

The Mariner Beach Club is Better Than New

*In spite of a global recession, or in some ways because of it,
the Mariner Beach Club is ready to face another half century on St. Pete Beach.*

by Peter A. Roos

The Mariner Beach Club at 4200 Gulf Blvd. has been a fixture on the white sand of St. Pete Beach for as long as anyone around here can remember. It was a time share resort since before 1980, and a hotel for at least 20 years before that.

The thirty-one unit, two-story resort occupies an enviable location that has been enjoyed by sun, sand and surf worshippers for over five decades. All that exposure to the salt air took its toll on the building, and by the summer of 2009, it seriously needed major work. "The electrical and plumbing components had deteriorated to the point that a major investment in the property's infrastructure was a necessity, not a luxury," said General Manager Margaret Parker.

That situation is not uncommon for properties directly on the beach. The Coral Reef Resort Hotel, for example, which was built by the same builder at about the same time, was ordered closed in 2005 by the St. Pete Beach's Fire Inspector over similar issues. Its owner has been trying to redevelop ever since. The Mariner Beach Club is now ready for another half of a century, thanks to a Herculean effort on the part of all concerned. A time-share resort for the last three decades, the property is owned by 879 "fractional owners", each of whom owns the privilege of staying at the resort for a week or more each year. Major decisions about the resort are handled by a volunteer board of directors, elected annually by the owners. Management is handled by the local General Manager, overseen by a management company, Vacation Resorts International, through its Regional Director, Jeff Wharton. "I'm extremely proud of the general manager and the Board of Directors of the Mariner Beach Club for the way they approached and accomplished the challenges they faced just a year ago", said Wharton.

In just 20 weeks elapsed time, contractors gutted the resort to the shell and rebuilt it to be even better than new. All parties are singing praises about the general contractor, designer and all of the subcontractors involved in the renovation, and asked Paradise NEWS to share this story with our readers.

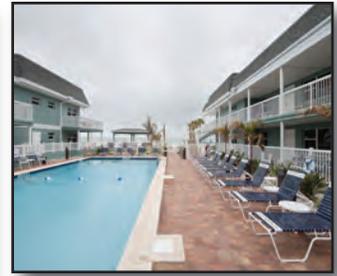
The General Contractor selected for the project was Wilson Kehoe Miller Corporation headquartered at 1496 Donegan Road, Largo, Fl 33771. Marty Kehoe

headed the redevelopment team. "The Mariner Beach Club Project was a complete renovation. Due to the amount and scope of work, vacationers were relocated for 18 weeks to allow for demolition and reconstruction of their prized investment. While the project started out primarily as an exterior renovation, by the end of the brief project the entire site, including the interiors, were completely reborn.

BillerReinhart provided structural engineering services for the restoration of this timeshare resort on St. Pete Beach, which includes two, 2-story buildings plus one single unit building, for a total of 31 units. "The restoration included exterior stairs, walkways, balconies, ground level slabs, beach shelters, reinforcement of existing walls, new windows, new sliding glass doors, new doors, roof structure supplementation and other related site improvements," says Michael Biller.

Due to the very tight construction schedule, Biller-Reinhart went to the site daily to address construction related issues immediately so that the contractor was able to keep moving without any delays. "We found some unexpected conditions that we had to work around quickly," says Biller. "For example, two large underground concrete vaults were discovered during construction - one where a new structural support was supposed to go. We quickly modified the design so the contractor could stay on schedule."





“Clients rely on BillerReinhart to deliver projects that are unique and have aggressive schedules. In this particular case, Mariner Beach Club had tenants that were scheduled to reside at the property in the first quarter so it was imperative that the project be completed on time. We enjoy delivering beyond client expectations,” says Biller.

“The majority of the exterior was to some degree touched during the renovation from the footers to the roof.” said Marty Kehoe. All elevated walkways and balconies, along with all wood columns were demolished. New steel columns were erected to allow for new concrete walkways and balconies, all of which were designed to meet new up lift codes. All doors, windows, sliding glass doors, and hand railings were removed and new, up to date and code compliant elements, were installed. The entire North Elevation of the South Building was sand-blasted and received a new stucco envelope to help blend the buildings together. The entire pool courtyard along with the beachside patio received all new pavers, which help to give the building a modern look. Finally, two new beach shelters were erected to give vacationers’ a place to rest outdoors but not get too sunburned.

The interiors of all 31 units were gutted of appliances and flooring to allow for a complete facelift. The design team from Hospitality Resources & Design chose modern materials and colors to help give the aging units a fresh new look. All new cabinets, tile, carpet, and furniture were added along with new plumbing and electrical elements. Bathrooms received new bathtubs, toilets, and vanities for a uniform look throughout the complex” said Marty.

Hospitality Resources & Design is a premier hospitality interior design firm centrally located in Orlando. HRD has been designing hotel, condo and timeshare facilities throughout the United States and the Caribbean for over 15 years. For the Mariner Beach Club renovation Mary Daust worked very closely with Marty Kehoe (WKM), resort general manager Margaret Parker and Sandy Faulconer of the Condo Owners’ Association to ensure the owner’s expectations were surpassed and the desired final look was achieved in the allotted time.

As a full service Interior Design Company, HRD specializes in all aspects of hospitality design from the small intimate boutique to 5-Star Resorts, Clubs and Spas in the timeshare, hotel/resort and condominium arena. Their full range of services includes interior construction and design, kitchen & bath design, purchasing, and project management and installation for the hospitality industry.

Ms. Dawn Sena, Vice President of Design is a licensed, award winning designer, and a member of the American Society of Interior Designers, ASID. Ms. Mary Daust, LEED AP, also a member of ASID and a licensed and accredited Interior Designer headed up the on-site design team..

“The challenge with the Mariner was simply that the time frame for interior and exterior construction was not a large window of time and a lot needed to be completed quickly. Great project management from all parties involved insured the success of this project. It was a fun project and team to be part of and the Mariner Beach Club is now open and ready for many more years of fun vacations for their owners” said Mary Daust.

The air conditioners in the suites and the common areas were all thoroughly cleaned and serviced by CSMP LLC, an air conditioning & heating contractor. John Newton, principle of CSMP says “These units REALLY needed to be cleaned. The units will run much more efficiently saving substantially on the power bill” says John. “They will literally pay for my work from the energy savings alone.” For more info about this, contact John at 727-327-9727 or email jnewton623@yahoo.com.

Quality doors and windows do more than add to the beauty of a renovation project. They can also add style, safety, security and peace of mind. PGT has a 30-year history of superior vision, outstanding quality, and innovative products.

Landscaping a beachfront resort is always a challenge. Choosing just the right plants to complement the location while surviving the natural elements can be tricky. The TradeWinds Resort has an entire department to care for their tropical environment. The Mariner Beach Club knew Sam Myers of PALMSCAPES LLC at 12890 Automobile Blvd., Suite 2-F, Clearwater FL 33762 (727) 573-3400 phone (727) 573-3380 fax was up to the challenge.



The challenge went well beyond choosing the plants, as Palmscapes designed and installed extensive: Drainage systems, Irrigation/ Sprinkler Systems, Pool and Landscaping Lighting in addition to the Palms, Shrubs, Ornamentals and Foliage.

Palmscapes manages many commercial and residential properties in the Tampa Bay area and offers a broad range of landscaping services. Sam Myers, the owner and sales executive visits every customer and provides a written estimate and job proposal. Family owned and operated, fully licensed and insured with over 20 years experience, Palmscapes offers discounts for multiple properties.

They specialize in unique landscaping services such as drainage systems, engineering for water features, removal and replacement of palms or hardwood trees of any size. They also install zoysia sod and are licensed to do chemical treatments for fertilization and pest control. They offer monthly quarterly and annual contracts from basic maintenance to a one time General Turf Bed Clean up.

Once the project was complete and the entire development had a fresh new look, a new brochure had to be prepared, since even the exterior color was completely changed. The Mariner Beach Club hired local photographer Spencer Lucas to photograph the newly completed resort. Spencer kindly allowed us to use his images to show you what the resort looks like now.

As a time-share resort, vacationers are offered the opportunity to purchase one or more weeks stay in the resort at their favorite time of year. As the years pass, peoples interest in various vacation destinations change, and peoples ability to travel changes. "Some of our week owners have become permanent residents of the beach...others are no longer able to travel here", says Margaret Parker, General Manager. "Some owners have passed their ownership to their children, whose vacation dreams may be different than their parents. As a result, we have weeks available for sale at the moment at many different times of the year", she continues, priced from \$3,000 for a one-bedroom to \$3,500 for a two-bedroom suite. Some owners also have weeks they are looking to sell privately.



Visitors can also rent units by the week at the resort. Suites can be rented for a fraction of the cost of guest rooms at the better hotels on the beach. From May 1st to December 31st you can stay in a 1-bedroom Gulf Front Suite for \$1,050, 2-bedroom from \$1,250 (just \$150-\$200/night). January through April, rates are about 20% more. In season, from Jan1-April 30, prices go up about 20%. For sales and rental information call Margaret Parker at (727) 367-3721 or toll free 1-866-469-8222.

If you know of someone headed to the beach this summer, have them check out the Mariner Beach Club. This brand new facility is sure to please.

Some of those responsible for the transformation of the Mariner Beach Club, 4220 Gulf Blvd., St. Pete Beach, FL 33706. Office (727) 367-3721 • Toll free 1-866-469-8222.

Margaret Parker - General Manager

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