

Geneva's Morgan Stanley office relocates

By CRAIG FOX
FINGER LAKES TIMES

GENEVA — Morgan Stanley is downtown's latest casualty.

Financial adviser George Michaels had been seeing clients in his hometown's business district for 36 years, before the office merged with Canandaigua's late last month. Now, he drives 18 miles to work.

Sherri Geary, interim executive director of the Geneva Business Improvement District, said she learned of the move last week.

A notice in the vacant storefront window at 505 Exchange St. tells customers that Morgan Stanley has moved to "attractive new offices just east of Canandaigua."

Michaels, senior vice president of the local office, declined to comment, referring all questions to the corporate offices.

"I think it's important to convey it's not a closing, it's a relocation," said corporate spokeswoman Christy Pollak, emphasizing customers of the small Geneva office can continue to be served from the new location.

Michaels and financial adviser Kelly LaVoie O'Brien can be reached at the same phone number, 781-6000, and are willing to meet with clients in Geneva. Three more people will soon be added to the new office at Eastern Boulevard (Routes 5&20) and County Road 10.

The move leaves another storefront vacant, and it ends Michaels' association as a GBID member because he no longer has a business within its boundaries.

Geary said someone has already expressed an interest in the storefront.

In recent weeks, the Sticky Fingers barbecue restaurant on Railroad Place also closed, Geary said. Last week, Rent City also moved from Exchange Street to Castle.

Geary said Michaels' work as a GBID member will be missed and that he was always a big downtown supporter. However, Michaels said he'll remain on the board of the city's Industrial Development Agency.

Michaels began his career in 1972 with the Carl M. Loeb and Rhoades office on Seneca Street, and the business went through a number of variations, including Shearson Lehman Brothers. In 2004, Michaels transferred that business to Morgan Stanley, and it moved to the renovated office on Exchange Street.

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CLYDE MANSION AN UNUSUAL B&B

By JOHN ADDYMAN

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CLYDE — Locals know the home as the Smith-Ely Mansion, but starting this weekend lodgers will be calling it the Erie Mansion.

Mark Wright bought the 12,000-square-foot mansion at 39 W. Genesee St. in the spring and got permission from the village in May to turn it into a bed-and-breakfast. Since then he's been renovating.

The name was changed so people outside the area will have some sense where it is, he said.

Built as a home for Dr. Jarvis Smith and his wife in 1858, the building was transformed into a Victorian Italianate villa. The home passed to their daughter, Eugenia, who married Charles Ely, owner of Clyde Glass Works. After he died, she added on in a Colonial Revival style, which remains today. The mansion has been on the National Register of Historic Places since 1992.

Another marker outside says the mansion is "historically haunted."

But despite the number of visitors the home has had over the years, only a few people have seen the spirits that are said to live there. The Smiths and the Elys apparently died there, and one servant reportedly lost his head somewhere in the house — with the rest of his body never to be found.

The mansion itself has had several lives. It was once a home for veterans, and when Community Action Self-Help bought the place years ago, \$700,000 was pumped in to refurbish it as low-income housing.

Over two years, Wright was the 23rd potential buyer to look at the house. When he asked the code enforcement officer why it had been condemned, he said he had no choice: The electricity had been shut off and people were still living there.

Getting its status changed would be simple: Just turn the electricity back on, Wright was told.

After moving in and starting his own renovations, he soon found that just about everybody he talked to had a story about the place, and a good many of them were about ghosts. One prior tenant recalls seeing a woman in white going up the grand stairway — twice.

Another tenant said she'd seen a black woman dressed for kitchen work glide through the area that was being rebuilt as a kitchen for The Mansion Suite; and others have said they've seen Victorian-era women with lanterns flow past the front door. Wright said one workman got so spooked that he refused to be alone in the house while handling his part of the renovations.

Earlier this month, Wright asked a group called Syracuse Paranormal to investigate. Several people from the group told Wright they had close encounters with whatever's wandering the house, and two audio clips



The



John Addyman / Finger Lakes Times

The Erie Mansion in Clyde has been renovated and is open for guests. Owner Mark Wright (far left) has placed hand-carved furniture pieces throughout the bed-and-breakfast, including the Eerie Suite (left).

captured sounds not heard until the tapes were replayed. A second visit with more equipment is planned. (You can read their report and hear the recordings at www.syracuseparanormal.com.)

But the bigger story is what Wright has done with the 21-chandelier, 12-fireplace house. And there are now four large suites for lodgers. The Mansion Suite covers the entire ground floor (some 4,000 square feet) and costs \$1,500 per night.

Wright formerly made his living operating a limousine service, and he knows what well-to-do clients want in a place like the Erie Mansion — uniqueness and service. He and Shannon Burgio of Lyons handle the latter as butler and French maid. "You'd be surprised who will book here," he said. "They will do it because it's the most expensive place in central New York."

Lodgers will find in every suite what Wright terms a "manly man's

B&B." Furniture is heavy, imported and unique — a result of 30 years of collecting. Beds are huge and ornately decorated. All suites have a kitchen, large bathroom and living room. All the showers are big enough for two people.

The Honeymoon Suite has a bridal bed that appears to be two king-size beds stuck together. And right next door is a small, ancient, fully contained box bed.

"That gives the poor guy a place to go if he's in trouble," said Wright.

That suite is \$495 per night. In the Eerie Suite, Wright has placed skulls, a table made out of coffin wood and other macabre accouterments throughout. Alligator and snake hides cover the walls. The bedroom is the largest room, and there are two fireplaces in the suite. That, too, is \$495 per night. The smallest is the Red Erotic Suite, featuring a king-size, four-

poster bed canopied with mirrors. The décor is red, and the decorations follow a sensual theme.

The price is \$295 per night. Wright expects the Mansion Suite will be rented in tandem with several of the others to pretty much give the party the run of the mansion. He also expects to host receptions and parties.

No alcohol is served on the premises, but guests may bring their own libations.

"We're trying to do this totally different than the rest of the B&Bs," he said. "I've gotten so much positive feedback about what I'm doing. So many people have helped me with historical information. They love to see the mansion come to life and be a mansion again."

Mansion tours are available for \$10 per person and can be scheduled by calling 406-1999.

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City forming a vision for economic development

By DAVID L. SHAW

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GENEVA — What should the City Council's economic development vision be?

At its Nov. 5 Council meeting, a proposed vision was discussed but not finalized.

The vision, as proposed by City Manager Mathew Horn, states: "Private investment

and job creation contribute to community success through diversification of the tax base and enhancement of quality of life for our residents. City Council will continue to make investments in well thought-out economic development efforts that attract high-quality commercial activity."

The vision says the city should focus on these three economic sectors:

Tourism

Council would support investment of resources and undertake policy decisions that bolster the city's position as a regional tourism center.

This would include attraction and retention of:

■ **Cultural Attractions:** The Council would support continued development and expansion of existing performing and visual arts attractions, plus exploration of new, compatible developments.

■ **Wine-centered development:** Recognizing the significant impact regional wineries have on the city's tourism base, the Council would support efforts to develop attractions, facilities and other ventures that build upon the momentum of the success of wine-centered development.

■ **Retail and restaurant recruitment:** A diverse selection of shopping and dining alternatives, geared toward both visitors and residents, would ensure year-round foot traffic and promote mixed-use development in business centers throughout the city.

Downtown

The Council would support investment and undertake policy decisions in efforts to continue the development of

downtown as a "24-hour" center of activity.

The vision statement says this can be achieved through:

■ **Educational institutions:** Encouraging the consideration of downtown buildings and sites for expansion opportunities related to learning and performing space, as well as other activities related to educational institutions.

■ **Retail and restaurant recruitment:** Recognizing that stores and restaurants are vital to generating foot traffic, especially for a revitalized downtown, generating year-round activity.

■ **Service sector:** Recognizing that the financial, legal, banking and other professional entities downtown create and maintain highly-skilled, well-paid jobs in the central business district, creating a customer base for retail and dining businesses.

■ **Residential development:** Encouraging upper-story residential development to promote the restoration, preservation and continued maintenance of critical historical resources in the central business district. It would also provide a built-in customer base for downtown businesses.

Manufacturing

The Council would support recruitment and retention of:

■ **Agriculture and food related industries:** With the Finger Lakes a recognized center of agriculture in the state, the city should serve as a regional center of agriculture and food-related industries, including research and development, as well as processing and production operations.

■ **Furniture:** The city has a

significant furniture production operation and smaller, more specialized furniture makers. This places the city in a favorable position to create a regional furniture production cluster.

■ **Technology:** This represents the greatest opportunity for highly-skilled, well-compensated jobs. It also aligns with the objective of wanting "clean" industries.

"We shouldn't rule anything out, such as the so-called Building 12 on the lakefront," said Third Ward Councilor Steven Valentino.

"I agree. This is not an exhaustive list," Horn replied. First Ward Councilor Jacqueline Augustine also said she could add more specific proposals but is in agreement with a board vision.

"I'd like to see us meet with other groups, like we did with the IDA, to discuss more ideas," Augustine said.

She said those groups could be the Chamber of Commerce, the Business Improvement District, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Finger Lakes Community College, the New York State Agricultural Experimental Station and realtors.

Councilor-at-Large Stephen O'Malley said the plan should protect the primary use of downtown for businesses, not college dormitories.

"We need to polish this up a bit and bring it back and get more input," Horn said, recommending it not be adopted yet.

Once a vision is adopted, city staff will be directed to develop strategies to implement the plan.

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