

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Nevada</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Eureka</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Eureka Historic District**

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Eureka**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Eureka**

STATE: **Nevada**      CODE: **32**      COUNTY: **Eureka**      CODE: **011**

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Multiple - Public and private**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Community of Eureka**

CITY OR TOWN: **Eureka**      STATE: **Nevada**      CODE: **32**

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Eureka County Courthouse**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Eureka**      STATE: **Nevada**      CODE: **32**

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**Nevada Historical Sites**

DATE OF SURVEY: **1968**       Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**Center for Western University of Nevada-Desert Research Institute Studies**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**North Virginia Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Reno**      STATE: **Nevada**      CODE: **0170**

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_

ENTRY NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Eureka, Nevada is one of the best preserved of Nevada's mining boom towns. During the 1880's this now quiet town was second in importance in Nevada only to Virginia City.

Eureka's rich lead and silver ore was discovered in 1864, but it was not until 1869 that a new smelting process was found that could treat the difficult ore and make it productive. Between these dates the area was totally deserted. Eureka became a boomtown in 1869 and soon had a permanent population of about 8,000 people. Following the peak years of 1871 to 1885 the mining, and thus the town, gradually declined. Eureka was a part of Lander County until 1873 when it separated and became Eureka County.

The very gradual decline in the town's fortunes is primarily responsible for the unusual state of preservation of the town. There was always just a little money coming in to keep things in repair; but not enough money to tear down the old buildings and replace them with new ones.

The last of the mines closed in 1970. Eureka's mines ran for a remarkable 101 years and total production was somewhere between \$135,000,000 and \$160,000,000. The present town, population approximately 350, survives through ranching, agriculture, and being the Eureka County seat located on a major cross country highway. Eureka is located on Highway 50 near the intersection of Highways 50 and 51.

During the 1880's Eureka was known as the "Pittsburg of the West". This nickname came about because of the heavy cloud of black smoke which hung over the narrow canyon in which the town is situated. The smoke was produced by the ten smelters of the town. The air was so poisoned by the smoke that the town was in danger. Ditches were dug up the canyon sides and tall smokestacks laid in them to deliver the smoke high into the air so it could be blown away by the wind. Huge slag heaps, resembling piles of black glass, lie at either end of town marking the sites of the smelters.

Eureka's slow start because of her difficult ore made it possible for the town to be laid out by a pair of surveyors before she began the big boom time. The main street is very wide and straight and fronted by well built brick and stone business buildings. Most of these are complete including original interiors. Some of the buildings are in danger of destruction by time or owners who can no longer maintain the buildings.

The lumber which was used to build in Eureka came either from California or the California border. Some of the buildings were moved from other boom towns. The bricks came from 3 kilns near town. The stone, of which most of the town's foundations and quite a few buildings are built, is a local pink sandstone. It is quarried from the canyon walls near town.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Eureka's side streets are filled with the small stone, frame and brick homes which are typical of a mining boom town. There are a few large impressive homes scattered over the town. One of the most beautiful of these big homes is silouetted against the desert sunsets each evening on one of the canyon walls.

Remnants of old Eureka remain everywhere: an old horse-drawn buckboard is sunken at its wheel hubs in a stable yard, the intricate wrought-iron hand-drawn fire carts of the volunteer fire companies are locked in an old dance hall, discarded mining and smelting equipment dots the landscape.

Several of the old Hotels are still in use with the original furnishings, as is the beautiful brick Courthouse.

Twenty foot arched bricked tunnels with small arched rooms leading off to dead ends are still found under the old "Eureka Hotel". There were several of these intricately bricked tunnels to be found in boomtown Eureka; though their origin and use is a matter of mystery and controversy. Since the tunnels were so close to the Chinese section they were thought to be opium dens or meeting places.

The narrow guage Eureka-Palisade Railroad connected Eureka to the main east-west railroad line. There were several stage lines operating in and around Eureka.

The Eureka Sentinel Newspaper has been published continuously since 1870. There were also several other newspapers which failed over the years in the town. The brick Sentinel publishing building is still standing and contains much of the original equipment and old handbills of entertainments are plastered on the walls.

Several of the old blacksmith shops still stand. One of them contains all of the original equipment for making wagon wheels and parts, stove pipes, horseshoes, etc.

The Eureka Opera House has shown such great attractions of the times as Jenny Lind, Frank Boothe, brother of John Wilkes Boothe, made the beginning of a comeback in Eureka after his brother killed President Lincoln, which nearly ruined Frank's career as a dramatic actor.

Eureka, Nevada  
General Description and  
Background of Community (cont)

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One of the Governors of Nevada, Reinhold Sadler, was a native of Eureka and figured very strongly in the Fish Creek War of 1879. This "War" took place just outside the town of Eureka and very thoroughly upset the town. The conflict was between the smelter owners and the charcoal burners. The charcoal burners were a group of several thousand Italian and Swiss immigrants who engaged in burning wood from the hillsides surrounding the town and making it into charcoal to fire the smelters of Eureka.

When the hills near the town were completely denuded of the wood for burning, the charcoal burners had to go further and further from town to get the wood. This made the cost of charcoal a point of contention. To a great extent the charcoal burners did not speak English and most of them had never been to town at all. This made communication difficult. The smelter owners at this time wanted to lower the price of charcoal as the lead market was declining. The charcoal burners went on strike and refused to have their charcoal moved from the hills. After a few minor skirmishes, with no shots fired, a posse from town went toward one of the burner camps and killed a few of the charcoal burners. No one in the posse was injured. The charges against the members of the posse were dropped. There are still descendants of the charcoal burners in Eureka and feelings run high when the "War" is mentioned.

**B. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The real significance of the town of Eureka is her near perfect state of preservation. The late 19th century in the western United States has a very different flavor from the rest of the world. A lot of that rich and roaring time is preserved in present day Eureka, Nevada. History can come alive to those who get to see the inside of the Eureka Opera House. The feeling of stomping, cheering miners in the horseshoe shaped balcony can still be felt. One can well imagine the everyday life, the drudgery and excitement of the 1880's. The ore strikes, the fires and floods, the gunfights, racial prejudices, masked balls, water shortages, the homes made of flattened tin cans, mortarless hand hewn stone, or of redwood brought from the California coast, these things were real in Eureka and left a mark. Eureka is significant because here history was, and is, alive.

The following are some of the major points of interest in Eureka:

**TANNHILL CABIN** - The log Tannehill cabin is located on the edge of town and is reputed to be the first permanent building in Eureka. The logs are of a diameter of up to 18". It consists of one room and has a shingle roof. In the hills there are no more logs of this size to be found as the charcoal burners used them for fuel for a distance of 50 miles from Eureka in every direction.

**SMELTER SITES** - There are 10 known smelter sites in the town of Eureka. The smelters and the larger consolidated mines were owned by companies in England. There are piles of rusting iron smokestacks and equipment to be found near the slag heaps. The slag heaps cover between 1 and 5 acres each and look like 30 foot piles of broken black glass. With the ore that was extracted in these smelters, Eureka once controlled the lead market of the entire world.

**SADLER HOUSE** - Made of red brick, the two story Reinhold Sadler house was one of the many buildings which were connected by underground tunnels. The 200 foot tunnel from the Sadler house connected to the main street business section. Reinhold Sadler was a contract teamster who hauled charcoal from the mountain charcoal burning camps to the Eureka smelters. He was elected Governor of Nevada in 1898. This home is very large in comparison to the average one or two room boom town home.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NOB HILL FIRE HOUSE - Though this firehouse now looks only like a weathered gray wooden building, it was one of the social centers of Eureka when it was proudly erected. There 9 of these Fire Companies. Each had a different section of town to protect. The front of this building contained one of the gaily painted hand drawn fire carts. The fire carts were made of intricately curled wrought iron and had the name of the fire company painted on them. The back of the firehouse held the "Fire Meetings" during which the fire company drank beer and played cards.

Each fire company had a large bell which they rang during a fire to call their members. Each bell had a different tone so everyone would know who was calling. Two of these bells are now in front of the Courthouse.

When there finally was a fire, several of the Fire Companies would race each other for the honor of putting it out. If two of them arrived simultaneously, there was a big argument as to who got to fight the fire. Three of the hand fire carts are now being stored in the old dance hall.

In order to buy uniforms and etc., the fire companies competed with each other to provide entertainment for the town. One of the biggest events of each year was the Masked Ball given on New Years Eve by the Rescue Hose Company.

COLONNADE HOTEL - This large brick building started as the home of the Italian Benevolent Society. Upstairs there were meeting rooms and the downstairs was a home. This building was connected to the Eureka Hotel across the street by a twenty foot high bricked tunnel. The tunnel's use is unknown.

CATHOLIC CHURCH - The original church was built in 1871 and proved inadequate. The present native stone church was built in 1874 at a cost of \$5,000. It has been in continuous use since 1874.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - This church was organized and built in 1874. It is built in the style of the New England churches. The building is of frame construction. A collection was taken up to have a bell cast for the church. So much silver was collected that the extra silver was cast into the bell. This bell now stands next to the Presbyterian Church. When rung the bell has a lovely and unique tone.

GRAVEYARDS - In and immediately around Eureka there are many cemeteries: Jewish, Catholic, Chinese, Odd Fellows and Pythians, City, Masonic, Schwamb (a mortician named Schwamb's private cemetery), a Pest Cemetery for victims of plague type diseases such as smallpox and diphtheria, and many Indian burial grounds.

The graveyards are typical of those filled during the boom times in Nevada. The markers are of every kind and description. There are carved wooden fences, silvered by the Nevada sun and winds; simple wooden crosses or markers with their carving nearly gone; wrought iron fences enclosing single graves or family plots, homemade sandstone markers, tall marble pillars, or a simple rectangle of unmortared bricks.

In one of the cemeteries there is a small double walled wooden cabin. It was the burial place of a young wife who developed an incurable disease. During her illness she was terribly frightened of being buried under the ground. She made her husband promise to bury her above the ground. The cabin was the result. The cabin's door now hangs askew and ~~slams~~ shut in the wind. The body was removed many years after the young woman's death and taken to Reno. One wonders if the promise was kept?. Most of the graveyards are overgrown with weeds and choked with sagebrush.

ZADOW HOUSE - The Zadow house was originally built for one of the mine managers. It is built of white painted redwood. It is typical of the Victorian era of American building; with bay windows, gingerbread decoration, and a white pillared porch. Many homes of this type were burned in the fires which swept Eureka during her most prosperous times.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH - This is Eureka's first permanent church, built in 1871. The first services of the Episcopal Church in Eureka were held in the Antelope Restaurant, a tent. This lovely little church managed to survive the disastrous fires, though it stood right in their way. At the back of the church, high over the altar, there is a 4 foot opening for a round window. It is sealed off. The side windows of the church are tall and narrow; they are rounded at the top with a peak at the center. The church is nestled against a canyon wall. Her bell sits high on the hill behind her.

RUINED CHURCH - This building would surely have been the largest of Eureka's churches, however it was never finished for lack of funds. It is thought that it was to be the Methodist-Episcopal Church. The building is built of native sandstone. The exterior was finished, but the interior was not.

STONE WAREHOUSE - This building is notable for her stone work. The huge stone blocks were cut to fit without chinking or mortar. The building still has the 8 foot iron shutters to close over the front windows. These shutters were required by the fire insurance companies or no fire insurance coverage would be issued. Several buildings in town still have these shutters, and some are still closed each night.

EUREKA FOUNTAIN BUILDING - Once a drug store, this main street building contains one of the beautiful old pressed tin ceilings. The designs were pressed into a sheet of tin, painted several colors, then applied to the ceiling and/or sides of the interior of the structure. Though the ceiling has never been repainted, the colors are clear and lovely. Many of these ceilings remain in town, however this is the only one which has never been painted out.

PAXTON AND CO. BANK - Located on Main Street, this is now the home of the Gold Bar. Paxton and Co. Bank was Eureka's first bank. Contained inside the bank was a large fireproof vault. Inside the vault were brass safety deposit boxes. The vault has an arched ceiling of brick and a walk-in iron door. The interesting thing about the present Gold Bar is that the original vault is inside the building in original condition. The bank had a chance to prove its claim that the vault was fireproof two times. The entire side of town containing the bank burned to the ground, leaving only the vault. The bank was rebuilt around the vault. Eighteen months later the identical area burned, again. The only thing left standing was the vault, uninjured. Once more the bank was built around the vault. The bank closed, but the vault stands.

BRICK STORES - There are a pair of brick store buildings on the main street. They are closed - the brick work on the pair is very well done and the iron shutters are intact. They are two stories high and one contains an elevator from the basement to the second story. These stores are typical of the main street in Eureka's heyday. There were many of the same type which have now been stuccoed over.

BROWN HOTEL - This operating hotel was built in 1877. The name was the Jackson House. It was famous as the only fireproof hotel in Nevada. It has since proved its claim of being fireproof. It has two stories and a basement and originally had a white balcony around the front and one side. It is built of red brick.

OPERA HOUSE - This imposing building was started in 1879 as a Labor Union Hall. The Labor Union went on strike during construction and ran out of funds. The incomplete building was sold and completed by the new owners as an Opera House. The floor is made of a special shock absorbing material as a dance area. It is said that you could dance all night without getting sore feet. There is a horsehoe shaped balcony over the main floor. The seats on both floors were of the type known now as tavern chairs, very much like a captains chair. One man was employed full time to keep the chairs in repair. The stage scenery was hand painted in Italy. They were made of six tall canvases on wooden frames and hinged together. Many of the famous artists of the 1800's were seen here, among them Jenny Lind and Frank Boothe. The Opera House is silent now.

COURT HOUSE - Built by the contractors who also built the Opera House and the Sentinel Building, the Court House was and is the pride of the town. Built in 1879, the new courthouse was added to the old jail building. The original jail is still in use. The architecture is of the Renaissance style, with a small amount of Victorian gingerbread trim. There is a small white balcony on the front of the building, which is built of locally made red brick with white trim. The Court House is two stories tall, the second story containing the huge court-room.



The judge's bench in the courtroom is made of imported Spanish cedar. The original judge's chair is still there as is the 4 foot clock which tells the time, day, month, and year. The two stories of the courthouse are joined by an impressive wooden banistered stairway. Two of the original walk-in safes are still being used. The doors are 6 inches thick iron with lovely summer scenes painted on them. There are two bullet holes in the first floor wainscotting where shots were fired after a fleeing prisoner in 1900.

SENTINEL BUILDING - Built in 1879, this historic building houses the original presses of the Eureka Sentinel Newspaper. The Sentinel Building is two stories high and built of native sandstone and brick. It was erected after one of the town fires burned all but the fireproof portion of the newspaper office. The fireproof part of the building was so intensely hot that wet blankets were thrown over the backs of the printers during the fire so that the paper could be put out on schedule.

The contractors had gone on strike on the Court House project, so the new Sentinel Building was erected while the builders waited for the strike to be settled. The downstairs press room is plastered with handbills of the 1880's announcing attractions at the Opera House, patent medicine shows, and stores which received a shipment of potatoes in midwinter.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Nevada Historical Sites-Brooks D. Mordy & Donald L. McCaughey  
 University of Nevada-Desert Research Institute 1968  
History of Nevada Thompson & West-Howell-North Books 1958-Berkely, Calif  
Nevada's Turbulent Yesterday-Don Ashbaugh-Western Lore Press 1963  
 Library of Congress # 63-13925  
Nevada Ghost Towns & Mining Camps-Stanley W. Paher-Howell-North Books  
 1970 Berkeley, Calif.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	115° 58' 20"	39° 31' 35"		0	0	
NE	115° 57' 25"	39° 31' 35"				
SE	115° 57' 25"	39° 30' 00"				
SW	115° 58' 20"	39° 30' 00"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **964 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
<b>Not Applicable</b>			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Marcia Elliott-Curgter & Albert Neu-RC&D Project Coordinator** P.O. Box 57 Austin, Nev 89310

ORGANIZATION: **Eureka County Historical Society** DATE: **7-17-72**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Eureka** STATE: **Nevada** CODE: **32**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

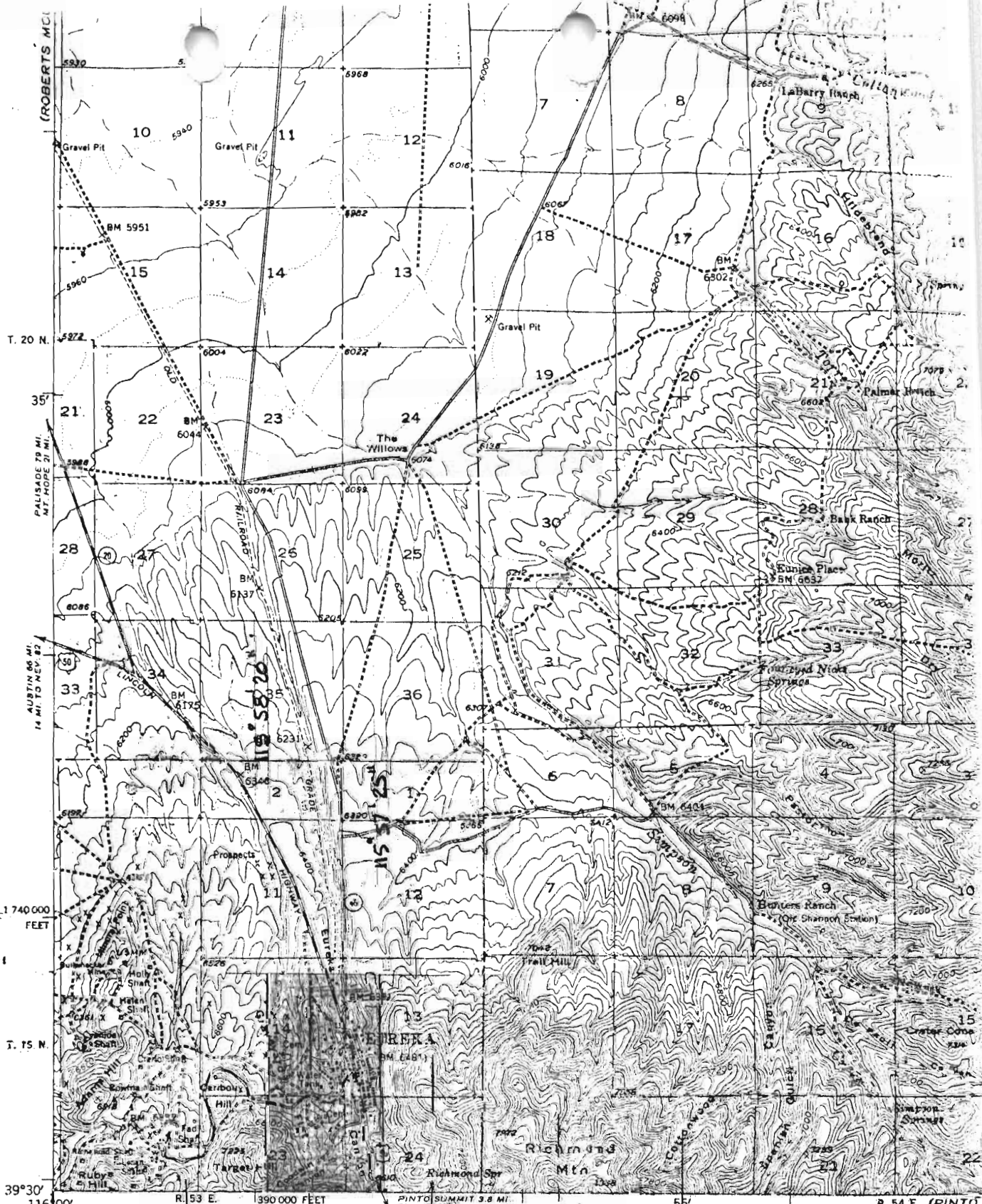
Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

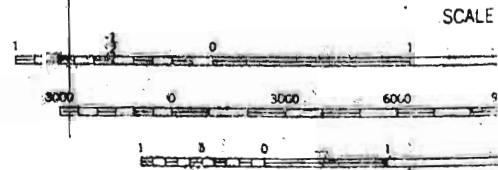


39° 31' 35" N  
 1:250,000  
 ROBERTS' MOUNTAINS

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
 Control by USGS and USC&GS  
 Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods  
 and by plane-table surveys 1953. Aerial photographs taken 1950  
 Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
 10,000-foot grid based on Nevada coordinate system, east zone  
 Dashed land lines indicate approximate locations



APPROXIMATE MEAN DECLINATION, 1953



CONTOUR INTERVAL  
 DOTTED LINES REPRESENT  
 DATUM IS NOT

# EUREKA HISTORIC DISTRICT

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL  
 FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, FEDERAL BUREAU OF GEOGRAPHIC NAMES