

The Terrace News

Issue III - October 11, 1993 - Published by your Riverland Terrace Neighborhood Association

NEXT MEETING - OCTOBER 17 - 3:00 PM - JAMES ISLAND BAPTIST CHURCH ISSUE: TRIMMING OF TREES FOR POWER LINES BY SCE&G

Thanks to all of you who have already signed our petition asking SCE&G to halt the "damaging" of our trees until a satisfactory compromise can be reached. We have already been granted a stay for the trees, however, it is important that we obtain as many signatures on the petition as possible to show SCE&G an accurate account of how many residents are against the cutting of the trees. If you have not yet signed a petition, you may either do so at the meeting, or can call Valerie Lamont at 795-8735 and she will bring one by. Special thanks also to the Riverland Terrace Garden Club for their ongoing support in this effort!

The petition specifically reads: "SCE&G is in the process of upgrading the power lines in Riverland Terrace. So far, this has resulted in severe disfigurement of live oak trees on Plymouth Avenue and Wappoo Hall Road. As residents of Riverland Terrace, this causes us great concern. One of the characterizing features of our neighborhood is its trees, especially the many beautiful live oaks which are prevalent throughout the Terrace. We believe there must be an alternative to such drastic "trimming" of the trees. We request that the upgrade work be suspended until such alternatives can be explored and presented to us by SCE&G."

Representatives from SCE&G have already agreed to halt their work until we can discuss this issue and hear our concerns at the October 17 meeting. We have already begun researching alternatives, and it appears underground wires may be very viable for this neighborhood. We have also consulted several local Realtors who have concurred that damaging of the trees, in the manner proposed by SCE&G (a minimum 20 foot clearance across all power lines) would result in drastic property value reductions for homeowners. We will be asking for a six month reprieve in order to research technological advances that may be used in the Terrace, and to ensure that our neighbors best interests are protected; financially and visually. We are in support of SCE&G's upgrading of our power lines and appreciate their understanding where the trees are concerned.

We will keep you updated on our progress with SCE&G through our newsletter. If you have not been receiving our newsletters in the mail and would like to be added to our mailing list, please call Valerie Lamont at 795-8735. Current newsletters will also be posted on the new neighborhood bulletin board donated by Chip at the Craftsman's Exchange.

ROUTE TO FOLLY IS FEATUREFUL

MUCH HISTORY NEAR IT

Mr. James Allan Points to Some of the Interesting Places Along Highway

To the Editor of The News and Courier: Yesterday I rode down to Folly, and today I want to write you about that trip.

I have made many trips to Folly before, but the trip of yesterday stands out in my memory as the most inspiring I have ever made in this low country.

There is a never ending joy in the trip to Folly—a smooth road, beautiful woods, picturesque scenery, in so many places so reminiscent of Lander's Marshes of Glyn, where he says "Vanishing, swerving, evermore curving, again into sight. Slowly the sand beach wavers away in a dim gray looping of light, and then the long smooth stretch of the beach and the restful reach of the waters.

But yesterday, I was seeking other things. I was looking at the country and seeing the things that had happened along, or so close to this road to Folly; things that my generation do not know or have forgotten or have in the march of events overlooked. Things that meant so much to our fathers, which have meant so much to us and will mean more and more as the years go by to our children's children.

And so yesterday I made this trip thinking of these things and seeing the things I saw, and I want to tell you some of these things in order that others who, like myself, have only enjoyed this trip because of its present day loveliness might love this road as a holy thing sacred to the vision and deeds of valor that have preserved our city and our State and have had their great influence on our nation.

The first place that I visited yesterday is reached by taking a road that comes into the main highway from Charleston through St. Andrew's Parish, at a point just about two hundred yards from the end of the causeway to the Ashley river bridge in St. Andrew's Parish. This road comes into the main highway from the South and is alongside the Eastern boundary of what is now known as the Harrison Farm.

By taking this road leading to the left as you leave Charleston and traveling about three quarters of a mile, I came to a point known in older days as Albemarle Point, located just at the junction of Wappoo creek and the Ashley river. This is one of the most interesting spots that is connected with the history of this whole country, because it was at this identical spot that the very first house that marked the settlement of Charleston by the English in 1670 was erected.

end of the causeway leading from the Ashley river bridge into St. Andrew's Parish is the site of the first settlement of the British in 1670, and the road over which the British forces moved to besiege Charleston in 1780.

Crossing the Wappoo creek bridge and immediately after leaving this bridge, we came to a road leading into what is now known as the Wappoo Country Club and by taking this road to the left into the Country Club and traveling up to the site of the Country Club we found the club house erected on the very crest of a battery that was used by the Confederate forces in 1861-1865 as one of the inner defenses to Charleston harbor. This battery was known as Battery Means, and was named after a gallant Governor of this State, Col. John Hugh Means, who was killed in the second battle of Manassas. This is a beautiful spot overlooking the harbor and at dusk with the shadows slowly creeping over the face of the waters, with the marshes in front and the lights in the distance, the new club surmounting and taking advantage of this glory, reminds one of a fairy castle in the Land of Dreams.

Returning from Battery Means to what we now call the Folly Beach road and proceeding towards Folly along this road about one-tenth of a mile we came to a road to the right that is now designated "To Wappoo Hall."

By taking this road to the right and traveling almost directly west for about a mile and three quarters, we came to a house now owned by Mr. Arthur Johnston, and located on one of the most beautiful and historic spots in this country. It overlooks the Stono river and in almost the front yard of this home is an old fort used by the Confederates and known as Fort Pemberton. This fort is in a remarkable state of preservation and is of tremendous size. It was the great western spot of defense to any approach from the Stono over James Island and guarded also the entrance to Elliott's Cut, not a half-mile from this spot. There is a moat surrounding this fort and a path leading up into it that gives one a commanding view of the beautiful stretches of the Stono.

The old maps show that the British had a battery at about this same spot, evidently to protect their forces from surprise by way of Elliott's Cut from the Continental forces. I have been unable, however, to locate the spot where such battery existed.

Returning to the Folly Beach road and proceeding towards Folly, the next point of interest, while not historical, is a road about six-tenths of a mile from the road to Wappoo Hall. This road comes into the Folly Beach road when proceeding to Folly, from the left and marks the southern boundary of the Wappoo Country Club. By taking this road and riding into it a little way, one obtains a panoramic view of the new golf links with the club house in the distance, which is a very beautiful sight.

Almost exactly two miles from the Wappoo creek bridge, the Folly Beach road crosses almost at right angles what is known as the King's

ervation and literally traverse the country in unbroken line from this point almost to the site of Secessionville.

In order to reach the site of the Battle of Secessionville after taking the left hand fork, we bore to the left at each turn and about two miles from the fork reached Secessionville, where a monument has been erected.

Immediately back of the monument is old Fort Lamar, one of the great defenses to Charleston, now in a horrible state of repair with ugly little negro cabins built inside of and even on top of the old fort. Surely a giant such as this was is entitled to crumble into dust. If crumble is must, with some more visible respect to its ancient glory than to be infested with negro urchins and unsightly huts.

But even today standing on the battlements of old Fort Lamar and gazing in the direction of Folly, one cannot but be thrilled with the grandeur of the place. There just before at Folly Island were encamped the Union forces, to the right and behind were the bristling breast works of the Confederacy. The field a glorious battlefield where the Charleston Battalion—the Sumter Guards, the Washington Light Infantry, the Union Light Infantry, the Irish Volunteers, the Charleston Riflemen poured out their young blood, their young life's blood, that the Federal forces might not come to destroy our homes.

And here it was that the Union forces were checked; where the gallant Johnson Hagood, arriving when the Confederate forces under Col. Lamar were in desperate straights, turned the tide of battle and gave to Charleston safety from attack by land in this direction, for in two weeks time after this battle all Union troops had been removed from James Island.

It is a wonderful sight to see, an inspiring sight to think on and the urchins and the shanties seem a sacrilege.

We returned to the Folly Beach road from Secessionville by bearing constantly to the left and reached it by the river road just where the causeway commences and about two miles nearer Folly than where we had left at the fork.

The next point of interest is on the island where the toll gate is located and known as Sol Legare's Island, where a small engagement was had about ten days before the Battle of Secessionville.

The next point of interest before reaching Folly is the Folly river, immediately before arriving on the island. In this river the Union forces maintained a picket line; outposts to guard the great force of Union troops on Folly Island.

There are very few who seem to know that in 1862 and 1863 Folly Island was the headquarters of the Southern Department of the Union forces and that there were as many as twelve thousand Union troops on Folly Island at that time.

Gen. Q. A. Gilmore, who was in command of the Union forces on Folly, and also in command of the Southern Department, leaves a map which would indicate that on or about the spot now occupied by Mr. Ladson LaBruce was a battery to protect Folly from any advances up

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Interesting Relic Discover- ed at Riverland Terrace

Perchance toppled from its lofty post commanding the river approaches to the city and tucked out of sight by the Confederates themselves to guard against the possibility of its being directed against their retreating ranks by the enveloping Union forces, a rusty cannon was unearthed from its resting place at Riverland Terrace, James Island, Wednesday, by workmen engaged in clearing and grading in preparation for the building that is to be undertaken at this historic and picturesque suburban development. The weapon, that was probably a monster among mobile weapons of defense or offense in the sixties, is about ten feet long and fired a projectile or ball of about five inches in diameter. The piece was discovered close to what will in due course be Pemberton Place, one of the parks that will dot the residential subdivision, and it is said that it will be moved there and remounted on a carriage as a relic of War of Secession in which it doubtless played an honorable part.

The spot where the cannon was buried is probably as high as any on the Terrace, about twenty feet elevation, and from it can be seen the confluence of Wappo creek and Stono river, so it is presumed by A. L. Welch, of James Island, and others engaged in the grading work, that the cannon belonged to an outlying battery or strong point in support of Fort Pemberton, a few hundred yards away on the banks of the Stono and known to be the chief fortification guarding the back gate to Charleston. What must have been the site of the supporting battery is not far from Elliott's cut, that now connects Wappo creek and Stono river, but it must be remembered that the cut was not in existence during the war, being dug well within the remembrance of persons of a later generation, so the real mission of the gun was to guard the mouth of Wappo creek, an entrance that has not been kept open to navigation and almost escapes notice now.

The discovery of the gun throws an interesting light on the historical side of the James Island territory that is being opened up to residents of Charleston due to good roads and excellent bridges connecting the city with the island. While more history was made on the island during the War of Secession than probably during any other period, so far as hostile engagements were concerned, yet from earliest Colonial days and on through the Revolution important events transpired where modern residences will soon be located and further discoveries are anticipated with interest.

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Ram Room: Eatery was James Island's home for good times

Continued from page 1

James Island Rams football team.

Superintendent Edward A. O'Sheasy responded with a two-paragraph letter to say "yes" and wish her luck, and The Ram Room, which featured a white, rectangular sign with green lettering above the front door, was born.

Inside, the orange and black cinderblock establishment, often frequented by the Rams' athletes after practices and games and by local golfers who made it their 19th hole after a round at the nearby "Muni," quickly became just what Miss Betty wanted it to be. It was a place to have a good time whether you were with a date, your family, your buddies or by yourself. It was a place of neighborhood charm, a safe place where parents didn't worry if their children were there.

It quickly became a family affair. Betty's sisters, Lisa and Ernestine, and sister-in-law Blanche helped out, as did Blanche's daughter, Chris. Betty's husband, Cas, who worked during the day at the Navy Base, helped out in the evenings. Two of Betty's three children learned to walk there, and when they were old enough, they started working by stocking soft drinks in the coolers.

"I can still smell the chili and hear the TV and pinball machines in the background," says Miss Betty, now 76 and still living on the island. "I can hear the families talk over dinner. I can still see the kids getting on the morning bus outside of The Ram Room. I'm happy to say that I still see some of my boys."

The "boys" she refers to were those who grew up, literally and physically, at The Ram Room.

"People came to The Ram Room and learned all there was to know about what was going on in the neighborhood," said her youngest son, Rocky, now 48 and living near Beaufort. "We knew who was dating who, and everyone seemed to come to The Ram Room to find information while enjoying good food."

But they also came to see Miss Betty.

"My life was so happy being with the people of the Terrace," she says.

"So many of the kids wanted their parents to be like mine," Brenda adds. "All of my friends said that Miss Betty was so easy to talk to. And she was."

Along with the famous hot dog chili, The Ram Room offered hamburgers and cheeseburgers and grilled cheese sandwiches. The Campbell's Soup machine was always in operation, and the blue plate special included meat and three vegetables. The steam table was always filled.

The beverage selection included both Coca-Cola and Pepsi, orange and grape drinks, root beer, 7-Up and Sprite. And there was beer — Pabst Blue Ribbon, Budweiser, Carling Black Label, Schlitz and Miller High Life.

On the counter, next to the antiquated cash register, was the obligatory gallon jug of pigs' feet and deviled eggs.

"I'm still shocked at the number of people who bought those," Rocky says.

The Ram Room's décor was strictly James Island. There were two sides to the place. One was referred to as the "Girls' Side," where fam-



PHOTO PROVIDED

"Miss Betty" Browder, shown in a recent photo, turned The Ram Room into James Island's most popular gathering place in the late 1960s and early '70s.

ilies could enjoy quality time and where the boys could enjoy their dates uninterrupted. The other side had the beer sales and the three pinball machines in the back.

The walls were covered with countless pictures of James Island Rams football teams and individuals in their uniforms. Many signed their framed pictures, and often returned with friends and family members to show them off. A Rams football helmet was strategically placed, as were the various sports trophies.

"I remember so very well many of the people who came in, and not just the customers," Miss Betty recalls. "Like Nat, the very nice man who brought the potato chips. And there was the man from Clausen's Bakery who brought the hamburger and hot dog buns, and the man who took the nickels out of the pinball machines."

"It was a great time," she says. "After a delivery guy came in, I'd pay him in cash, right there on the spot."

The Ram Room was open six days a week, from 7 in the morning until 11 at night, and closed all day Sunday so the family could attend church. With the long hours and her husband struggling physically, Betty Browder sold The Ram Room in 1976, and it quickly lost its neighborhood charm. Refusing to retire, Miss Betty worked for a while in the printing business.

"A childhood goes by so fast and I am glad that I was part of the 'good times' in so many of the young people's lives of James Island in the '60s and '70s," she says. "They will always be important to me."

Still going strong, she is now feeding another generation of James Islanders, working in her 14th year at the cafeteria at James Island Middle School. Sure, they serve chili at the school, but not her Ram Room Chili.

"That's a private recipe," she says.

She occasionally makes her chili for family or special events, but admits that she only knows how to make it a few gallons at a time.

Now, James Island transplants can will battle the locals for some of Miss Betty's Ram Room Chili, if they're ever fortunate enough to find some.

Couple transform Riverland Terrace home into showplace



Freddie Crymes stands next to a wall of windows that form a bay in the living room.

By ELSA F. McDOWELL
Post-Courier Reporter

Freddie Crymes nearly decided not to show her husband a tract of land and house for sale in Riverland Terrace. She knew he would want it instantly, and she wasn't so sure she wanted it at all.

The lot was spectacular. It is seven acres sloping gently down to the Stono River from a high embankment.

The house situation was less appealing, she says. It was originally three separate buildings. They were in disrepair. The rooms were inconvenient for a family of five. The grounds around the house were overgrown.

But Dr. and Mrs. William B. Crymes saw great potential. The dwellings were built atop the foundation of Fort Pemberton, a Civil War fort that is now on the National Historic Register. The ditch that wrapped around the fort still exists and the Crymes family uses a small wooden bridge to cross it en route to the river and dock.

So they bought it nine years ago. Today, you would have no idea that it was ever anything but a showplace.

It is a sunny, open house with dramatic vistas and roomy living areas. The bedrooms are cozy and modern.

But the changes didn't happen overnight. The Crymes family roughed it a while. They made some cosmetic improvements but the kitchen had one drawer and one small window. The bedrooms were choo-choo-train style so that you had to pass through one to get to the next.

Now, the three buildings are connected to form a U-shape which allows each room to

have a breeze and sunlight.

The front entrance opens to a spacious living room with a wall of windows that form a bay. The random width oak floors are polyurethaned and a dhurrie rug of soft greens, corals and blues keeps the light feeling. A grand piano fills the bay window area, and a traditional Chippendale sofa and contemporary stuffed armless chairs form a comfortable seating area in front of the fireplace.

In the dining room next door, a rustic mantel accents the fireplace, and provides an interesting contrast to the formal dining room table and chairs.

The kitchen and informal dining area previously was a tiny, dark kitchen and a bedroom. As altered, it is spacious and light. The table sits in a bay area surrounded by windows overlooking the grassy lawn and river.

The kitchen is open with clean lines and a sunny feel as it has windows on two walls. As in the living and dining rooms, Mrs. Crymes uses no draperies in the kitchen. The result is uncluttered and open.

Mrs. Crymes has a large closet that doubles as a pantry and small appliance area where she can keep her coffee maker, toaster, can opener and other small appliances plugged in and ready to use right where they are. When they're not being used, she closes the doors and has no clutter.

The kitchen floor is of brick.

From the kitchen you enter a less formal sun room added by previous occupants to

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West Ashley THIS WEEK

AND THE ISLANDS • EDISTO, FOLLY, JAMES, JOHN'S, KIAWAH, SEABROOK, WADMALAW & YONGE'S

Garden club dresses up oaks along Wappoo Drive

By DEIRDRE C. MAYS
Of The Post and Courier staff

A spring cleaning for the avenue of oaks along Wappoo Drive on James Island was the end of a 10-year maintenance project for the Riverland Terrace Garden Club.

The 75 live oak trees that line the street were pruned and cleaned of ivy and dead branches by certified arborists in return for taking part in a tree workshop, according to Marie Gandy, historical preservation chairman of the garden club.

"We started doing this in 1984 and we've been doing it piecemeal since then," Gandy said. "We just couldn't get it all done and you couldn't see anything happening. This time it will have a big impact both physically and ecologically."

The training program was sponsored by a \$7,650 grant from the South Carolina Forestry Commission and about \$9,000 from the garden club, a bargain considering one estimate the club received to do the same work was \$100,000.

Jay Clingman, the project coordinator who helped get the club get the federal grant, said the workshop was a worthy project.

"They're getting several times the value for the amount of money," he said.

Participants in the workshop spent time in the classroom learn-



Staff Photo by Deirdre Mays

About 75 trees were pruned thanks to a \$7,650 grant from the S.C. Forestry Commission and matching funds from the Riverland Terrace Garden Club.

ing about advanced pruning techniques that included the biology of trimming and directional pruning. They spent the rest of the two-day project working on the trees.

The project was not simply aesthetic, however. It was necessary because the trees were wrapped with English ivy, which chokes the tree, preventing it from getting ample sunlight or nutrients and

adding extra weight that it can't support. Broken branches that remained attached and still growing were a hazard, along with dead limbs that could fall.

The Riverland Terrace live oaks range in age from 60 to 100 years.

Clingman said the arborists who attended the workshop were al-

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Staff Photo by Deirdre Mays

Several crews took part in the workshop to learn advanced pruning techniques. They later cleaned up the live oak trees on Wappoo Drive by clearing off ivy and branches that were dead or broken.