

CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL NAME COMMITTEE
Facility Name Application
Naming Existing Portions of School or Nonschool Facilities

Periodically, names are submitted to the School Name Committee to dedicate a portion of a school or nonschool facility to honor distinguished citizens and educators.

Prior to a nomination and application being presented to the School Naming Committee for consideration, the administrator of the intended facility must be informed.

All nominations are made available to the public for review and are posted on the Clark County School District's website at ccsd.net

PORTION OF FACILITY TO BE NAMED: Sandy Valley Library

LOCATION: Sandy Valley, Nevada HCR 31, Box 111, Sandy Valley, Nevada 89019

ADMINISTRATOR OF FACILITY: Jerry Cornell PHONE NUMBER: 702-799-0935

NAME OF PERSON CONTACTED AT THIS FACILITY: Jerry Cornell, Principal

PROPOSED NAME:

"Frank & Edith Williams Memorial Library"

NOMINEE'S OCCUPATION:

(Frank) Miner; Nevada State Legislator; University of Nevada Regent
(Edith) School Teacher

YEAR OF BIRTH, CITY AND STATE:

(Frank) 1871, Wetmore, Kansas
(Edith) 1888, South Ryegate, Vermont

CITIZENSHIP & YEARS IN CLARK (& LINCOLN) COUNTY:

(Frank) 32 years
(Edith) 52 years

PERSON SUBMITTING THE NOMINATION:

Leanne Holt Ferdig, Granddaughter of Frank & Edith Williams
6431 Swan Song Road
Las Vegas, Nevada 89142
702-457-0319
702-799-0008

EMPLOYMENT IN THE CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT:

In the early 1900's, the Clark County School District as we know it today did not exist. That is precisely why Frank Williams, a University Regent (24 years) and Nevada State Legislator (13 years), and his wife Edith, a school teacher (10 years), established a school in the rural community where they lived. Even in their extreme poverty and difficult circumstances, they felt education was a top priority. Through their determination, they did indeed establish a school in 1927 in Sandy Valley, Nevada.

EDUCATION-RELATED POSITIONS HELD OUTSIDE THE CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT:

FRANK:

-University Regent, 24 years-

Advocated for the creation of a school and recruited the support of the President of UNR and the Board of Regents, which impacted the education of students in Nevada and California.

EDITH:

-School Teacher, 10 years-

Edith graduated and earned her Teaching Degree from the prestigious Haverhill Academy in New Hampshire. Upon moving to Sandy Valley, she also earned her Nevada State Teacher's License.

INVOLVEMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS OR ACTIVITIES BETTERING CHILDREN:

Frank was a member of the Masonic Lodge for a time, which sponsored clothing and food donations for children in need. Edith taught school for many years in her living room without pay for any child in need.

GOVERNMENT SERVICE:

In 1904, the Lincoln County Democratic Convention nominated Frank Williams for the Nevada Legislature. During his first Legislative Session, he served on the Military and Indian Affairs and Agriculture Committees. Re-elected in 1906, he served as chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. He encouraged young people to be involved in the Nevada Historical Society. In 1910 he ran for Lieutenant Governor, but narrowly lost the election. Goodsprings and Sandy Valley had become part of the newly formed Clark County and he returned to represent them in the Assembly. As a University Regent, he went on an educational fact finding tour to the Eastern United States, which included Washington, D.C. He visited 6 New England Colleges, including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Dartmouth. He also visited Haverhill Academy in New Hampshire, which is where he met a young teacher by the name of Edith Crawford. Her family ran a very fine boarding house and Frank stayed there several weeks while doing his research for the Board of Regents. It was a quiet life with beautiful scenery, and "The Crawford House" served many refined clientele - school teachers, ministers, and doctors. Frank and Edith married in 1915 and moved to the remote mining camp of Sandy Valley, Nevada. She was 27 years old, he was 44 years old. Edith supported Frank "unbelievably" in a new and very different way of life than she ever could imagine.

ASSOCIATION WITH THIS NOMINEE AND THE EXISTING FACILITY:

Frank and Edith Williams started the school in Sandy Valley in the living room of their home and then in the little one-room schoolhouse. The current "existing" facility did not exist in 1927! As mining activities wound down and people moved away, the community of Sandy Valley sprang back and in 1982 the Clark County School District opened the Sandy Valley Elementary and Middle School, and in 2007, it opened a high school in the town that was once so small it could barely support a school.

WHAT CONTACT HAS BEEN MADE WITH THE SPECIFIED FACILITY/SCHOOL/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE/PARENT GROUP. DO THEY SUPPORT THIS NAME CHANGE?

I have met Jerry Cornell, Principal of Sandy Valley School. I have also spoken to him on the phone and through email. He has been very supportive. When I did a history presentation to the Goodsprings/SandyValley Historical Society last year, they were also supportive - in fact, they are the ones who gave me the idea! Adding their names to the front of the school and/or library, would be educational for students as they learn about the lives and work of Frank and Edith Williams, true Sandy Valley pioneers.

SPECIAL ATTRIBUTES, TALENTS, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CONTRIBUTIONS:

Frank and Edith Williams are my grandparents. From my grandmother's journal, she writes, "Through much effort and letter writing, Frank applied for the creation of a school district so that our girls and the other children in the area could start school. There were several Nevada students across the Nevada-California state line where many families were homesteading, and several boys and girls needed school privileges. It was arranged with California school officials to allow these students to attend our small school. Needless to say, those boys and girls were very appreciative of Frank's efforts in their behalf." (The 'girls' are my mother, Helen, and her sister, Ruth.)

My grandfather saved my mother's life when she was 5 years old. She recorded in her journal: "Growing up in Sandy Valley was difficult at times, with no running water and being very isolated. Once while playing near my desert home, I was bitten by a poisonous side-winder snake. Because the nearest hospital was 50 miles away in Las Vegas, my father used the old tried and true first-aid method of slashing my ankle with a razor blade and drawing the poison out. The feeling that I would not live through the night is still very real to me." (My mother, Helen Williams Holt, was born in Las Vegas in 1921, lived in Sandy Valley, then lived in Las Vegas until she passed away in 2006.)

Also from my mother's journal: "Although we were very poor during the years growing up in Sandy Valley, our parents subscribed to good magazines and did their best to provide us with good reading materials. Papa was a great historian and spent many hours describing to us the important events of history. Our parents impressed upon us at an early age that learning to read was one of the most exciting things we could ever do. Reading was truly our greatest recreation - we always looked forward to birthdays and Christmas when we would receive some new reading material. I can remember receiving

four books one day around noon when they were delivered by the mail truck and having them all finished before evening. This was when I was four years old and my sister, Ruth, was six." Helen and Ruth graduated from the 8th grade in Sandy Valley and were sent away to Las Vegas High School while their parents stayed and worked in Sandy Valley to support them. Helen was 13, Ruth 15. Wanting to provide a true educational experience, Frank and Edith took the girls to see President Franklin D. Roosevelt when he dedicated Boulder Dam in 1935. The girls graduated from LVHS in 1937.

Attributes: grit, determination, knowing the value of an education against all odds, the promotion and advocacy of reading, keeping up on world events, sacrifice, extremely hard work, devotion to the State of Nevada and to Sandy Valley, honesty, integrity.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION:

Jerry Cornell, Principal of Sandy Valley School

Board of Regents, University of Nevada, 1947 (Posthumous)

Dave Lowe, resident of Sandy Valley acquainted with Frank Williams

REFERENCES:

Dave & Darlene Williams

Rex Ewing, Jr.

Mrs. Edith Paige Holt Reese

Ms. Jeannie Williams Cowan

Mr. David Lowe

RELATED MATERIALS FOR YOUR REVIEW:

A DVD entitled "From Small Beginnings: The Story of Vaughan and Helen Holt"

A PowerPoint Presentation: "The Connection: Las Vegas, Sandy Valley & the CCSD"

Archival Book: "Education in the Neon Shadow: The First 50 Years of the CCSD"

Artifacts from the 1927 Sandy Valley School House, including:

-The Original Flag with 48 Stars

-Edith's School Bell; Pocket Watch; Nevada State Teacher's License #321

-Commencement Address for the graduating class of Sandy Valley School, circa 1934

-Original manuscripts of Frank Williams on file at UNLV Special Collections Library

-This application respectfully submitted for your consideration by Leanne Holt Ferdig-

REFERENCES

Dave & Darlene Williams
657 Vista Bonita
Newport Beach, California 92660
Phone: 949-640-5590

Rex Ewing, Sr.
565 Cypress Garden Place
Henderson, Nevada 89012
Phone: 702-736-3005

Mrs. Paige Reese
Box 700
Logandale, Nevada 89021
Phone: 702-398-3061

Ms. Jeannie Cowan
39 Lorraine Court
Seaside, California 93955
Phone: 831-394-1852

Mr. David Lowe
777 East Quartz Avenue
Sandy Valley, Nevada 89019
Phone: 702-723-5329

To whom this may concern:

Frank Williams was one of the very earliest Anglo-Americans to live in Sandy Valley. He originated in Kansas but left there to join an uncle in the Goodsprings Township sometime in the 1890s. He took the train from the midwest to the end of the tracks in Vanderbilt, California. From there he walked into Mesquite (Sandy) Valley. He lived on what is now Cherokee Avenue for the remainder of his life.

He was elected to the Nevada State Assembly when this county was still a part of Lincoln County. Later in about 1910 he was re-elected Assemblyman from the new County of Clark. His political career shifted to the area of higher education when he was elected to the Nevada State University Board of Regents.

It was during his service as Regent that he was sent by the Board to New England to study the system of higher education in one of those states. There he met Edith. They married and returned to Sandy to make their home.

Their place was 'dry', requiring them to haul a barrel into Goodsprings for their water supply. This water had to be very carefully meted-out. They had fresh water for cooking and drinking but bath water was re-used for the watering of plants. After Edith gave birth to their two daughters, Frank dug a well which gave an entirely new dimension to life at the Williams' place.

Mr. Williams served several terms on the Board of Regents.

When I was a boy in Goodsprings in the 1940s, I would see the Williamses come into the little mining camp to procure their groceries and other supplies. Mrs. Williams always did the driving. They were a lively old couple.

Sandy Valley should honor one of its first and, to this day, most prominent citizens by naming the elementary school after Frank & Edith Williams.

Very Truly Yours,

David W. Lowe III

777 E. Quartz Ave., PMB 7030

Sandy Valley, Nevada 89019

1+(702) 723-5329



Sandy Valley School

HCR 31 BOX 111 / SANDY VALLEY, NV 89019 / (702) 799-0935 (702) 723-1800 / fax (702) 723-1802

Jerry Cornell, Principal

Chris Lounsbery, Assistant Principal

August 29, 2012

To CCSD School Name Committee:

As the Principal of Sandy Valley School, I fully support the proposal to rename the school. Frank and Edith Williams were true pioneers to Southern Nevada. Mr. and Mrs. Williams established a school in Sandy Valley in 1927 where Mrs. Williams also served as the teacher.

This is a great opportunity to celebrate two upstanding citizens for their contribution to education in Clark County. By renaming the school Frank and Edith Williams Sandy Valley School, we not only recognize their contribution, we also maintain the identity for Sandy Valley.

Sincerely,

Jerry Cornell

Principal, Sandy Valley School

30 September 2012

To CCSD School Name Committee:

As a grandson of Frank and Edith Williams, I fully support the proposal to name the Sandy Valley School in their honor.

My mother Helen, a daughter of Frank and Edith, often told me how hard her father worked to establish the first school in Sandy Valley when she was a girl. She told me that even though the school was small, the education she received there was of the highest quality, and high standards were required of each student.

Frank and Edith Williams had a passion for high quality public education and spent their lives working to bring the finest public and higher education to the state of Nevada. Their contribution to the success of that early school in Sandy Valley cannot be overestimated. Edith served as a teacher in that school for many years. Frank also served ably as a member of the Nevada State Assembly and the Nevada State University Board of Regents.

I cannot think of a more appropriate way to honor their untiring service to the cause of education in early Nevada than by allowing the school in Sandy Valley to bear their names.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Russ Holt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" and "H".

Russell D. Holt

1544 N. East Hills Circle
Bountiful, Utah 84010