
Profile

N. Jean

First Name

Trammell

Last Name

418 Gulf Street

Street Address

Venice

City

FL

State

34285

Postal Code

queenjeantrammell@gmail.com

Email Address

Home: (941) 484-9859

Primary Phone

Alternate Phone

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Historic Preservation Board: Submitted

Have you ever been convicted or pled "no contest" to a misdemeanor offense?☐ Yes ☒ No**Have you ever been convicted or pled "no contest" to a felony?**☐ Yes ☒ No

Demographics**Are you a city resident?**☒ Yes ☐ No**How long have you lived in the City of Venice?**

Since 1967

Question applies to multiple boards

Do you own property within the City of Venice?☒ Yes ☐ No

Ethnicity

☒ Caucasian/Non-Hispanic

Gender

☒ Female

Interests & Experiences

Are you currently serving or have you served on a city board?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list:

Public Art, Historic Preservation

Why are you interested in serving on a board or commission?

Venice is a beautiful and historic town. It needs to have public art that will celebrate its' history, beauty and artistic spirit. I am happy to serve in helping build our community's art heritage and preserve Venice's history.

Resume of Education and Experience:

1970 Venice High School, 1973 Manatee Community College-A.A. Theatre Arts, 1971/1972 Asolo State Theatre/ FSU Apprenticeship Program, 1975 University of West Florida-B.A. Theatre & Communication Arts

Member of the Following Organizations:

Venice MainStreet, Venice Heritage, Venice Historic Society, Venice Art Center, Venice Nokomis Woman's Club, Venice Theatre, Friends of the Venice Public Library, Venice Area Beautification Inc., Venice Area Chamber of Commerce

[2017__Bio_JET.pdf](#)

Upload a Resume

Question applies to Historic Preservation Board

Do you have demonstrated special interest, experience or knowledge in history, architecture or related disciplines, as well as heritage of the city?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Acknowledgements

Jean (Ehrhart) Trammell
418 Gulf Street
Venice, FL 34285
Home: (941) 484-9859

E-mail: queenjeantrammell@gmail.com

Education:

1970	Venice High School
1973	Manatee Community College, Assoc. of Theatre Arts
1971/72	Asolo State Theatre/FSU Apprentice Program
1975	University of West Florida Bachelors of Theatre & Communication Arts

Family:

I have been a City of Venice resident since 1967. I'm married to Thomas B. Trammell, Tom is the Executive Vice-President of D.K.E. Inc and an ex- Marine Corps Captain. He is a Kiwanian and a leader of the Venice Civil Air Patrol squadron. We have four sons. Thomas is a realtor with Merritt Realty in Venice. Thor, a graduate of Manatee Community College with an AA in Film Production, and a B.A. in film from Full Sail, is now working on various independent film projects. Arthur received his Bachelors Degree in Hospitality Management from Johnson & Wales University and works at the Venice Company as its President. Our ward Tristan graduated from University of South Florida with a Bachelor's in Journalism and currently travels the world as a photo journalist.

Board Positions & Volunteer Activities / Past & Present

20/20 Steering & Visioning Board

Past Board Member

Arts & Culture Alliance

Member	present
Board Member	1998-2001
President	2001-2002
President Ex Officio	2002-2003

City of Venice

Chair: Public Art Advisory Board	2008-present
Historic Preservation Advisory Board	2004-present

:Vice Chair: Public Art Advisory Board	2006-2007
Charter Review Board	2000-2001
Economic Development Advisory Board	1996-2002
Airport Master Plan Review Committee	2000-2001

Community Center Review Committee	2000-2001
City Tax Oversight Committee	2000-2003
Community Development Advisory Committee	
City of Venice Representative	2001-2005
Economic Development Council of Sarasota County, Council	
Board Member	2005-2012
Chairman, Film Committee	2007-2020
Ehrhart Family Foundation	
President	1997-present
Exsultate!	
Founding Board Member	2003
Vice President	2004
President	2016-2018
Florida Theatre Conference	
Lifetime Member	
Friends of Venice Library	
Lifetime Member	
President	2018-2020
Gulf Coast Community Foundation / Venice	
Volunteer	2006-present
Arts & Education Review	original member
Women's Fund Executive Fund Chairman	1996-2002
Women's Fund	2001-2005
Youth Advisory Committee	2000-2005
Institute of Philanthropy Charter Board Member	2000-2003
Board Member	2000-2006
Vice-President	2005-2006
Hermitage Artist Retreat	
Charter Board Member	2004-present
Lifetime Honorary Board Member	2007-present

Junior Achievement	
Instructor	2007
Lemon Bay Playhouse	
Founding Director/Guest Artistic Director	1987-2002
PALS	
Volunteer	Since 1975
P.J. Productions Children's Theatre	
Vice President/Guest Instructor/Director	1992-2004
Quota International of Venice	
Charter Member	1995
Charter President	1995-1997
Treasurer & Publicist	1997-1999
President	1999-2000
Past District 27 Secretary/Treasurer	1999
Vice President	2001
District 27 Lt Governor	2000-2002
District 27 Governor	2002-2004
President	2005-2008
Ringling Museum of Art	
Sarasota County Ambassador	1994-2001
(appointed by Senator Lisa Carlton)	
Sarasota Arts in Public Places	
Jury Member	2000-2002
Sarasota Ballet Ambassadors South	
Secretary	1997-1999
Sarasota County Arts Council	
Hermitage Committee	2001-2005
Grants Review Panelist	2001-2002
Board Member	2002-2010
Vice President	2006
Chair of Governance Committee	2006-2007
President	2008-2010

Sarasota County Leadership

Class of 2000

Sertoma

District Governor 2003-2005

Board Member 2007-2008

Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Sarasota County Inc.

Chairman/Parenting Committee 2001-2003

Positive Youth Activities Committee 2001-2003

Tourism & Economic Development Board

Board Member 2006-2012

Venice Area Beautification Inc.

Vice President 2001-2003

Board of Directors 1995-2004

Chairman Marketing Committee 2000-2003

Member of Fundraising/Grant Writing Endowment Steering Committee 1995-2010

Chairman of Arts Committee 2004-2010

Vice President 2007-2009

President 2009-2011

Venice Area Chamber of Commerce

Board of Directors 1995-2001

Past Chair of Cultural Development

Past Chair of Tourist & Cultural Development

Marketing Committee 2004-2019

Ambassador 2003-2019

Visitor & Community Awareness Committee 2005

Board Member 2006-2012

Venice Area Historic Society

President 1999-2001

President Ex Officio 2001-2002

Representative on Year 2000 Film Project Committee 1998-2001

Member 1999-Present

Venice Mainstreet Inc

Past President, member of the Board	1993-2000	
Past Chair	2002-2003	
Board Member	2004-2010	2020
Treasurer	2004	
Vice President	2005	
President	2006-2007	
Economic Development Committee	Present	
Design Committee, Chair	Present	
Merchandise Committee	Present	
Marketing Committee	Present	

Venice Nokomis Women's Club

President	2019-2020
Membership	2013-present

Venice Theatre

Past Chairman, Stage II, Venice Little Theatre		
Board Member and Secretary		
Returned to Board May 1999 as 2nd Vice President of Arts & Education		
Past Director of Stage II and Theatre Camp		
Guest Artistic Director		
President	2000-2005	
Board Member	1999-2005	2020
Vice-President	2007-2008	2020
President	2009-2012	

Venice Heritage

Board Member	2002-Present
President	2002-2004, 2017-2019

Sarasota Film Commission	2005-2020
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Community Recognitions:

1985 Venice Little Theatre, President's Award

1986	Venice Little Theatre, Volunteer Hall of Fame
1997	Sarasota Co. School Board, Moment of Pride
	Sarasota County Commission on the Status of Women, Women of Impact
1998	Woman of Distinction Award
	Marie Kaufman President's Award, Venice Area Chamber of Commerce
2001	Pillar of Our Community Award, City of Venice
	National Leadership Award, National Republican Congressional Committee
	Wanda Frey Joiner Founder Award, Quota International, Inc.
2002	Congressional Business Commission Member
	Republican Gold Medal
	Arts & Culture Alliance, President's Award
	Arts Champion, Businessman of the Year
2003	National Republican Congressional Committee
	Florida MainStreet, Outstanding Supporter
	Rotary, Doc Matson Award for Community Service & Leadership
2005	Sarasota County Community Archives, Honoree
	Daughters of the American Revolution, Community Award
	Arts & Culture Alliance, Philanthropist Award
2007	Venice Little Theatre, Volunteer of Distinction
	Women's Council of Realtors, Award of Excellence
2011 - 2013	Queen Jean Blog / Venice Magazine

Profile

Franklin

First Name

E

Middle Initial

Wright

Last Name

521 Harbor Dr S

Street Address

Venice

City

FL

State

34285

Postal Code

fwright@venicefl.gov

Email Address

Home: (941) 244-2214

Primary Phone

Mobile: (941) 441-8699

Alternate Phone

Retired

Employer

Attorney

Occupation

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Historic Preservation Board: Submitted

Have you ever been convicted or pled "no contest" to a misdemeanor offense?☐ Yes ☒ No**Have you ever been convicted or pled "no contest" to a felony?**☐ Yes ☒ No

Demographics**Are you a city resident?**☒ Yes ☐ No**How long have you lived in the City of Venice?**

9 yrs

Question applies to multiple boards

Do you own property within the City of Venice?☒ Yes ☐ No

Ethnicity

☒ Prefer not to Answer

Gender

☒ Male

Interests & Experiences

Are you currently serving or have you served on a city board?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list:

Historic Preservation Board

Why are you interested in serving on a board or commission?

I believe my experience in and enthusiasm for preservation would help the Historic Preservation Board in achieving its and Council's goals in retaining the history and charm of this unique City.

Resume of Education and Experience:

B.A., History, Old Dominion; J.D., U. of Denver; LL.M., U. of Michigan. I was a member of the board of Preservation of Historic Winchester (VA) for 10 years, serving two terms as President. I have been a member of the Venice Preservation Board for two terms, and serve as a Director of the Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation.

Member of the Following Organizations:

Nat'l Trust for Historic Preservation; Preservation of Historic Winchester (VA); Venice Heritage, Inc.

[FRANKLINEASTWOODWRIGHTResume__1_.pdf](#)

Upload a Resume

Question applies to Historic Preservation Board

Do you have demonstrated special interest, experience or knowledge in history, architecture or related disciplines, as well as heritage of the city?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Acknowledgements

FRANKLIN EASTWOOD WRIGHT

Education:

- Bachelor of Arts (History), Old Dominion University
- Juris Doctor *cum laude*, University of Denver College of Law
- Master of Laws (LL.M.), University of Michigan Law School

Experience:

- Judge Advocate (Colonel, United States Air Force (Retired))
- Assistant Professor of Law, United States Air Force Academy
- Attorney, admitted Colorado, Texas; Private Practice, *Groce Locke & Hebdon*, San Antonio; *Winstead Sechrest & Minick*, Dallas

Other experience:

- Past President (two terms), Preservation of Historic Winchester (Virginia), Inc.
- Board Member *Emeritus*, Preservation of Historic Winchester
- Member, National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Member, Venice Heritage, Inc.

Personal:

- Born, Norfolk, Virginia
- Married, two children, five grandchildren
- Moved to Venice October 2013



Venice, Florida
"City on the Gulf"

BOARD APPLICATION
(Please type or print clearly)

BOARD: Historic Preservation Board (HPB)
Architectural Review Board (ARB) DATE: August 3, 2021

NAME: RICHARD R. BERGMANN

PREFERRED CONTACT TELEPHONE NO.: 203-966-9505, 203-979-4249

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 1538

CITY: Venice ZIP CODE: 34284

CITY RESIDENT: Yes ☒ No ☐ E-MAIL ADDRESS: brgmnn2004@yahoo.com

HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN VENICE? since 2018

DO YOU OWN PROPERTY WITHIN THE CITY OF VENICE? Yes ☒ No ☐

IF YES, ADDRESS: 416 Park Blvd. N. 34285 (Bergmann's private residence)

OCCUPATION: retired. formerly architect, landscape architect, and planner

NAME OF BUSINESS: _____

BUSINESS ADDRESS: _____ BUSINESS PH: _____

ARE YOU CURRENTLY HOLDING AN ELECTED OR APPOINTED OFFICE FOR ANY GOVERNMENT AGENCY (INCLUDING CITY OF VENICE BOARDS)? Yes ☒ No ☐

IF YES, PLEASE LIST: _____

RESUME OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE (Attach resumé, if you prefer): see ATTACHED

MEMBER OF THE FOLLOWING CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS (Attach resumé, if you prefer): _____

Former President & active Board Member of the Venice Heritage, Inc.

WHY DO YOU DESIRE TO SERVE ON THIS BOARD? Since serving on the City of Venice's ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD in 2019, filling-out a temporary vacancy, valuable experience was gained. Beginning in 1980, four study trips were made from Connecticut to better understand the John Nolen Venice Plan in-depth before making decision to move her
HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OR PLED "NO CONTEST" TO A MISDEMEANOR OFFENSE?

Yes ☐ No ☒

IF YES, GIVE DETAILS:

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OR PLED "NO CONTEST" TO A FELONY OFFENSE?

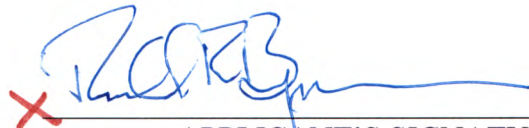
Yes ☐ No ☒

IF YES, HAVE YOUR CIVIL RIGHTS BEEN RESTORED:

Yes ☐ No ☐

GIVE DETAILS:

I UNDERSTAND THAT IF APPOINTED, I WILL SERVE ON THE ABOVE BOARD WITHOUT COMPENSATION AND AT THE PLEASURE OF THE CITY COUNCIL, AND I WILL BE REQUIRED TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL MANDATORY TRAINING ON THE SUNSHINE AND PUBLIC RECORDS LAWS.



APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE
Richard R. Bergmann

PLEASE NOTE:

MEMBERSHIP ON THE FOLLOWING BOARDS REQUIRE THAT AN ANNUAL FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE FORM BE FILED ON OR BEFORE JULY 1ST OF EACH YEAR: FIRE PENSION BOARD; MUNICIPAL CODE ENFORCEMENT BOARD; PLANNING COMMISSION; POLICE PENSION BOARD; AND VENICE HOUSING AUTHORITY.

APPLICANTS OF BOARD APPOINTMENTS ARE REMINDED OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE FLORIDA STATUTES AS APPLICABLE TO CONFLICTS OF INTEREST. ALL BOARD APPLICATIONS ARE KEPT ON FILE AND ARE REVIEWED AS VACANCIES OCCUR. UPDATED INFORMATION MAY BE REQUESTED AT THAT TIME.

DIRECT ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE TO THE MAYOR'S OFFICE, PHONE NO. (941) 486-2626.

ENCLOSURES: **Page 2a-2**

Page 2b-2

Newspaper Article: "Restoring Historic Buildings is this Architect's passion,"
Venice Gondolier, Our Town Section, pages B1 and B2.
August 4, 2021 issue

BOARD APPLICATION for Architectural Review Board (ARB) October 2, 2020

Attachment One

For: **Richard R. Bergmann**

The following Resume' with Honors has been edited with a partial listing:

Richard Bergmann is a graduate of the University of Illinois School of Architecture with additional studies in conservation of building materials at the University of York, York, England, and Cornell College.

"Showing a sympathetic understanding of the relation between building and urban setting and between old and new, Richard Bergmann's sensitive and skillful handling of creative design and adaptive preservation is noteworthy" according to investiture into the College of Fellows of The American Institute of Architects (AIA) for outstanding contribution to the architectural profession, 1982. It is a life-long honor granted to fewer than 10% of its membership.

Served for 27 years as Chair of a local historic district commission (New Canaan, Connecticut). "Because of the excellent persuasive ability of Dick Bergmann, the Red Cross decided not to encase their house in either vinyl or aluminum. It is now being painted," proudly wrote Dr. Jerome Selinger, former chair of the New Canaan Historic District Commission, July 31, 1979, meeting minutes.

30-year Trustee of local historic society, a founding member of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, founder of Green-Link---a greenway/walking paths, now part of a Connecticut Land Trust, similar to the Greens/Mini Parks in the Nolen/Venice Master Plan. First recipient of the AIA of Connecticut's Outstanding Service in Historic Preservation to the Community award, 1994, cited for "selfless dedication to preserving Connecticut's architectural and cultural heritage."

When departing his home town after 45 years, he was honored with the New Canaan Preservation Alliance's 2018 Leadership Recognition Award prior to establishing residency in Venice.

A frequent speaker, published writer and a professional photographer in historic preservation, landscape, and the environment. In between, he is a sculptor and has a strong sense of stewardship for something larger.

August 3, 2021

Venice City Common Council Members
City of Venice

Re: Venice Architectural Review Board and Historic Preservation Board

Dear Common Council Members:

It is my understanding that there are two vacancies on both the Architectural Review Board (ARB) and the Historical Preservation Board (HPB) due to the resignation of a board member from each. Since I have served on the ARB, filling an unexpired term of a member for one year and have gained valuable experience by my service, I would appreciate reappointment to either or both of these boards. I understand the Council is contemplating joining these two boards into one.

For the past 50 years, prior to moving to Florida, I practiced architecture and landscape architecture with a high percentage of historic preservation projects. As a founding member of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, as well as serving as the chair of New Canaan's Historic District Commission and the local Historic Society's Board for 28-years are some of my credentials.

Feeling that I can add much to either of both of these Boards, it is my request to be reinstated to the ARB or appointed to the HPB or both for that matter.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Richard Bergmann

Our Town

AROUND TOWN 16B COMICS/PUZZLES 11B-14B
CALENDAR 3B and 15B PUZZLE ANSWERS 9B

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2021 | KIM COOL, Our Town Editor | kcool@venicegondolier.com | SUN NEWSPAPERS

Who's That?
1004 S Tamiami Trail
Venice, FL
941-492-6000
AUTO ACCIDENT • INJURY • BANKRUPTCY • DIVORCE

JODAT
Law Group .com
941-492-6000

HISTORY

Restoring historic buildings is this architect's passion



GONDOLIER PHOTOS BY LARRY HUNES

The architect enjoys spending time in his workshop, creating works of art and architectural design elements that cannot be restored. Richard Bergmann's father, who was a mechanical engineer, and his grandfather, who was a tool and die maker, both greatly influenced his life.

Richard Bergmann had designed iconic structures in career

By LARRY HUMES
FOR THE GONDOLIER

VENICE — During his architectural career, Richard Bergmann designed numerous homes and commercial buildings, including one of America's most iconic and recognizable structures.

But the projects that brought him the most joy and satisfaction involved restoring historic landmarks.

"The idea is not so much to be a purist in preservation, but to try and adapt the reuse of the buildings and to make them useful for today's needs," he said. "And to do that in a very sensitive way. It's a difficult chore, but it's fun to do."

Born and raised in Milwaukee, Bergmann attended the University of Wisconsin after graduating from high school.

"My father wanted me to go into electrical engineering, but I didn't like it. I ended up going into the Army as I figured that would give me some time to decide what I wanted to do."

Bergmann was sent to post-war Germany in 1956 to work with guided missiles. Armed with dummy warheads, he said the missiles were moved around to keep the Russians on edge.

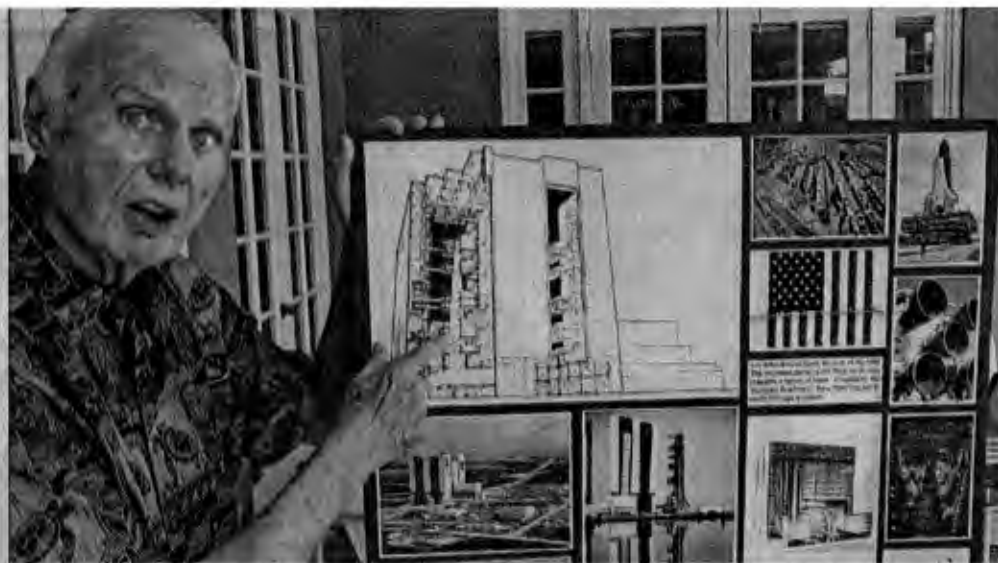
"We would simulate blowing up targets and would then visit the sites to determine how much damage we could have done," he added. "I became interested in looking at these cities that were still in ruins from the war and watching the re-construction of those medieval buildings. Stone on stone and putting back in the carvings. I decided then that that was what I wanted to do with my life. After I got out of the Army, I wanted to study historic architecture."

He applied to three universities, but was told by his top choice, the University of Illinois that he should first return to Wisconsin and take a year of art courses. Following that advice, Bergmann returned to Illinois and eventually earned his bachelor's degree there in architecture.

In those days, however, schools were only teaching modern architecture.

Armed with his degree, Bergmann interned for Richard Urbahn in New York City and was soon given an assignment that would serve as the challenge of a lifetime.

"Mr. Urbahn came to me at 9 a.m. one morning and said, 'Dick, I've got a problem. I've got Werner von Braun and Dr. Kurt Debus (head of NASA at the time) coming to the office at two o'clock this afternoon. I need a drawing of what we're



Richard Bergmann was given five hours to complete a pen and ink concept for NASA's Vertical Assembly Building. Quite an accomplishment for a 25-year-old intern fresh out of college. The building is designed to withstand 150 mph winds

proposing to them.' My question to him was: what are we proposing? What NASA wanted was a building at Kennedy Space Center that was tall enough to stand up in it a 365-foot rocket.

"Since I had some military background with rockets, I kind of understood what they were looking for," he added. "I got busy and started drawing this thing up. I figured if my concept turned out okay, we could enlarge the drawing for the presentation. We had the drawing blown up to a 6 by 8-foot panel which we placed on the wall of the conference room. At four minutes to two, I hauled it up there just as these guys were walking in. Mr. Urbahn had never seen it before, but acted like it had always been there. As it turned out, the building turned out to look exactly like that original pen and ink line drawing. The amazing thing about that building is that it's still being used some five decades later."

During the next three years, Bergmann and the Urbahn team designed the space center's Vehicle Assembly Building and the adjacent Launch Center. He was invited to the complex for the launch of the Apollo 11.

SEE PASSION, 48

The inspiration for the sundial Richard Bergmann created occurred on a visit he and his wife made to Jaipur, India. The stainless steel sculpture also adjusts for daylight savings time.



PASSION

FROM PAGE 1B

flight to the moon on July 16, 1969.

Two years ago, Bergmann was presented the "Test of Time Award" by the Florida Chapter of the American Institute of Architects for designing what one juror called "a thing of legend."

Said another juror: "It's just a plain box with an American flag on one side and a NASA sticker on the other. The simpleness of the box is what gives it's quite beauty. There is no scale to the building, no formal doors or windows to suggest its size, only 500-foot blank surfaces with 500-foot-tall doors."

It was while he was working for Urbahn that Bergmann was approached by an elderly woman in Connecticut that wanted what she said was her 1670 home restored. When he explained to her that he had no actual experience in such restoration, she suggested he supervise the project and hire a restoration architect to do the actual work.

"I realized this was exactly what I wanted to do, but had to learn something about it."

In 1973, Bergmann discovered a new course available at the University of York, England.

"They were looking for students from different countries and I was lucky enough to be the first student from the U.S. to apply. It was kind of a traveling course to countries throughout Europe, looking at Medieval buildings to determine what caused them to fail. It was fascinating to me. You think you're building something strong, but a simple mistake can cause a building to collapse over time."

Bergmann also took

advanced courses at Harvard and Cornell universities that provided more experience about restoring historic homes.

A significant challenge came in 1973 when he and wife, Sandra, purchased a dilapidated house in New Caanan, Connecticut. Built in 1846, the house had over the years served as a private residence, boarding house and even the New Caanan Country Day School.

The house was purchased in 1924 by Maxwell Perkins and would serve for many years as the residence for he and his wife and five daughters.

Perkins was a senior editor at the publishing house of Charles Scribner's Sons, who both discovered and edited such literary

luminaries as Scott Fitzgerald, Earnest Hemingway, Thomas Wolfe and Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings.

Although they had no idea who Perkins was when they purchased the house, Bergmann said "it was a wonderful place and we enjoyed rubbing shoulders with Maxwell during the 45 years that we lived there."

Bergmann said renovating the Perkins house was one of his favorite projects.

"It was a lot of fun. We gutted the house on the inside. I saved all the woodwork and put it all back together again. We had to completely rewire the house and put in central air conditioning."

The ground floors served as the offices for his architectural practice while the couple lived on the top two floors. The house, he said, served as his "restoration school" during the 45 years they lived there.

During his career, Bergmann served as restoration architect for the Lockwood-Mathews mansion in Norwalk, Conn., an excellent example of mid-19th century craftsmanship.



GONDOLIER PHOTO BY LARRY HUMES

The Lord-Higel House, Richard Bergmann said, is an outstanding example of "bringing life to the history of a place." Built in 1886, the historic residence is the oldest building in Venice and the second oldest in Sarasota County.

He also oversaw the restoration of the Winder Building in the District of Columbia. Constructed in 1848, and the first fireproof office building in the city, the offices served many purposes over the years, including the investigation of Lincoln's assassination.

Bergmann said the building was empty when he began its restoration.

"What I discovered in the basement was a sort of torture chamber with stone cells and chains on the walls. It looked like something you might find in a medieval castle. I told a friend about what I'd found and was later told the CIA had gone in there later and removed everything."

Looking back on his career, Bergmann said he never designed two buildings identical to one another.

"Each building I ever designed began as an empty canvas. You start with the land, the environment, the needs and desires of the client, and combine all of that to design space that is truly functional, comfortable, and unique."

When the Bergmanns moved to Venice three years ago, they were not familiar with the work of urban designer John Nolen and Prentiss French, the city's first landscape architect.

Since then, he has enjoyed studying their works. He also joined the local preservation organization, Venice Heritage, and served for a time on the city's Architectural Review Board.

As a volunteer with VHI, Bergmann looks forward to helping with the restoration of the Lord-Higel House which, when completed, will

serve as the city's early settler museum.

Bergmann said restoring a building can be like the careful retouching of a painting.

On one hand, it should be visible from the original, but still blend well into the overall.

"If you don't preserve old buildings, it's like a man without a memory," he added. "We need to understand our collective history in order to better understand who we are as a community. The buildings serve as a visible reminder of that history. That's why we like Venice so much. It was well designed, well done, and it has been maintained that way."

Larry Humes writes about local history and can be reached at 1926venice@gmail.com.