

City of Las Vegas

STAFF REPORT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING DATE: 07/22/15

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING

ITEM DESCRIPTION: Report by Department of Planning regarding historic and archaeological resources in local media

BACKGROUND

No relevant case history.

SUMMARY

Please enjoy the attached articles.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

NO ACTION REQUIRED

BACKUP DOCUMENTS

- “Billionaire Las Vegas builder and philanthropist Kirk Kerkorian dies at 98,” www.lasvegassun.com, 06/16/15
- “Historic Nevada trail now has national significance,” www.reviewjournal.com, 06/04/15
- “Historic Railroad Trail at Lake Mead marked national trail,” www.lasvegassun.com, 06/16/15
- “Prehistoric artifacts plentiful where Nellis jets rock the sky,” www.reviewjournal.com, 06/24/15
- “UNLV professor’s book explores Nevada’s weird, wonderful history,” www.reviewjournal.com, 06/07/15

Billionaire Las Vegas builder and philanthropist Kirk Kerkorian dies at 98



KEVORK DJANSEZIAN / AP

Kirk Kerkorian is shown in this 1992 file photo.

By Ed Koch

Published Tuesday, June 16, 2015 | 8:41 a.m.

Updated 6 minutes ago

Billionaire businessman Kirk Kerkorian spent a lifetime outdoing himself, whether it was being the biggest studio boss in Hollywood or one of America's leading automaker investors or by building spectacular Las Vegas resorts, each one grander than the previous.

Three times he built what was heralded as "the world's largest hotel" — the International Hotel (now LVH) in 1969, the MGM (now Bally's) in 1973 and the MGM Grand in 1993, earning him the

endearing title of “the father of the Las Vegas megaresort.”

Even when it came to giving away much of his vast fortune, Kerkorian did things bigger and better than most, creating the Lincy Foundation that provided a billion dollars to rebuild earthquake devastated Armenia and tens of millions of dollars to Southern Nevada charities.

Kerkor “Kirk” Kerkorian, who during his long and colorful life owned the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer film studio in Hollywood, key percentages of the Ford Motor Company and General Motors and at one time or another 16 major Las Vegas hotel-casinos died Monday, June 15, 2015, nine days after his 98th birthday. He died at home in Los Angeles of natural causes.

“Kirk Kerkorian was one of a handful of people who built the city he loved — Las Vegas,” said Brian Greenspun, CEO, publisher and editor of Greenspun Media Group. “He was quiet; he was shy; he was unassuming, and yet he was a giant of American capitalism whose vision and love of the deal helped catapult Las Vegas to the top of the world when it came to building the megaresorts for which we are so famous.”

“Kirk was a dear friend of my parents and a cherished friend of mine,” Greenspun said. “His business genius will be missed by all, and his warm and endearing friendship and loyalty will be sadly missed by all of those people lucky enough to have enjoyed it.”

Another titan of Las Vegas business and philanthropy, Steve Wynn, said he admired and respected Kerkorian “in every possible way.”

“I started playing tennis with Kirk when I was 26 years old at the Las Vegas Country Club in 1968,” Wynn said. “I have been proud to be his friend ever since. Over the years we did deals together and enjoyed life. He was a man who lived every day to its fullest and although we will miss him, we know that Kirk in his time didn’t miss a thing.”

Kerkorian, whose holdings are controlled by his Beverly Hills-based company, Tracinda Corporation, of which he was longtime president and CEO, first came to Las Vegas in 1944 for the reason most people visit the neon desert oasis — simply to gamble.

As a pilot who ferried war planes during World War II, he spent about three years as a gambler before quitting the habit in 1947.

That year he started a small charter company, LA Air Service, and flew gamblers from Southern California to Las Vegas. As the venture grew, he obtained some U.S. government cargo contracts for his charter service and changed the name to Trans International Airlines, which he sold to TransAmerica in 1968 for \$104 million. Financially, he never looked back.

Signs that Kerkorian was a real estate visionary in Las Vegas were realized early on when, in 1962, he spent \$960,000 to purchase 80 acres of Strip property across from the Flamingo hotel-casino. At first, Kerkorian rented the land to Jay Sarno who built Caesars Palace on the site in 1966, then outright sold the land to Caesars in 1968 for \$9 million.

A year earlier, Kerkorian bought 82 acres on Paradise Road for \$5 million and built the International Hotel, then the world’s largest hotel with 1,500 rooms.

To fill his mammoth 4,200-seat showroom, Kerkorian brought in two of the biggest names in entertainment — Barbra Streisand to open the facility and Elvis Presley, who until his death in 1977, set Las Vegas showroom attendance records that still stand.

Eventually, Kerkorian bought the historic Flamingo resort then sold both of his hotels to Hilton, which renamed the International Hotel the Las Vegas Hilton and the Flamingo the Flamingo Hilton.

Kerkorian’s next project was to build a towering resort with a theme based on the famed MGM Studio that he had purchased in 1969. Appropriately named the MGM hotel-casino, it overtook the International in number of rooms — 2,084 -- to become the world’s largest hotel at the time.



Of note, Kerkorian hired architect Martin Stern Jr., to build both the International and original MGM hotels.

On Nov. 21, 1980, the MGM burned during what is considered the worst disaster in Las Vegas history, killing 87 people. The hotel reopened eight months later and, in 1986, Kerkorian sold the MGM Las Vegas and MGM Reno to Bally Manufacturing for \$594 million. The Las Vegas property was renamed Bally's.

In September 1989, Kerkorian outdid himself again by announcing his company would build another Hollywood-themed complex on the Las Vegas Strip — the \$700 million MGM. (The price tag eventually grew to \$1 billion.)

MGM acquired land upon which the old Marina Hotel and Tropicana Country Club stood. Construction on the MGM Grand Las Vegas began on that site in October 1991 and the resort opened 26 months later as the new world's largest hotel with 5,000 rooms.

In 2000, Kerkorian's gaming empire increased several fold when he purchased Mirage Resorts from Steve Wynn that May for \$6.4 billion.

Kerkorian took over ownership of the Mirage, Treasure Island, Bellagio, downtown's Golden Nugget and the Boardwalk and half-interest in the Monte Carlo, all in Las Vegas; the Golden Nugget in Laughlin; and the Beau Rivage in Mississippi. Kerkorian soon after sold the Treasure Island for \$750 million to fellow billionaire and former New Frontier owner Phil Ruffin.

In August 2000, Kerkorian's company became MGM Mirage. In June 2010 it became MGM Resorts International. By 2014, Kerkorian's company was the second largest gaming conglomerate in the world based on annual revenues.

During his lifetime, Kerkorian also owned the Desert Inn and the Sands hotels, which he purchased from Howard Hughes. He sold the Sands to Sheldon Adelson and the DI to ITT Sheraton. His company also built or owned New York-New York, Circus Circus, Mandalay Bay, the Luxor, Excalibur and Slots-A-Fun.

But the crowning jewel in Kerkorian's resort empire had to be CityCenter, a 16.8 million-square-foot mixed-use, urban complex on 76 acres on the Strip that opened in 2009. A joint venture of MGM Resorts International and Dubai World, it has been heralded as the largest privately funded construction project in U.S. history.

Although Kerkorian long had a policy of not granting interviews to the news media, he did issue a statement through a spokesperson at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for CityCenter in December 2009: "Of all of the wonderful Las Vegas properties with which I've been associated, CityCenter is simply the most amazing.

"I'm extremely excited to see the public's reaction and look forward to seeing how it changes Las Vegas."

CityCenter properties include the Aria, Veer Towers, Mandarin Oriental, Crystals and Vdara.

Jim Murren, chairman and CEO of MGM Resorts International, said the company and its 62,000 employees were honoring Kerkorian, who he described as a "great man, a great business leader, a great community leader, an innovator and one of our country's greatest generation."

"Mr. Kerkorian combined brilliant business insight with steadfast integrity to become one of the most reputable and influential financiers of our time," Murren said. "Personally, he was a friend and coach who taught me the importance in looking forward, and to look back only to understand how things could be done better."

Alex Yemenidjian, Kerkorian's longtime friend and former chairman and CEO of MGM Resorts International, called Kerkorian "one of those rare and exceptional individuals who set the standards by which excellence is measured."

"He was kind to everyone, a loyal friend and a gentleman's gentleman. In business, Kirk was brilliant and could see around corners," Yemenidjian said. "But in his heart, Kirk was really a philanthropist who lived modestly and gave extravagantly. He has profoundly enriched the lives of many without expecting or accepting anything in return, and that is an admirable legacy. I love him and I will miss him terribly."

Born June 6, 1917, in Fresno, Calif., to Armenian immigrant parents, Kerkorian was a junior high school dropout who for a while fought as an amateur boxer and, as a teenager, installed furnaces and herded cattle.

He took up flying in his early 20s, taking lessons at a Mojave Desert-based flight school. After earning a commercial pilot's license, Kerkorian joined the British Royal Air Force at the start of World War II and spent much of the war ferrying planes from Canada to Scotland.

Being paid \$1,000 per plane delivery, Kerkorian safely delivered more than 30 aircraft to allied forces to assist in the war effort. Upon his discharge in 1944, he used his military earnings to buy a Cessna and for

a while made his living as a pilot for hire.

In addition to his Las Vegas holdings, Kerkorian acquired MGM studios in 1969 and immediately began to stabilize the company's financial position by selling off its collection of movie memorabilia.

During his years of ownership, the studio expanded its film library and acquired the United Artists studio in 1981. Five years later, he sold both studios to Atlanta television mogul Ted Turner, who 74 days later sold the MGM name and the pre-1984 film library back to Kerkorian.

Kerkorian later sold his MGM/UA studio lot to Lorimar pictures. After a series of sales, Kerkorian, in 1996, wound up again buying the MGM Studio and soon expanded it by purchasing Orion Pictures and other film-related businesses. In 2005, Kerkorian sold MGM for the final time to a group which included Sony.

In 1995, Kerkorian attempted a takeover of the Chrysler Corporation, but was rebuffed. A year later, Kerkorian abandoned his plans and sold the Chrysler stock he had acquired over time for a huge profit.

Kerkorian at one time owned nearly 10 percent of General Motors, but by 2006, he had sold nearly all of his shares in the company without incurring a loss, a fate not shared by other GM shareholders who waited too long.

In 2007, Kerkorian again went after Chrysler, making a \$4.58 billion bid to Daimler-Chrysler, which expressed interest in the offer. However, the positive response to Kerkorian's bid opened the floodgates for other investors to make offers, including Cerberus Capital Management, which wound up buying Chrysler for \$7.4 billion.

In 2008, Kerkorian turned his attention to buying stock in the Ford Motor Company. He spent \$1 billion to acquire 6 percent ownership in Ford. But after the company lost two thirds of its value during the recession, Tracinda began to sell the Ford stock at what was estimated to be a half-billion-dollar loss. By year's end, Kerkorian had sold all of his Ford shares.

Hit exceptionally hard by the devastating recession of the early 21st century, Kerkorian saw his vast wealth decrease from an estimated \$16 billion in 2008 to just less than \$4 billion in 2013, according to Forbes magazine.

In his off-time Kerkorian enjoyed playing tennis, especially competing in tournaments.

He refused countless proposals during his lifetime to have buildings named in his honor. But Kerkorian's charitable efforts, most notably through his Lincy Foundation – the name came from combining the first names of his two daughters, Linda and Tracy, as does Tracinda -- are legendary.

Through Lincy, which Kerkorian established in 1989, he gave \$1 billion to Armenia to help rebuild the northern sector of the country after a massive 1988 earthquake.

In 2011, Kerkorian's Lincy group gave \$18 million to the Andre Agassi Foundation for Education at Agassi's 16th annual Grand Slam for Children. Kerkorian and Las Vegas tennis legend Agassi had been longtime friends.

With tears in his eyes, Agassi announced Kerkorian's gift during the gala at the Wynn Las Vegas's Lafite Ballroom, bringing the total raised that evening to \$26.1 million.

In August 2009, an initiative to raise money to advance education, health care and social services in Nevada was launched at UNLV with a \$14 million grant from Kerkorian's foundation.

The gift funded The Lincy Institute at UNLV to identify and apply for national grants to improve the quality of life in Nevada. The institute works with dozens of public agencies and nonprofit organizations on issues including health care, education, child and family advocacy, homelessness, suicide prevention and physical disabilities.

Kerkorian said through a spokesman that he made that gift in honor of his friend of more than 40 years, Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid.

Lincy also was instrumental in the funding of Las Vegas's Three Square Food Bank, which has become a model for food bank operations nationwide.

After 22 years of philanthropy, the Lincy Foundation was dissolved in 2011. Its last act of kindness came on Feb. 14 of that year when Kerkorian donated nearly \$200 million to UCLA to create the "Dream Fund at UCLA."

Married three times, Kerkorian spent his later years as an eligible bachelor, almost tying the knot for a fourth time as late as 2012.

His first marriage to Hilda Schmidt in 1942 ended in 1951.

Kerkorian met his second wife, British-born dancer/choreographer Jean Maree Harbour-Hardy at the old Thunderbird Hotel on the Strip and married her in 1954. They had the two daughters and remained friends after their divorce in 1984 following 30 years of marriage.

Kerkorian's marriage lasted one month in 1984 to professional tennis player Lisa Bonder, who was 48 years younger than Kerkorian.

In June 2012, on the eve of his 95th birthday, reports surfaced that Kerkorian was seriously dating Joan Dangerfield, widow of comedian Rodney Dangerfield. That September, they announced their engagement. A spokesman for the couple confirmed at that time that the two had been dating since December 2009.

He was briefly married a fourth time but by Valentine's Day 2013, Kerkorian's relationship status had reverted to single, according to published reports.

In addition to his daughters, survivors include his niece Jewel and nephew Roger.

Ed Koch is a former longtime Sun reporter.

Posted June 4, 2015 - 3:58pm | **Updated** June 5, 2015 - 8:28am

Historic Nevada trail now has national significance



By STEVE TETREAULT
REVIEW-JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — The 3½-mile trail that links Hoover Dam with the Lake Mead National Recreation Area was designated as a trail of national significance Thursday.

The Historic Railroad Trail was added to the National Trails System by the Department of Interior along with trails from nine other states.

More than 16,000 miles on 1,200 trails in all 50 states have been awarded the designation that brings with it upgraded status and sets of special trail markers.

The trail that starts at the Alan Bible Visitor Center at the Lake Mead National Recreation Area was carved

It offers hikers views of Lake Mead, Boulder Basin, the Mojave Desert and the extinct volcano at Fortification Hill.

The new designations were announced in advance of National Trails Day this Saturday.

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A photograph taken from inside a dark cave, looking out through a large, irregular opening. The cave's interior is mostly black, with some reddish-brown rock visible on the right side of the opening. Outside, a steep, rocky mountain slope is visible, covered in sparse vegetation. A prominent, bright yellowish-gold ridge or path runs diagonally across the upper part of the mountain. In the lower left foreground, outside the cave, there is a cluster of small, yellowish-green bushes or trees. The lighting is natural, coming from the outside, creating a strong contrast between the dark cave and the bright landscape.

A tunnel along the Railroad Trail at Lake Mead Thursday, June 6, 2013.

The Interior Department is designating the 3.5-mile path a national recreation trail ahead of National Trails Day on Saturday.

The trail connecting the Alan Bible Visitor Center in the Lake Mead National Recreation area to the Hoover Dam is built on the railroad grade running through five tunnels that was used during the dam's construction.

Nine other state or local paths also won the designation this year, which comes with a set of trail markers, certificate and congratulatory letter.

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Prehistoric artifacts plentiful where Nellis jets rock the sky



Kish LaPierre, an archaeologist, searches for artifacts on Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas on Wednesday, June 24, 2015. (Joshua Dahl/Las Vegas Review-Journal)

By KEITH ROGERS
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Kish LaPierre ambled over a rocky hillside on the northeast side of Nellis Air Force Base to a special place beyond the roar of fighter jets taking off from runways in the distance.

This place is so special that as base archaeologist she plans to nominate it for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. If it qualifies, it will be the first prehistoric site at the base to make the list.

It is where Native Americans perhaps as long as 5,000 years ago chipped away at fine-grain "chert" rocks from this quarry to make stone tools and spear points for the tips of darts that they would launch from throwing sticks, or "atlatis," to kill bighorn sheep and other game, she said.

Training Range) but this site is so extensive. There are thousands of artifacts here," she said.

LaPierre, who formerly worked at the Navy's China Lake site in California, said she intends to compare fragments from the quarry with other collections in the area to see if the material fits with what's been found at other archaeological sites, such as Gypsum Cave. That's where famous anthropologist Mark R. Harrington, in the early 1930s, documented human habitation back to 3,000 B.C., and evidence of the giant ground sloth as long ago as 8,500 B.C.

"It's potential to contribute more information is what were going to nominate it under," LaPierre said about the Nellis chert quarry.

"We're going to investigate the techniques used. There seems to be consistency with some of the techniques used, pieces in stages in which they transported them out of here and possible trade," she said Wednesday, holding one sharp-edged "flake" in her hand as an example.

Although the exact age of the quarry site is unknown, she believes it predates the advent of the bow and arrow 1,500 years ago and certainly written history.

Through more research, she and her colleague, Jeff Kirkwood, chief of the base's environmental assessment section, will try to determine if the quarry has any link to Gypsum Cave, an existing site on the National Register of Historic Places that's about 5 miles to the east.

"There is an amazing history of Southern Nevada when it comes to Native American occupation," said Kirkwood, who is a geologist. "I personally didn't know a lot of it until Kish started pointing it out to me."

Much work lies ahead to document countless sites on the sprawling Nevada Test and Training Range, north of the Las Vegas Valley, where only 8 percent of the 3 million-acre range for air combat exercises has been surveyed by archaeology teams.

"Because the bombing range has been shut off for the last 50 or so years, the public can't get out there, they can't disturb these archaeological sites. Hence they've just been preserved forever," Kirkwood said.

He was particularly impressed with petroglyphs, or rock art etchings, that exist.

"There was one that was just your typical bighorn sheep. You can just picture someone hiding in this little spot, waiting for them to come to drink at the water. And while they're waiting they drew this sheep on the wall," he said.

LaPierre consults with 17 different tribes for her work as Nellis' cultural resource program manager.

The test and training range has "some of the most phenomenal artifacts I've ever seen in my life," she said.

"It's like walking in a large, huge museum. You'll see rock shelters with baskets still sitting there with seeds inside them. Pots. We just found a rock shelter with a pot that had pine pitch inside it," LaPierre said. "We found recently a cache of arrow shafts for use of bow and arrow and they were painted. It just goes on and on. It's just like people left camp and didn't return."

Another important find on a recent survey on the range was an Olivella shell bead — a seashell from the California coast near Santa Barbara — evidence that American Indians traveled a long distance to trade with tribes on what is now the Nevada Test and Training Range.

"That just shows how far people were trading," she said.

While LaPierre's work has focused on sites that predate written history, she said there are "some really phenomenal historic sites, military related, early World War II era and early Cold War era" as well as some interesting mining structures on the range.

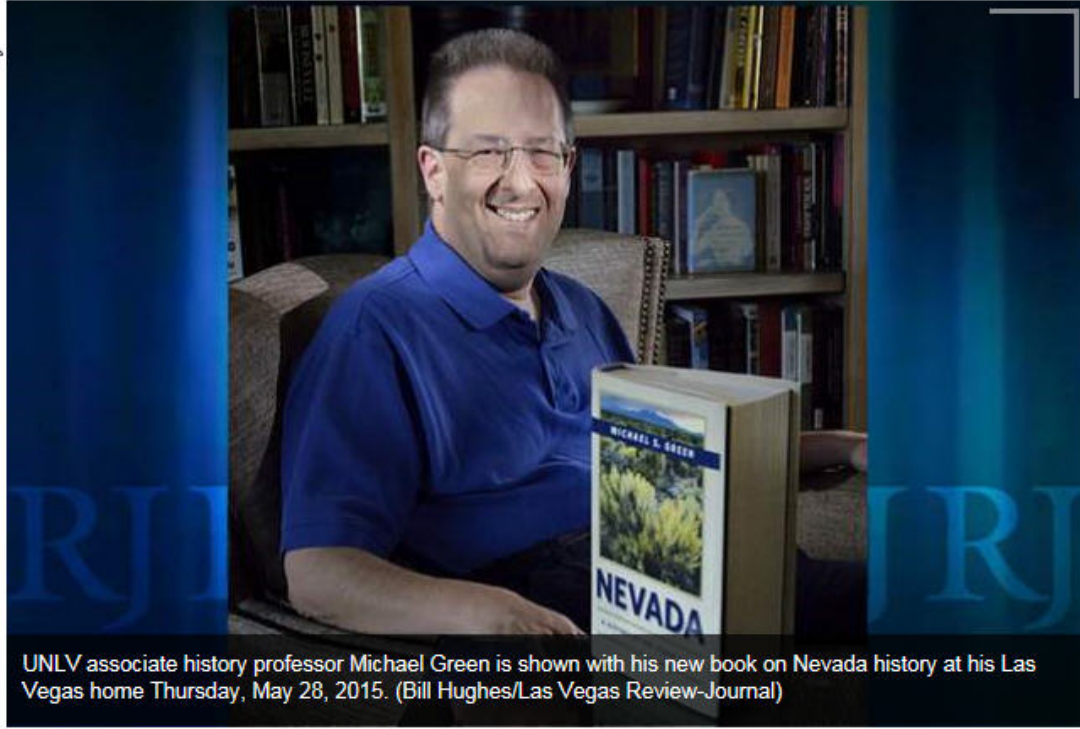
She said documenting archaeology on the base and range "is very important because we're American and we're protecting our own history. We want to protect that and pass it on to future generations as our guide to learn from the past.

"Just like this ground quarry with these stone tools, they were storing munitions here like they are now thousands of years ago," LaPierre said.

Contact Keith Rogers at kr Rogers@reviewjournal.com or 702-383-0308. Find him on Twitter: @KeithRogers2.

Posted June 7, 2015 - 1:39am | **Updated** June 7, 2015 - 4:31pm

UNLV professor's book explores Nevada's weird, wonderful history



UNLV associate history professor Michael Green is shown with his new book on Nevada history at his Las Vegas home Thursday, May 28, 2015. (Bill Hughes/Las Vegas Review-Journal)

By JOHN PRZYBYS
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Michael Green knows them all.

The scalawags, the thieves, the killers, the saints, the sinners, the heroes, the odd fellows and just about everyone, and everything, that had or has something to do with Nevada's evolution.

Not personally, of course — at least not in most cases — but as a historian, teacher and go-to media source for writers and reporters seeking to put today's events into perspective.

Las Vegas, puts all of Nevada's past into context with "[Nevada: A History of the Silver State](#)" (University of Nevada Press, \$45 cloth, \$26.95 paper).

Although designed as a college textbook, it is a readable reference for anyone looking for details of Nevada history.

Green, a nearly native Nevadan, is the perfect guy to tell the state's story. As he discusses his book, the conversation often drifts into parenthetical sidelights and odd historical tidbits that seem to be embedded into the Silver State's past like neon-colored strands in an otherwise staid tapestry.

Nevada is, and always has been, interesting, Green says.

Begin with social and economic forces that have made Nevada a real-life equivalent of Rick's Cafe (for "Casablanca" fans) or Mos Eisley Cantina (for "Star Wars" fans). Thanks to mining and tourism, Nevada's main industries, "you have this constant flow of people in and out, and you constantly have this group of people who are trying to make a living off of the people moving in and out," Green says.

Granted, that kind of diverse nomadism also can make Nevada's story tough for historians to tell.

"(These transient people) don't have the tendency to stay around long enough to say, 'OK, I'm going to leave a diary or papers to the archive' or whatever it is," Green says. "But it also means they tend to do some interesting things along the way."

"Years ago, I did a middle school textbook and the publisher said, 'We'd like to include profiles of inspiring businesspeople,' " Green recalls. "Bugsy Siegel and Moe Dalitz?"

He laughs.

"Well, Moe Dalitz really was an inspiring businessperson. But Bugsy? Not so good a businessman."

Also complicating the telling of Nevada's history in general and Las Vegas' history in particular, Green says, is that many mobsters or people who worked in casinos came out of illegal operations.

"They didn't try to draw attention to themselves. So you're not going to see Moe Dalitz take out an ad in the RJ saying, 'Hi, I'm from the Cleveland Mob,' or 'This is how I made this sweetheart deal.'"

"You have to do a little more assuming or extrapolating than in some other places," Green says. "You do have to do a little more guesswork and look at unusual sources. I don't think most people writing history in other places are likely to look in FBI files."

Green says he began the project aiming to write a college-level textbook. It represents, he adds, the first new, in-depth survey of Nevada published since 1989.

As Green researched the book, he faced the challenge of deciding which parts of Nevada's broad story to leave out and which to leave in.

"And in terms of leaving something out, there are myths, and we know they're myths," he says, "but sometimes we have to address (the myth) to clear up the myth."

Green says he tried to incorporate necessary basics, such as Nevada's geology, into the book as part of both thematic and chronological narratives. The result is a history book that often doesn't read like a history textbook.

"One of the beefs I've had with many state history textbooks is that they're, 'Here we have our chapter on Native Americans, here's our section on women, here's our section on African-Americans,'" Green says.

"I realized how tough (organization) is once I got into the book, but I wanted to make sure I was being both chronological and topical. Pick up the final chapter and the final chapter is about current events, or fairly current events."

Green has studied Nevada history for most of his life. He was 2 years old when he and his family moved from Los Angeles to Las Vegas, and although he doesn't remember much formal instruction in Nevada history, he did enjoy the subject.

"My first unpublished volume," Green says, smiling, was "a history of the presidency," dictated to his apparently very patient mother based upon facts gleaned from kids' books of the time.

Green says he wanted to be an announcer for the Dodgers. When he was 9, his parents took him to Los Angeles to attend his first Dodgers game, and Green got to visit the announcer's booth to meet legendary announcer Vin Scully.

Green previously had written to Scully to ask him how to become a baseball announcer.

"He said, 'Be an English major.' Good for him."

And that in-person visit?

"He looked down at me and said, 'So you're the guy who wants my job.' And my response was to stand there gaping at him. In fact, I had nothing to say the entire time. I think I did manage to get out a thank you when he showed me out of the booth."

But, during a visit to the North Las Vegas library, Green found a book in which he discovered that Nevada had a governor named Mike — Mike O'Callaghan, who served from 1971 to 1979 — and Green began to think of a different career.

"I thought I'd be a journalist," Green says.

In 1982, when Green was 17, Bob Brown, then publisher of the Valley Times, hired Green as a "kid reporter," Green recalls, which meant doing anything from ripping stories off of the wire machine to covering cops to, even, covering Ronald Reagan's visit to Las Vegas when Green was a UNLV freshman.

UNLV didn't offer many journalism courses then.

"I thought maybe I'd be better off, if I wanted to go into journalism, to study something related to it," Green says. "I loved history, and they had very good professors at UNLV, and that sealed the deal."

After earning bachelor's and master's degrees at UNLV, Green enrolled at Columbia University to study for a doctorate. Later, after returning to Las Vegas, he landed a part-time job at the then-Clark County Community College, teaching Nevada history.

Green taught at now-College of Southern Nevada for 19 years, and just completed his first full-time year at UNLV, which, he says, has been a joy.

UNLV's history department Chairman Paul Werth said that when the opportunity arose for Green — who had been teaching part time in UNLV's honors college — to join UNLV's full-time faculty, it made sense.

"Very few people, perhaps no one at all, has the experience he has in Nevada history, with the possible exception of (UNLV history professor) Gene Moehring," Werth says.

Although students know him as a teacher and readers of his book will know him as an author, other Southern Nevadans also might recognize Green as an oft-quoted source for newspaper, magazine and TV pieces involving Nevada history, politics and popular culture.

"When you do local history, there's a pretty good chance that's going to happen," Green says.

He recalls talking with Frank Wright, a noted Nevada historian who for years wrote a popular weekly Nevada history feature aired on KNPR-FM (88.9), shortly before Wright died.

"He was dying, and I said, 'Frank, you can't go. You've got to be here to keep taking those telephone calls,' " Green says, smiling. "Frank said, 'It's OK. You can have 'em.' So I do get those calls."

"But the other thing is, historians do have something to say," Green adds.

Once, during a talk to a Sun City club, somebody asked Green, "Why aren't more people interested in community?"

Green called for a show of hands.

"How many of you moved here in the last five years?' All but two or three people out of 50. 'OK, how many (in) the past year?' At least half a dozen, maybe more."

"When you're new and learning the community, (you) learn history, too," Green says. "So if I could help with that, great. (Also) I don't think it's a bad thing for faculty ... to be seen in the community and be seen trying to do useful things in the community. It might remind people these are valuable institutions worthy of funding."

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