



Lamers Building (Grove Gallery)
832 S. 5th Street



Historic Milwaukee, Inc.
Spaces & Traces 2018
Walker's Point

HISTORIC MILWAUKEE, INC.
SPACES & TRACES

PART I: BUILDING HISTORY

1. BUILDING/HOUSE ADDRESS:

- A. PRESENT: 830-832 S. 5th Street
B. HISTORIC: 352-352(a) Grove

2. NAME OF BUILDING/HOUSE:

- A. PRESENT: Zoe Gallery
B. HISTORIC: Lamers Block

3. LEGAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

Week's Plot of Lots 3 & 6 in SE Y4 section of 32-7-22 block 102 S 26.3' Lot 8

4. DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1883 (from the building front)

5. ARCHITECT: Andrew Elleson

The original architect of the Lamers Block of buildings was Milwaukeean, Andrew Elleson. Elleson ran his design firm from 479 National Avenue, Milwaukee, and lived at 491 Grove, not far from the buildings he designed for owner, Matthias Lamers. Elleson, along with engineer John Rugee, is also credited with designing St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, an Italianate, Gothic church on Milwaukee's South Side.

In 1901, five years after the death of Matthias Lamers, the first floor of the Lamers Block building was renovated by architect Otto C. Uehling and his partner, Carl L. Linde. They originally ran their firm of Uehling & Linde from 331 Grove but later moved it to 120 Wisconsin. During the renovation, the first-floor retail space was updated so that Lamers Bros. Shoes, the shoe store started by Matthias and continued by two of his sons, Henry and John, could move in. The brothers soon after moved the store to the adjacent building but several of the Lamers family members continued to use the property as their home.

6. BUILDERS, CONTRACTOR, MASON, ETC.:

7. ORIGINAL COST OF CONSTRUCTION:

\$4,500 (as noted in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel) and \$1,000 for the lot

8. ARE THERE ORIGINAL PLANS FOR THIS BUILDING? IF SO, WHERE?:

9. ARE THERE HISTORIC PHOTOS OF THIS BUILDING? IF SO, WHERE?:

10. HAS THIS BUILDING BEEN ALTERED?:

In addition to the 1901 renovation, the building was converted from a store to offices in 1966 by then-owner, Marica (also listed as Marcia) Staut. No architect is listed for this conversion. Additionally, after purchasing the property in 1972, current owner Celine Ferrell renovated the exterior of the building.

Currently, only one structure remains at the building site although Matthias Lamers, the original owner, constructed adjacent buildings to form the Lamers Block. The subject property was built by Lamers

simply for use as a rental property, however several of his family members inhabited the building after his death.

11. INTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

12. GENERAL EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

The Lamers Block building is a fine example of the High Victorian Italianate style of architecture. It is constructed of cream bricks (those that gave Milwaukee the nickname, "Cream City") and has a contrasting red design and intricate brickwork weaved into its façade. The fairly standard, two-story rectangular building has a very ornate front with a striking pediment of black iron/wood/carved stone? A carved stone shell detail is located just under the pediment and there are two large bay windows to either side of the front door. The windows have finely detailed iron casements surrounding them and there are unique mullioned transoms directly under the bays that lead to the basement.

PART II: HISTORY OF THE BUILDING'S OCCUPANTS

13. LIST OF OWNERS/OCCUPANTS:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>NAME</u>
1883-1896	Matthias Lamers (owner); carpet & wallpaper store, men's clothing store (occupants)
1896-1930s	Lamers Family (owners & occupants)
1896-1904	Anna, Anton, Emil and Henry (occupants)
1901-1902	Lamers Bros. Shoes (occupants)
1930s-1947	Lamers Realty Co. (owners)
1928-1930	Robert and Edith Stevens (occupants)
1930	Kleman &. Weller Shoes; Harry Richards; Leo G. Shulse (occupants)
1931-1933	Leo G. Shulse; (a) W. Harry Richards (occupants)
1933-1947	Mervin LeRoy; (a) W. Harry Richards
1944-1946	(a) Thomas H. Fine
1947	(a) Alvord Wilson
1947-1972	Frank R. and Marica Staut (owners)
1949	Leonard Household Specialties; (a) Mervin LeRoy; Donald E. Kueny (occupants)
1950	vacant
1951-1953	record not found; (a) Mervin LeRoy; Stefan C. Csicsaj (occupants)
1954-1956	Acme Surgical Appliances & Artificial limbs; (a) Mervin LeRoy; Stefan Csicsaj
1957	vacant; (a) Harvey J. LeRoy (occupants)
1958	G.S.I. laboratory, Inc. & Harvey LeRoy; (a) Mrs. Sadie LeRoy (occupants)
1959	Harvey LeRoy; (a) Harvey LeRoy and Mrs. Sadie LeRoy (occupants)
1960-1961	Vacant; (a) Jos Landaro; Sadie LeRoy
1962-1970	Sadie LeRoy; (a) Israel Marrepo [also listed as Marrero and Marreo] (occupants)
1971	Sadie LeRoy; (a) Louis Torres (occupants)
1972	Harvey LeRoy; (a) vacant
Nov. 1972-present	Celine Ferrell (owner and occupant)

14. BIOGRAPHICAL INFO ON ORIGINAL AND SUBSEQUENT OWNERS/OCCUPANTS:

Matthias & Anna Lamers & family (1883-1947)

Matthias Lamers was born in Buxtahusen, Holland in 1827. In 1854, he married Anna (also called Maria or Mary) VanBoakholdt. Anna was born in Holland in about 1837. They immigrated to Milwaukee in 1855 and lived on Virginia Street between Reed and Hanover South. In 1866, Lamers purchased property at 352-354 Grove for \$1,000. He hired local architect, Andrew Elleson, to design a block of buildings where he could open up his boot & shoe shop (the first on Milwaukee's South Side), he could rent out space and he could house his large family. By the time the building was constructed, he and Anna had seven children: William, Henry, Anton, Benjamin, Hannah, John and Emil.

In 1883, the building was constructed and housed a carpet and wallpaper shop and a men's clothing store. After Matthias' death in 1896, his wife and several of their grown children moved into the building. In 1901, the building was renovated by architect Otto Uehling and Lamers' sons, Henry and John, moved their shoe store into the space. After only a year, they moved Lamers Bros. Shoes to the space next door (354 Grove). Although the brothers moved the business to 354, Anna and her sons Anton (a barber married to Agatha), Emil (also a barber) and Henry, co-owner of Lamers Bros. Shoes and a "commercial traveler," continued to live in the building.

Anna died September 8, 1905, followed soon after by Anton on January 10, 1907. For many years, the Lamers sons continued to own and occupy the building. For a brief period of time (1928-1930), milliner Robert A. Stevens and his wife Edith lived in the building, which was then legally owned by Lamers Realty Company (also called Lamers Real Estate Company). Finally, in 1947, the last of the Lamers family to own the building sold it to Frank R. and Marica (also listed as Marcia) Staut.

Leo G. Shulse (wife, Buelah) & William "Harry" Richards (wife, Annie)

Leo G. Shulse and "Harry" Richards lived with their wives in the building for several years. Richards was a shoemaker who occupied the building from 1930-1942 and, for a brief time, Shulse, born in 1897 in Missouri, was a helper to Richards. The two are listed as occupants along with Klieman & Weller Shoes but that lasted for only a year. Whether Shulse and Richards owned this business or worked for the owners is not listed.

Mervin P. LeRoy, Sadie LeRoy & Harvey J. LeRoy

Mervin LeRoy was born August 23, 1896, in Marinette Co., Wisconsin. He married Sadie, born in 1899 in Wisconsin, and they had four daughters and a son: Violet, Sylvia, Mildred and Dolores, and Harvey J. LeRoy was a machinist who worked in the shop, along with Richards, and lived in the building until 1955. There is no mention of Mervin after that date however, his wife, Sadie, continued to be the primary occupant of the building from 1962-1971. For a few months after Sadie died, Harvey J. LeRoy was the primary occupant until the building was bought and occupied by current owner, Celine Ferrell.

Frank R. and Marica (Marcia) Staut (1947-1972)

Frank R. and his wife, Marica, born August 8, 1896, bought the building from Lamers Realty in 1947. Frank, who either owned or worked for Obzor Publishing Company, died in the mid-1950s. Marica continued to own the building until it was sold, in 1972, to Celine Ferrell. Marica died in August of 1987. While the Stauts were owners of the building, Acme Surgical Appliances & Artificial Umbs used the first floor space for several years, as did Leonard Household Specialties and G.S.I. Laboratory, Inc. However, for the most part, the LeRois were their main tenants.

Celine Farrell (1972-present)

The building is currently owned by Celine Farrell who has restored the building and has used it as a gallery space. It is presently the site of Grove Gallery, run by Farrell, and a print shop, Team Nerd

Letterpress. Grove Gallery is known for its exhibitions of local Milwaukee artists who work in a wide variety of styles and medium. They also host artist talks and other events. For reasons of privacy, no further current owner information is offered.

Team Nerd Letterpress

Team Nerd Letterpress specializes in typesetting wood and lead type with their set of antique lead type from the 1920s. They have been housed in the Lamers Building since 2014 and they produce custom works of all kinds.

15. SOURCES CONSULTED:

Flower's *History of Milwaukee*, p. 1453

Milwaukee City Directories {1900-1973}

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, March 4 & 9, 1883

Social Security Death index.

Tax Rolls

U.S. Census Records (various years)

Wisconsin Architecture & History Inventory

www.historicdistricts.com

www.linkstotheoast.com/milwaukee/1858mkedirectoryL.html

<http://www.gallerygrove.com/>

<https://www.teamnerdpress.com/>

<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Property/HI41998>

16. PREPARED BY:

Ali Stuebner (2006), 2018 Information added by Yazmin Gomez