom Street next to the Old Truckee Jail museum. The arch harkens back to Truckee's earliest days first as an outpost and then as a town. Twelve Masons attended the dedication and then right on time the sound of a freight train's whistle punctuated the silence evoking the time a century ago when the Masons built the Truckee lodge.

"This Masonic arch is a crucial part of history and it should remain a part of the Town of Truckee" said Joe

Aguera, Past Worshipful Master Truckee Lodge No. 200.

Sources:

Whitsell, Leon O (1950). One hundred years of Free Masonry in California. S: Grand Lodge, Free and accepted Masons of California. (Four volumes, ©1950).

SierraSun.com/article/20071028/NEWS/71028004.

Sierra Sun.com, September 4, 2007.

Sierra Sun.com, December 2, 1993.

Sierra Sun, Patrick McCartney, October 28, 2007.

Moonshine Ink: January 10, 2014.

125th Anniversary Observance of the Founding of Truckee Lodge Number 200, F.&A.M., Instituted - May 5, 1869, Chartered - October 14, 1869, Northstar of Tahoe, Truckee, CA, September 10, 1994.

Joe Aguera, Mason, Past Worshipful Master Truckee Lodge Number 200.

Truckee Donner Historical Society website, <https://www.truckeehistory.org/>



Photo courtesy of the Editor, 2014

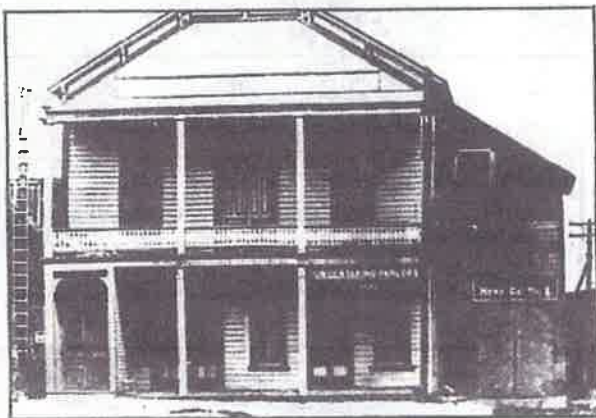
Masonic Arch images continue on page 8

Echoes From The Past Newsletter

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(Above) Photos courtesy of the article author, 2018



TRUCKEE KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS HALL — 1869-1909

Extracted from brochure 125th Anniversary Observance of the Founding of Truckee Lodge Number 200 F.&A.M., September 10, 1994



(Above & below) Original location of the Masonic Arch; FTS0067, 1910



(Above) Masonic Lodge after 1993 Propane Explosion; COR2344

Masonic Arch article continued on page 9

Echoes From The Past Newsletter

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(Above) Courtesy of Greg Zirbel and Google Earth showing location of original Masonic Arch and where it presently stands in 2018

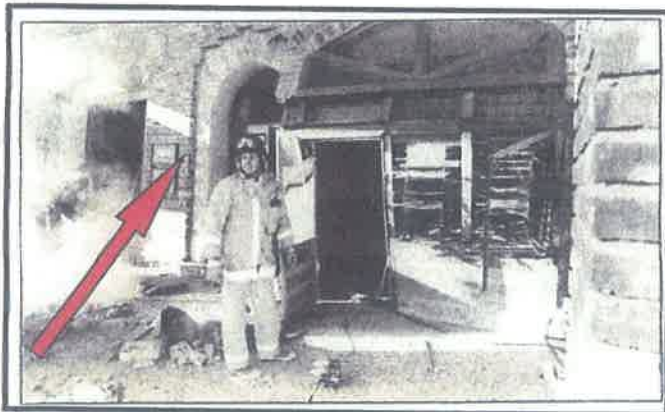


Photo courtesy of Bart Banks and KC Brown from December 2, 1993 Sierra Sun newspaper article, back page (scanned)

Assessment of landmark application (to be completed by Commission member)

1. Is permission of the property owner included?

Yes

2. Is permission granted for the placing of a marker or plaque?

Plaque already in place. The Tahoe-Donner Historical Society may place a second plaque.

3. Is reasonable protection and maintenance for the landmark addressed?

Yes, by Tahoe-Donner Historical Society

4. Is the description of the landmark clear and precise?

Yes

5. Is the history of landmark comprehensive and complete?

Yes

6. Are there records to support the statements regarding the landmark?

Yes

7. Does the landmark have unusual properties?

Yes. Truckee Masonic Lodge # 200 is reportedly the only lodge to have had a chiseled, Sierra granite entrance-way. It was preserved after the fire and explosion in 1993 and is all that remains of the historic Masonic lodge building. It has been a Truckee landmark for over 100 years.

8. Is the bibliography sufficiently complete to enable verification of the statements made in the application?

Yes

9. Are supplemental materials included or cited, such as photographs, prints or drawings?

Yes

Bernard Gimreman
Commission member (Evaluator)

18 April 2018
Date

Olivia Barnes
Commission member (Evaluator)

19 April 2018
Date