

# Orlando's Historic Restaurants, Exhibit Brochure

2006

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## Today's Specials Include:

- Hotel Fort Gatlin's "Golden Brown Fried Chicken"
- Latchstring Tearoom's "Figs with Cream Cheese and Tea"
- Gary's Duck Inn "Jumbo Shrimp"
- Ronnie's Restaurant "Hot Pastrami Sandwiches"
- Lee's Lakeside Signature "Pina Colada Muffins"

### For More Information (and recipes):

O'Brien, Dawn and Matkov, Beeky. *Florida's Historic Restaurants and Their Recipes*. Winston-Salem: Blair, 1994. **Rosen General Collection TX715 O2827 1994.**

Central Florida Memory. Accessed 5/1/2006. <http://www.efmemory.org>.

"Gary's Duck Inn Grew With Orlando, Closes Suddenly." *Orlando Sentinel*, 10/11/2006, <http://www.infoweb.newsbank.com>.

"Orlando: A Visual History." Central Florida Heritage Foundation. Accessed 5/1/2006, <http://www.efhf.net/orlando/1926.htm>.

Rippel, Amy C. "Larry Beckart Dies—Created Lost Landmark." *Orlando Sentinel* 12/1/2004, <http://www.infoweb.newsbank.com>.

"Tropical Explorer's Riches of Green Left Mark on Florida's Landscape." *Orlando Sentinel*, 4/2/2006, <http://www.infoweb.newsbank.com>.

### About the Library



The Universal Orlando Foundation Library at UCF's Rosen College of Hospitality Management is devoted to the study of the hospitality and tourism industries. The Library is located at 9907 Universal Blvd., near International Drive and the heart of central Florida's tourism area. For more information, visit the Universal Orlando Foundation Library's homepage at <http://library.ucf.edu/rosen> or call 407-903-8100.

### About the History Center

The Orange County Regional History Center, which loaned some of the artifacts on display, is located at 65 E. Central Blvd., in downtown Orlando. For more information, visit the History Center online at [www.thehistorycenter.org](http://www.thehistorycenter.org) or call 407-836-8500.

### Curators:

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### Artifacts on loan from:

Orange County Regional History Center

### Universal Orlando Foundation Library

#### Rosen College of

#### Hospitality Management

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You Are Cordially Invited to  
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At

# Orlando's Historic Restaurants

On Display

May—August 2006

at the

Universal Orlando  
Foundation Library

Rosen College of  
Hospitality Management



### Hotel Fort Gatlin (ca. 1926-1965)

In the mid-1920s, Orlando's building boom gave rise to the Hotel Fort Gatlin on Orange Avenue where guests could relax and enjoy a "Full Course Golden Fried Chicken Dinner." The dining room served fresh Florida fruits and vegetables and meats of the highest quality, prepared by well-trained chefs. The building was bought and subsequently demolished in 1965 by the Orlando Sentinel newspaper which chose to expand its operations on the site.



A postcard depicting the Hotel Fort Gatlin, circa 1950.

### Latchstring Tearoom (ca. 1930s-1950s)

Between the 1930s and 1950s, the corner of Magnolia Ave. and Colonial Dr. was home to artist and horticulturist Mulford Foster. Here he opened the Tropical Arts Nursery and the Latchstring Tearoom. One could enjoy sipping a cup of tea while looking out at some of the 200 species of plants, including bromeliads, discovered by Foster on his travels around the world. In fact, colonies of Foster's bromeliads can still be found in the historic neighborhoods around Orlando. A 7-Eleven has replaced the lush environment that once dominated this corner near Lake Eola Heights, but memories of the nursery and tearoom live on in the minds of longtime Orlando residents.



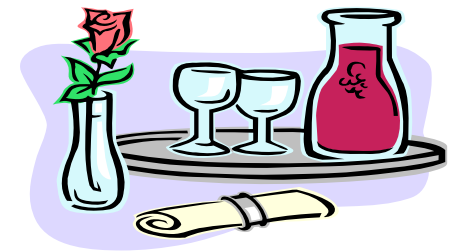
A postcard depicting Gary's Duck Inn.

### Gary's Duck Inn (1945-1994)

Opening its doors in 1945 on South Orange Blossom Trail, Gary's catered to Orlando's growing population and tourists with no-frills seafood that featured quality, service, and affordable prices. The restaurant's popularity drew celebrities like Dolly Parton and Bob Hope to dine on their Jumbo Shrimp. It is estimated that Gary's served about 25,000 pounds of shrimp annually during the 1970s and 1980s, its heyday. The success of Gary's interested Bill Darden of Darden Restaurants, Inc. to become a co-owner of the local landmark in 1963 and became the inspiration for a chain of seafood restaurants, known today as Red Lobster. Although Gary's closed in 1994, its legacy continues to grow in the U.S. and abroad.

### Ronnie's Restaurant (1956-1995)

For 39 years, Ronnie's Restaurant, located at Bumby and East Colonial, served good food with abrupt service to a wide mix of people, from locals to campaigning politicians like Bob Dole. Owner Larry Beckart used his keen business sense and sharp wit to become a local celebrity. Despite strict enforcement of rules such as no food sharing, rationed butter, and no dividing checks, "customers would line up for hours" to enjoy pastrami sandwiches, blintzes, and fresh bagels. Ronnie's closed its doors in 1995, but will continue to be remembered as an Orlando landmark.



### Lee's Lakeside (ca. 1980-2005)

Once one of the top choices for locals to celebrate a special occasion, Lee's Lakeside stood as a centerpiece of downtown Orlando for 20 years. Its owner, Lee Rose, purchased the building formerly known as the Cherry Plaza Hotel in the 1980s and renovated the property to take full advantage of the panoramic view of Lake Eola and the Orlando city skyline. Lee's Lakeside became a favorite dining destination for Central Floridians and visiting dignitaries, including Governor Lawton Chiles. Linda Chapin, former Orange County chairman, commented that "[Miss Lee] made it fashionable to come downtown for a meal" offering signature items such as Pina Colada Muffins, Red Snapper Amandine, and Tournedos Lakeside. Sadly, Lee's Lakeside closed in 2005 following 3 tough years after the death of Lee Rose. Recently, Robin Stotter, a former apprentice of famed chef Wolfgang Puck, purchased the former Lee's Lakeside and plans to rejuvenate the location with his own "imaginative cuisine."



The panoramic view of Lake Eola and Orlando city skyline from the dining room at Lee's Lakeside.