

# Preservation News

A PUBLICATION OF THE LEE TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

NOVEMBER 2009

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LEE TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION, INC.

*“Preservation...the ultimate recycling.”*

THE MISSION OF LEE TRUST IS TO PROMOTE HISTORIC PRESERVATION THROUGH EDUCATION, ADVOCACY AND ACQUISITION.

## SEMINOLE EXHIBIT OPENS NOVEMBER 18

When she died in 2004, Fort Myers resident Mary Hanson entrusted her son, Woody, with their family's greatest treasure, an extensive collection of Seminole photographs and artifacts collected by her Father-in-law, W. Stanley Hanson. Woody Hanson struggled with how best to share this legacy with the public, until now.

On November 18, at 5 PM, an exhibit called White Medicine Man, will open at The Seminole Lodge Museum at 1635 Hendry Street in Fort Myers. In stunning large-format photographs, the exhibit chronicles the relationship between W. Stanley Hanson, a white Fort Myers' resident and the Seminole Miccosukees. As a boy, Woody Hanson learned the Miccosukee language while playing with Seminole children during their parents' visits with his physician father. As an adult he maintained those relationships, acting as an advocate, friend, and recorder of Seminole history and culture.

The Lee Trust has joined forces with the Seminole Lodge Museum and will be responsible for 4 rotating exhibits annually. On the opening night the Cultural Heritage Center will tell the story of Black Settlers of Sanibel and Fort Myers with a comprehensive photo exhibit. The mission of the Cultural Heritage society is to heighten the awareness of contributions of culturally and ethnically diverse groups to SWFL.

## FOUNDING ICON RETIRES

*By Gina Sabiston, President of Lee Trust*

When one thinks of historic preservation in Lee County, the first name that often comes to mind is Bill Grace. Bill has been instrumental in preserving many of the places we Lee Countians hold dear to our hearts.

In 1993 Grace became a founding board member of the Lee Trust for Historic Preservation, serving as Treasurer, Vice President, and most recently as President. During those 17 years, he was instrumental in a plethora of significant preservation projects, including the formation of historic districts, restoration of key historic sites (including the Langford Kingston and Burroughs Homes), and an establishment of a revolving fund to preserve future endangered properties. But long before the Lee Trust, Bill was an avid preservationist and steward of historic resources.

Well known throughout the community for his passion, candor, and frankness; three traits often necessary to be successful in this field. And successful he is, with a list of accolades too numerous to list completely, highlights include: 1986 – 1994 Florida Trust for Historic Preservation Board of Trustees; 1991 - Outstanding Achievement for a Residential Restoration, Florida Trust for Historic Preservation; 1996 - Individual Achievement and Distinguished Service Award in the Field Of Preservation by the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation; 1999-present - President of the Koreshan Unity Alliance and Past President of the Southwest Florida Historical Society.

In 1989, Bill Grace was appointed as the first Chairman to oversee the restoration of the historic Burroughs Home, by then Mayor Wilbur Smith. “I had the opportunity to work with Bill while he served as Chairman of the Burroughs Home,” Lee Trust Executive Director Gina Taylor shared, “it was a great experience. Bill was a mentor, not only to myself, but to so many of us involved.” Under Bill Grace's leadership the initial restoration was completed in just under a year and the Burroughs Home opened to the public with a lovely gathering in January of 1991.

“When I think of Bill Grace, I think of two things,” fellow preservationist Councilman Mike Flanders shared. “The first is the Burroughs Home, his involvement got the Burroughs Home into the City; the second is the city historic preservation ordinance. Bill was the author of the first draft of the historic preservation ordinance, those are two landmark deals.”

Currently Bill Grace is continuing his commitment to preservation at the Koreshan Unity Alliance and the Mound House on Fort Myers Beach. Being a preservationist is not always an easy role. Preservation is often misunderstood and sometimes, the value of preservation is not seen until decades later, whether that value be architectural, social, or historical. Bill has a passion for preservation that is rare and often difficult to maintain through bundles of bureaucratic red tape. He sees the value in preserving our historic resources for future generations. The Lee Trust is grateful for his years of service and accomplishments achieved during his years of service.

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**Lee Trust  
For  
Historic Preservation**

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Lee Trust for Historic  
Preservation, Inc.  
was founded in 1993  
and is dedicated to  
preserving and developing  
the heritage of Lee County  
and its municipalities.

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Lee Trust publishes  
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quarterly.

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Lee Trust is a 501(c)(3)  
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**DOWNTOWN UTILITY REPLACEMENT AND  
STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT RECOVERS  
AND RECYCLES OLD BRICKS**

*By Kaye Molnar, Cella, Molnar & Associates, Inc.*

As part of the City of Fort Myers Revitalization Program, crews for the Downtown Utility Replacement and Streetscape Improvements Project are adding the finishing touches to the downtown streets. Visitors to our city will dine at sidewalk cafes, share a latte with friends, and walk along old brick streets.

While beautifying the entire downtown area, this project replaced all underground utilities including water, sewer, and storm drain systems. Street furniture such as benches, and waste receptacles will soon be installed. Decorative bike racks placed throughout the downtown area will complete the street furnishings package.

**One of the most exciting aspects about this project has been the effort to recover and “recycle” over 500,000 old bricks once covered for decades by asphalt.** Several streets such as Jackson, First, Main, Hendry, and Lee streets were known or suspected to still contain many of the old bricks. Suspected streets were carefully demolished, old bricks found were palletized and taken off-site for cleaning. Many of the old bricks were cleaned by South Fort Myers JROTC members, citizens needing community service hours and a handful of volunteers. The process was long and tedious, but the results are well worth the effort. Today, First Street, Hendry Street, and Main Street reflect the look of a simpler time and add charm to downtown Fort Myers.

**THE LEE TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
THANKS THE BENEVOLENT BAR ASSOCIATION  
FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT**

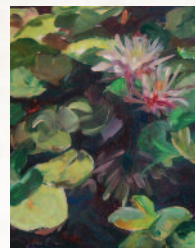
Ron Kopco and Mark Solomon owners of The Bar Association are constantly designing new interactive ways to bring visitors to historic downtown. Currently the PASSPORT PROGRAM is open to the public. 6 dinners from around the world are being offered over a 2 month period, Get your passport stamped while attending all the dinners and you are automatically invited to a complimentary cocktail party at the OASIS High Rise on the river. Dine in an historic Building and party in a new one. Like the Romans who refer to the god Janus who had 2 faces; one looking to the past and one looking in to the future. Our city is fortunate to have business owners interested in preserving the past and creating excitement for our future.

**Thank You to Local Artist Jan Ellen For Her Recent Donation at Art Walk Sept 4**

Jan Ellen is a contemporary impressionist who often works directly from nature emphasizing the effect of color and natural light in her work. Some works are created "alla prima"; painting continuously without allowing the paint to dry between sessions. Others are built up in thin layers, working from back to front. She experiments with styles and medium, but is always focused on pulling the viewer into the art. Located permanently in Fort Myers, Florida, she has been privileged to work across the United States, France, England, and Italy.

Jan Ellen graduated with a BS Degree in Art from University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, is a published author, and lecturer.

For more information, visit her website at [www.jan-ellen.com](http://www.jan-ellen.com).



*In the Pond*

**Thank You to Local Artist Scott Lee Dozier For His Recent Donation at Art Walk Oct.**

Visual art is only one way to express the creativity common to all aspects of human endeavor. Scott Dozier began his study of visual art with the historic painter Jack Clifton in Hampton, VA, at age ten. Other instruction included audit courses at The Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C. as a young teen, followed by more formal credit courses at a number of community colleges after serving in the United States Coast Guard.

For the past three years he has been associated with local Sculptor, Donald J. Wilkins, creating over life-size standing portrait sculptures of Thomas Edison for Edison College and Henry Ford and Mina Edison for the Edison & Ford Winter Estate in Fort Myers. In November of 2008 a statue of the “American Newsboy” was dedicated at the entrance to The Island Arts Foundation Purple Heart Comedy and Tragedy for the same theater.

His most enduring passion is portraiture both in paintings and sculpture with a particular interest in historic figures. Public monuments of historic figures define our past by stating our presence with our aspirations for our future.



*Scott Dozier pastel.*

# HISTORICAL SOCIETY BEGINS HARD WORK

## Home, School to Be Preserved

By Christina Cepero; reprinted with permission of the News-Press

Six Estero residents in their 60s tore out carpet; pulled off gutters, screens and railing; and peeled away old electrical boxes from two 100-plus-year-old buildings.

The Estero Historical Society members spent two mornings recently preparing the Hall-Hanson-Collier house and Estero Creek School for rehabilitation.

Their goal is to adapt the white wood-paneled Hall house for use as the society's headquarters, museum and workshop and restore the white schoolhouse with green trim to the way it looked in 1911.

"We're trying to do some stuff we can do so it makes it easier when the professionals come," said Steve Shandor as he yanked a gutter from the front porch of the old schoolhouse.

He also sawed off green railing and cut away screens from the porch so it can be redone.

Project supervisor Dave Pryal unfastened dead electrical boxes from the side of the two-story schoolhouse.

Secretary Betty Shandor and the rest of the volunteers ripped out the blue-gray carpet and greenish padding underneath as well as the wooden strip that had held it in place in the Hall house.

The carpet removal revealed the Hall house's paneled dark wood floors, which will be refinished.

They moved furniture back and forth from room to room in the heat so they could get the rug out of all of the rooms.

The air conditioning hasn't kicked in yet," society president John Yarbrough joked as he tried to lug carpet out of the back room.

Air conditioning, electricity and water will be installed.

The group needs about \$300,000 - \$150,000 for the Hall house, \$100,000 for the schoolhouse, \$40,000 for a maintenance-free ramp that will connect the houses and the rest for startup equipment.

The society orchestrated the 11.2-mile relocation in May of the two houses from Highlands Avenue, off U.S. 41, to Estero Community Park, off Corkscrew Road. The College of Life Foundation donated the houses to the society in 2005, along with \$100,000 for the move.

The society also received \$36,000 in grants from Lee County for the preservation plan and construction drawings by architect Linda Stevenson.

The county school board opened Estero Creek School in 1904 as a one-room building and expanded it into a two-room school with a front porch in 1911 after a 1910 hurricane damaged the building. The school served 15 students then.

The building also served as a Sunday school for the Estero United Methodist Church and a place for public meetings and social events. The school closed in 1927 when a new one was built on Broadway Avenue and later became a private home.

The Hall house first appeared in county records in 1906. It housed Estero's post office from 1902-1908. Its first owner, Frank Hall, served as postmaster as well as trustee of the school next door, owned a citrus grove and wrote a column about Estero for the Fort Myers Press from 1904-1914.

W. Stanley Hanson, who was a Lee commissioner and known as "The White Medicine Man" of the Seminoles, bought the house in 1925.

During World War II, Carlos and Isabel Hertell, who were part Cuban and from Key West, and their family lived in the house.

After 1945, local fisherman Calvin Collier bought the Hall house and schoolhouse, and in 1991, the Rev. Paul and Florence Steffens of New York bought both.

The College of Life Foundation acquired the property where the houses were located in 2003 and gave the houses to the society two years later.



Jean Pryal, a member of The Estero Historical Society cleans up the porch of a one room school house originally built in 1904. Valerie Roche /news-press.com

### HOW TO HELP

Donations toward the renovation of the Hall-Hanson-Collier house and Estero Creek schoolhouse may be mailed to the Estero Historical Society, P.O. Box 1314, Estero, FL 33928. For more information, to make a monetary or materials donation or to volunteer, call Jean and Dave Pryal at 498-5296 or Bev MacNellis at 498-0678.

## GARDEN COUNCIL

By Ena McGratten

Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council has been a very active but silent member of Fort Myers community for over fifty years.

We have provided scholarships, donations and thousands of voluntary man hours to maintain parks, tree banks, and areas like Rachael at the Well and Save the Palms project.

We conduct programs to educate members and public about conservation, beautification and historic preservation. We present Flower Shows to exhibit our best horticulture and Floral designs.

Garden Council has had many homes over the fifty year period but now have a permanent residence at Virginia Avenue in Fort Myers. Mayor Humphrey and the City of Fort Myers allocated land to the Garden Council. We renovated the old apartment building that was on site. It now houses our offices, meeting rooms and The Mina Edison Botanical Reference Library.

Our Headquarters is also the home of The Berne Davis Gardens, designed by renowned landscape architect George Fogg. The pergola is one of many focal points and features a fountain. The garden has an arbor, brick, and shell pathways that lead to a gazebo.

Each of the Council's Societies contributed to the gardens by featuring their own specialty, for example, native plants, hibiscus, bromeliad, orchids, heliconia, roses and bonsai. Caloosa Rare Fruit Exchange have their tree bank which is already producing fruit.

The gardens will mature in the next year when we hope to open to the public.



### THE HISTORIC LEE COUNTY THROWS!



They are available in blue and cranberry. for \$49.50 through the Trust Office.

Also available are Limited Edition NOTE CARDS for \$8.00

### HISTORIC BUILDING PLAQUES



for \$75.00 each, including engraving.

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## SAVE THE DATE!

### HOLIDAY STROLL

Downtown Ft. Myers

November 28th

### FOUNDING FAMILY TREES

Peoples Court, Hendry St.

Nov. 28 - Dec. 4

### Celebrate Downtown's 20th Anniversary on the National Register of Historic Places

January 16, 2010

Florida Trust for Historic  
Preservation

### 2010 CONFERENCE

Lee County

May 12 - May 15

“Preservation...the ultimate recycling.”



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## Membership Application / Renewal Form

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I am a:  New Member  Renewing Member

### Level of Membership:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Sponsor \$250   | <input type="checkbox"/> Family - \$30       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$100             | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual - \$20   |

In addition to my gift, a matching gift  
will be made by: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Make checks payable to Lee Trust for Historic Preservation and send to:  
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Tired of seeing our historic  
buildings torn down? Want  
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preservation?

Then join Lee Trust!

Lee Trust is a nonprofit organiza-  
tion formed to promote preservation  
and assist our community when  
historic resources are threatened.  
We have a Revolving Fund Program  
to buy threatened historic structures.  
We also provide assistance and seek  
to educate the public about our  
community heritage. Our primary  
sources of funding are membership  
dues, gifts and fundraising events  
organized by volunteers.

Membership donations are tax  
deductible to the extent allowed by  
law. For more information about  
Membership contact Gina Taylor at  
LeePreservation@embarqmail.com  
or (239) 939-PAST.

You Can Join At  
Any Time!