

## **Amity Lodge No. 4**

Amity Lodge No. 4 is located at 175 Main Street, in Silver City, Lyon County, Nevada. It is listed as a contributing resource to the Virginia City Historic District National Historic Landmark (NRIS 66000458). The property contains a two-level wood framed building, with horizontal weatherboard wood siding of the commercial or western vernacular style. The street level contains the main meeting hall room, and lower level contains a general recreation meeting room. The rear of the building has an exterior staircase leading to the ground and is covered in metal shingles. It has a wooden flat covered porch with wood columns, and wood false front parapet wall with wood dentils and cornice molding. The roof is gabled, covered with metal standing seam roof panels. Windows are double-hung sash windows with wood frames, and the entry door is a four panel door. The buildings foundation site upon concrete masonry units installed in 1959 replacing the original wood post foundation. The walls of the building are painted white, while the door, window and eave trims are painted blue.

The Amity Lodge No. 4 building was constructed in 1867 by John Grier as a boarding house, reflecting the town's rapid expansion during the silver boom. At the time, Silver City was growing quickly, with the population reaching approximately 1,200 people by 1861. The influx of miners, entrepreneurs, and business owners necessitated the construction of new commercial and civic buildings to serve the needs of the community. Grier's boarding house was one of these early buildings, designed to provide accommodation for miners and travelers passing through the area. Advertised as a prime location opposite Odd Fellows' Hall, it catered to those traveling to and from more prominent mining districts like Virginia City and Gold Hill.

Following John Grier's death in 1885, his wife, Susan Grier, transferred the property to the Ancient Order of United Workmen (A.O.U.W.) in 1888. The A.O.U.W., a prominent fraternal organization, focused on mutual aid and workers' rights. Upon taking over the building, the A.O.U.W., in partnership with Amity Lodge No. 4, adapted it for use as a hall for the organization, providing space for both social and charitable functions. The building has been used by the Ancient Order of United Workmen (A.O.U.W.) from 1888-1893, in addition to its use by Amity Lodge No. 4. since 1888.

The building underwent several modifications over the years. In 1959, its original wooden post foundation was replaced with concrete masonry units (CMUs) to enhance its structural integrity. A further modification in 1974 saw the addition of a covered porch with wooden columns. Despite these updates, the building retains much of its original character, with its timber-frame construction, weatherboard siding, gable roof, and metal standing seam roof reflecting the utilitarian design typical of 19th-century mining towns.

The Amity Lodge No. 4 building in Silver City, Nevada, is one of the remaining historical landmarks from the early days of the Comstock Lode era. Its history is deeply intertwined

with the growth of Silver City, a town founded in 1859 after the discovery of silver in the Comstock Lode. As a service town for miners and businesses in the region, Silver City experienced rapid growth, which necessitated the establishment of institutions that could support the community's social and civic needs. Among the most important of these institutions was the Masonic lodge, which played a central role in the town's social fabric. The building that would house Amity Lodge No. 4 became an integral part of this process, serving not just as a place for fraternal meetings, but also as a venue for public gatherings, town meetings, and charitable activities that were essential to the town's development.

As one of the oldest surviving buildings in Silver City, the building is being nominated under Criterion A, as it is associated with events or trends that have made a significant contribution to Nevada history for its association with the A.O.U.W. It is also nominated under Criterion C as the property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction significant to Nevada for its ready association with Comstock era construction.

The nomination was prepared by Audie Robinson, historian of Amity Lodge No. 4, Free and Accepted Masons, 922 Nicole Street, Dayton, Nevada 89403. E-mail: [audierobinson@gmail.com](mailto:audierobinson@gmail.com), (559) 905-7011. The initial date of the nomination preparation was March 6, 2025. The draft was reviewed by SHPO architectural historian Jean-Guy Tanner Dubé on May 22, 2025.

The Nevada State Historic Preservation Office recommends approval of listing the Amity Lodge No. 4 to the State Register of Historic Places.