

The Willingham Carriage House at Richardson Historic Park

The Carriage House at Richardson Historic Park was part of the original Willingham estate. His home and the Carriage House (*see right side of photo*) were built around 1925-1926; and both survived the 1926 Hurricane.

In the early years, when Willingham, and later Perry Mickel, lived on and farmed the property, the ground floor would have been a barn and the second-floor was for basic housing of farm/estate workers.



With the opening of the Richardson Golf Course at the end of 1939, the ground floor remained a barn/maintenance area. The small structure on the right was added as a lunch counter for golfers. There one could get light fare like a ham & cheese on rye (with potato chip and pickle) for 55¢ and a soda for 10¢. In front was another addition—variously described as a "caddy shack" or a laundry room.

The upstairs was converted to a complete one-bedroom apartment; including living room, kitchen and a bathroom. Over the years it was occupied either by snow-bird guests or various Richardson family members.

The Willingham Carriage House is believed to be the oldest surviving structure in Wilton Manors. Beginning in late

2013 WMHS and the City collaborated on an adaptive-reuse restoration plan for the building. With various funding valued at over \$300,000 (including community donations and labor), the ground floor restoration was completed in 2017. It now serves as a popular event venue; complete with service bar, catering preparation area and outdoor pavilion. The second floor currently awaits restoration funding. *[The Willingham estate home was a Richardson family residence until the mid-1980s—when it was demolished due to structural and Building Code issues that prevented restoration/remodeling.]*

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