

Preservation News

A Publication of the Lee Trust for Historic Preservation

Spring 2008 • Phone (239) 939-PAST

Congratulations!

A Preservation minded Developer - "Everyplace eventually reaches its lifespan and someone needs to rebuild it said Pat Riley the projects general manager and longtime history Buff."

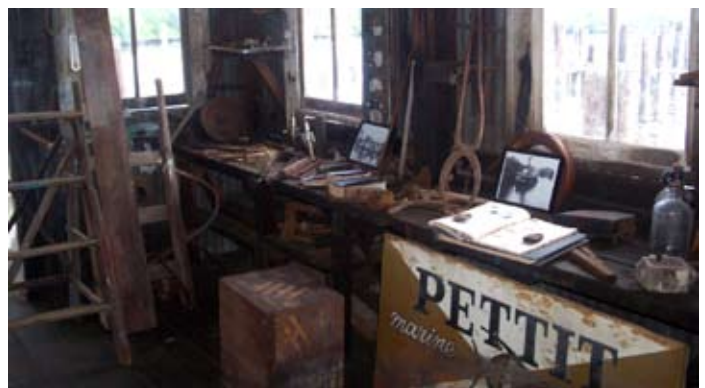
Steamboat Marina located at 5601 Palm Beach Blvd. in Ft. Myers recently was purchased by Leeward LLC and Streamboat LLC. The Leeward yacht club is a 6.25 acre parcel which basically consists of two old marinas known as Hansen Marine Way and Manatee World. The immediate area around the Menge-Hansen complex is being preserved as a historical preservation site. The Menge Railway, circa 1890, has been determined by the state of Florida Historical Preservation Office to be a National Historical Preservation Landmark. An existing railway and existing building will be preserved. It is the hope of Mr. Patrick Riley to restore a viable marina while preserving the historic integrity. The plans will also include a historical museum housing 1910 thru 1920 boat engines, boat building tools and equipment.

The Menge brothers business flourished starting with two boats in 1886 and increasing to twelve within 30 years becoming the regions leading steamboat company for transporting citrus, furniture, supplies, mail, livestock and passengers up and down the newly created waterway to Lake Okeechobee. Mr. J. Fred Menge became great friends with Thomas Edison and eventually constructed a vessel in his name. Edison and his new bride even honeymooned on one of the Menge brothers most famous steamboats the *Suwanee*.

The development concept for steamboat marina is honoring the role of the Orange River, its steamships, and the role these boats played in the growth of commerce and tourism to Ft. Myers.

In 2009 the development will open its new marina and restaurant. There will be a boardwalk adjacent to the waterfront that visitors will be able to stroll along after dining and enjoy the artifacts at the museum. This site will still maintain its Old Florida Charm while it embraces new development.

It is our hope at The Lee Trust for Historical Preservation that other developers will follow the proactive lead of Mr. Riley while considering new development. If Lee County wants new development in its future, it should always keep an eye to the past.



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LEE TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION, INC.

The mission of Lee Trust is to preserve the sites and buildings of historic and archaeological significance to Lee County through both advocacy and acquisition.

Lee Trust for Historic Preservation

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2008

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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 its newsletter,
Preservation News,
in April and October.

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Lee Trust is a 501(c)(3)
not-for-profit corporation
and all gifts made to Lee Trust
are tax deductible to the
extent allowed by law.

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free within the State of Florida 1-800-435-7352. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the State.

Welcome Enid Terregrosa, The New City Historic Preservationist

Enid was born and raised in San Juan, Puerto Rico. She has a Bachelors Degree in Environmental Design from the University of Puerto Rico and a Masters Degree of Science in Historic Preservation from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. She worked in both private and government sectors. She was also the construction manager of several restoration projects in Puerto Rico including Casa Aboy, Capilla de Nuestra Senora de Lourdes and the Capitol Building of Puerto Rico which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

In the public sector she worked for the Mayor of San Juan as the Manager for the Urban Center for the Rio Piedras town. Rio Piedras, founded in 1714, is where the University of Puerto Rico main campus is located and is the busiest intermodal city within the entire country. In that position she served as a liaison between the Mayor, residents, commerce, students and visitors. She supervised major City's capital projects including the acquisition, restoration and re adaptive use of the oldest house within the town (circa 1886). Other capital projects were the extension of Paseo de Diego; a pedestrian commercial road, and the rehabilitation of the Plaza del Mercado de Rio Piedras, the largest Marketplace within the Island.

In January of 2001 she was appointed as the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Officer by the first woman elected Governor of Puerto Rico. In that position she served as advisor on Historic Preservation issues to the Governor, Legislators, Mayors, and Federal, State and Local governments. She worked with public policy related to historic preservation and was in charge of the National Register of Historic Places of Puerto Rico. Among the State capital projects that were part of the responsibilities were the rehabilitation of the Governors' Mansion- La Fortaleza, built in 1533, a National Landmark and a World Heritage Site, restoration and re adaptive use of Hospital de la Concepcion el Grande, a Spanish hospital built in the Historic Old San Juan, and restoration of La Bateria del Escambron, circa 1771, a Spanish first defense wall element for the northeast shore of San Juan islet, among others.

In February 2008 she was hired as a principal planner for historic preservation for the City of Fort Myers. Her main responsibilities are assisting the City of Fort Myers Historic Preservation Commission in overseeing the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance. ***Her main goals and passions are to educate citizens about the importance of preserving our heritage for future generations.*** One of the main tasks will be regular empowerment meetings with owners and tenants on designated historic districts within the city. These meetings will create leadership and awareness on historic preservation issues. It is a belief that owning a historic property is rewarding, but also a time consuming task; knowing that there are professionals and advocates that can support and help citizens on preservation efforts will make everything easier. Another goal and challenge is the promotion of our historic heritage. ***We need to attract visitors to our distinctive Historic Downtown area;*** we need people to experience the uniqueness of our history and architecture. ***The City of Fort Myers needs to be recognized as a fine first class historic destination within the Southwest Florida region,*** for this we must create alliances with preservation advocates, regional, State, and Federal agencies as well as non-profit organizations.

FMHS Graduates Online

Did you know that if you were graduated from Gwynne High School or any of the buildings called "Fort Myers High School", you can find your name on the web? Just go online with Google and enter your full name and "Fort Myers Florida" and you will find YOUR name on the web! This should work for most folks, but there are exceptions. Further, if you had a picture taken for your senior class, then your face MAY be on the web too! This website is due to the loving efforts of Tom "Tinker" Stewart, FMHS 1947 and many volunteers. He began the pages in 1997 and they have grown to include all the names and all the faces for FMHS grads he's been able to find... up to and including the Class of 2007. If you'd like to write to encourage, disparage, or support Tom, his email address is on the FMHS pages... ***Go Greenies!*** www.tinkerstewart.com

New Office For The Trust

The Lee Trust for Historic Preservation has recently rented office space at 1609 Hendry Street Suite 15 in downtown Fort Myers. Originally this building was the old Starnes Arcade built in 1920 and was home to many small businesses.

With the help of the South West Florida Historical Society's research materials and knowledgeable volunteers, Helen Farrell and Genevieve Bowen, we learned that this building was the home to Smiths Kandy Kitchen. Many native Fort Myers residents may remember the name Kandy Kitchen Smith. Mr. Smith was the grandfather of Mrs. Genevieve Bowen the president of the historical society.

It is the hope of the Lee Trust to gain more presence in the downtown area. Our goal is to increase awareness and Membership. It is imperative that our historic buildings remain intact. We hope to educate the downtown leaders about the importance of a successful downtown revitalization and its connectiveness to historic preservation.

Currently 1609 Hendry Street is the home to The Bar Association Lounge. The lounge is open 3pm to Midnight on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Happy Hour is from 3-6pm offering free appetizers and reduced price drinks. On weekends Mr. Tony Thomas, from Las Vegas, entertains on Piano. The Bar Association is now offering an Express Lunch for \$5.

The Starnes Arcade, also known as the Courtyard Shops, has office and retail space available for rent. Call 239-275-8131 or 239-850-4646 for more info.



Smiths Kandy Kitchen, courtesy of SW FL Historical Society

The Historic Lee County Throws Are Back!!



The Lee Trust has reordered these wonderful throws. They will be available in blue and cranberry. We will be selling them for \$49.50 available through the Trust Office and at many local museums.

Don't Miss Out!!



On Tuesday, May 13th 2008 at 2:30pm
The Cape Coral Historical Society President
Paul Sanborn will give a talk titled
"Cape Coral Yesterday and Tomorrow."
Mr. Sanborn has been designated by the city of
Cape Coral as the official historian.

Free Admission call 772-7037 for more info

**Please visit our updated website at leetrust.org
new email is leepreservation@embarqmail.com
our new phone number is 939-PAST (7278)**



Save The Date!

5pm Friday, June 6th

1609 Hendry Street • In The Courtyard

Please join us in welcoming Enid Terregrosa and for a book signing with Gerri Reaves
Appetizers, Beer and Wine will be served

Lee Trust for Historic Preservation, Inc. is please to offer the Historic Building Plaques Program Again!

The Lee Trust Historic Building Plaque Program is open to any person who wishes to recognize a historic resource with a bronze plaque. There are two criteria for participation in the program: the building must qualify as a historic resource; and the resource must be designated through a local preservation program. The goal of the Plaque Program is to promote awareness of our historic resources, and to recognize those who are the stewards of these unique and limited elements of our heritage. Plaque programs provide one of the most effective and least expensive ways to bring history to life in our streets.



Shown here, these handsome plaques will be individually cast in bronze, the material of choice for markers with longevity. Our unique design is an oval measuring 5" x 7" that is fabricated to ease installation and to provide an affordable program. Lee Trust is able to sell these markers for \$55.00 each, including tax. This price is greatly reduced from the normal retail cost of \$91.68. If you are uncertain as to whether a building qualifies, Lee Trust volunteers will assist in reviewing the qualities of the site, and will introduce participants to local preservation programs within Lee County and its municipalities.

To order your plaque, or to receive more information please contact Lee Trust at 239-939-PAST. The Plaque Program will be an ongoing program for Lee Trust.

Historic Building Plaque Application

Name of Applicant _____

Applicant's Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone Number (required for pickup) _____

Name & Address of Resource _____

Date of Construction, Architect & Builder (if known) _____

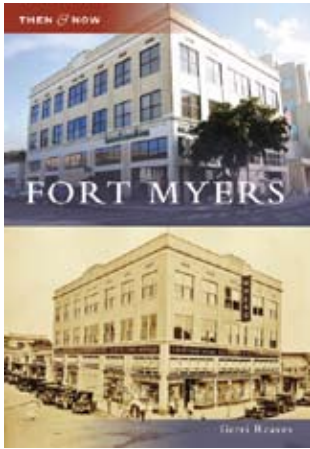
First Owner & Owner's Occupation (if known) _____

This resources is: Designated Not yet designated Possible eligible
Locality of Designation: Lee County Other (please specify)
Dated Designated: _____ Don't Know

Check Enclosed Please send more information

Mail to: Lee Trust for Historic Preservation • P.O. Box 1035 • Fort Myers, Florida 33902-1035

About the Author of *Then & Now, Fort Myers*



Gerri Reaves lives in Fort Myers, Florida, where she writes about Florida history, the environment, popular culture, the arts, and literature. Her weekly column in *The River Weekly News* on historic downtown Fort Myers sparked her interest in writing this book. Her other publications include *Mapping the Private Geography: Autobiography, Identity, and America* and numerous essays.

She is active with the Southwest Florida Historical Society, whose archives she delights in perusing. Her passions are birds, dancing, and South Florida's natural environment.

Her love for local history is inspired by a keen interest in autobiographical literature and the relationship between place and identity. A former English professor, she has been awarded two Scholar/Humanist Fellowships from the Florida Humanities Council and a Teacher Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities.



An Interview with the Author of *Then & Now, Fort Myers*

Q: What was your inspiration for writing the book?

A: Downtown Fort Myers is the only place I have ever felt “at home” in the years I’ve lived here. Every human being needs a neighborhood, and even though I do not live downtown, I can walk around there and feel I’m in a neighborhood, a place not stripped of a sense of place. Simply walking around and taking the time to notice what’s around me gives me something akin to the excitement I felt as a child when I went out to play and explored my neighborhood. What has changed since I was last here? What will I see or discover today? Ultimately, I’m fascinated with how we use place to define ourselves and how we connect or disconnect from it.

Q: How did you research the information for the book?

A: The basis for the book is almost four years of “then and now” columns on historic downtown Fort Myers, a column I write for *The River Weekly News*. I consulted existing books on local history, the archives of the Southwest Florida Historical Society and Southwest Florida Museum of History, old maps, and other sources. Perhaps most important are the memories of Fort Myers that natives share with me. And then, part of what I’ve included in the book comes from walking around Fort Myers and mentally overlaying all those maps, historical accounts, and personal memories on what I see on the ground. The actual place—the land, the trees, and the structures—say things no other source can.

Q: What will readers find interesting about the book?

A: The general reader will be struck, I think, by a seeming contradiction: how little downtown has changed and yet

how drastically it has changed. I hope the book will invite people to use the book as a guide for a walking tour. So much is invisible when we experience place through a car window. People might happily discover that traces of the old Fort Myers they thought had disappeared are really still there—and it’s fun to discover that.

Q: What writing advice would you give to aspiring authors and historians?

A: Start with whatever entices you, however trivial or confusing it might seem. Revel in the contradictions, the fuzzy facts, the conflicting accounts. All of it is relevant. Enjoy the serendipity of tackling a topic and letting it lead you.

Q: What lasting impact do you hope your book will leave?

A: In *Then & Now, Fort Myers*, I sincerely try to show this lovely historic town in a more comprehensive way. People often are preoccupied with the unwelcome results of inevitable change. Old landmarks disappear, skylines change, and downtowns die and then revive. It’s easy to experience the transformation of a place only as loss. Writing this book gave me optimism and enlightened me about why people repeatedly re-write the landscape, why they relentlessly remodel their habitats. It’s about creation, not just destruction. I hope readers will see from my book that we have a choice in how we alter our landscapes. We can make choices that preserve the beauty and spirit of the past, or we can make choices that alienate us from our surroundings. We must make choices that make our human landscapes beautiful and livable.



Membership Application/ Renewal Form

Name _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____

Save a stamp and email my meeting notices.

I am a: New Member Renewing Member

Level of Membership:

- Benefactor - \$500 and up
- Patron \$250
- Sponsor \$100
- Contributor - \$50
- Family - \$30
- Individual - \$20

In addition to my gift, a matching gift will be made by: _____
(Name of Company)

Make checks payable to Lee Trust for Historic Preservation and send to:

Lee Trust for Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 1035 • Fort Myers, Florida 33902-1035

Membership is for the calendar year. Dues are payable on January 1st and are considered delinquent after the annual meeting in February of each year.

Tired of seeing our historic buildings torn down? Want to know more about historic preservation? Then join Lee Trust!

Lee Trust is a nonprofit organization 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.

Please fill out this form and send it in with your check. In addition to selecting your membership level, you may elect to be notified of meetings and events via email, saving the Trust the cost of postage. Consider an additional donation as a Contributor or Sponsor and help increase our Revolving Fund. For more information about Membership contact Gina Taylor at LeePreservation@embarqmail.com or (239) 939-PAST ■



Looking to the future with an eye to the past...

LEE TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION, INC. P.O. Box 1035 • Fort Myers, Florida 33902-1035

***Do you think our
Downtown is unique?
It's because of
the historic buildings.
Successful Downtowns
across America
have embraced
historic preservation.
Please become a member
of the Lee Trust
and help restore
and revitalize
our Downtown.***