

Wappoo Cut Played Role In Past

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(Staff Photos by Spain)

Wappoo Creek Early Waterway For Planters

News + Courier

10-16-72

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project was many years late in starting.

According to the South Carolina Gazette, the Grand Jury in March, 1733, complained, "We present the Commissioners for not cutting the Creek through from Stono River into Wappoo according to a Law made for that purpose."

However, the cut was made by the time of the Revolution, when it is mentioned in an order from Gen. William Moultrie for a squad to search for escaped prisoners in the region.

The unit was to "proceed

Do You Know Your Charleston?

through Wapow (sic) Cut," the order said.

It is also described in 1782 in a letter from Thomas Farr, an Ashley River planter, to Col. John Laurens, as the only place on Wappoo Creek which was fordable.

According to a map of the region drawn by Charleston historian Henry A.M. Smith from old maps and plats, Wappoo Cut is the narrow stream on the northwest boundary of what is now Edgewater Park subdivision.

Local folklore and traditions are a tricky business, however, and the name has come to be applied to the section of the Wappoo Creek which is crossed by Folly Road.

Through the bridge at that point is officially named for the late Sen. Burnet R. Maybank, it is generally known as Wappoo Cut Bridge.

The real Wappoo Cut has remained in place since the 17th century, but its name has traveled about two miles downstream.

Near the confluence of Wappoo Cut (the real one) with Wappoo Creek, where Wappoo Shores subdivision is now, was the plantation of Col. John Lucas, whose teenaged daughter grew South Carolina's first indigo.

Col. Lucas, lieutenant governor of the Island of Antigua, owned the planta-

tion, known as "The Bluffs," as early as 1713.

His daughter, Eliza, at 17, was left to manage his plantations and about 1741 began experimenting with growing indigo at "The Bluffs."

After several failures she succeeded and the plant, which yields a blue dye, became a product of great economic importance to the colony.

Wappoo Cut proved satisfactory for the sailboats and rice-laden barges of the planters, but the advent of steam-powered boats changed the picture.

With a legislative appropriation of \$11,000, Messrs. Thompson and Walker, contractors, opened a new straighter cut a half-mile down the Stono.

The first steam packet, the John David Mongin, passed through the 600-foot-long cut en route from Savannah to Charleston in January of 1831.

The new cut was at the time described as "of sufficient width to accommodate the largest steamboats that ply our waters."

Known as Elliott's Cut, presumably for the Elliott family who owned a plantation in the area beginning in the 18th Century, the canal is now part of the Intracoastal Waterway.

When it was cut, the Charleston Courier worried that the "agitation" caused by the steamboats might cause the banks, constructed of earth from the cut bed, to wash and fall into the cut.

The worry was that it

would be necessary to clean out the silt.

However, The News and Courier reported in 1952 that the current was so strong through the cut that it had never had to be dredged.

The first bridge was built over the Wappoo at Folly Road in 1929 and by 1933 nearly 1.5 million automobiles a year were crossing it.

As the bridge got older the number of vehicles increased, but the drawbridge mechanism remained slow and sometimes refused to work at all.

The number of boats passing under the drawbridge apparently also increased and the delays often backed up traffic on Folly Road for miles.

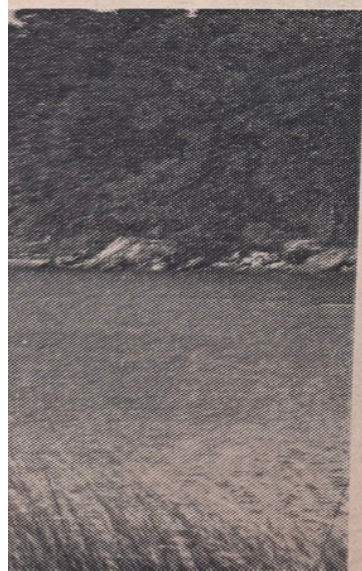
After many complaints about such incidents, federal funds were obtained through Sen. Maybank's efforts and a \$900,000 new bridge named in his memory was opened in June, 1956.

Material from the old bridge was used to build a span over Long Cane Creek in McCormick County.

The new bridge was hailed for having four lanes, a much higher clearance than the old and a drawbridge which could be "opened in less than a minute."

A few weeks after it opened the drawbridge locks went out of control and would not close, backing up traffic for miles on Folly Road.

Recently, concern has been expressed about the number of traffic accidents on the bridge and a fifth lane has been proposed.



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FILE PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRAD NETTLES/

The home of Peter Evans was built years ago on top of an earthen Civil War-era fortification on James Island known as Fort Pemberton. The city of Charleston has purchased the property off Riverland Drive and will turn it into a park.

Barney Thompson, a class mate, lived in this house City to convert unusual home into park

The family lawyer was Barney Thompson, Sr. This was his home.

PARK, from A1 *The fort was behind our house on Yates Avenue.*

"What's a passive park? Will it be programmed? Will we allow events? All of that will have to go through that civic engagement process and be approved by the mayor and City Council," he said. The process also will influence the park's hours and facilities, such as public restrooms and picnic shelters.

Kronsberg said the city's initial push will be to create an unpaved parking area and new trails.

"We also have two docks that are there now, and we feel confident we can get those publicly accessible with some minor improvements," he said.

In a later phase, the city could grapple with what to do with the existing house, which sits atop a pentagon-shaped Confederate fortification.

Kronsberg said the house could be remodeled into a picnic shelter and public restroom, but added, "It may be cost-prohibitive to do that, and we might end up with demolition of the home and construction of a picnic shelter there."

The city's purchase also ensures that a relatively underdeveloped nook in Riverland Terrace will

remain that way. Before deciding to sell, Evans had received approval for a planned development with as many as 11 units.

The property includes 8.4 acres and remains of the earthen fort, which rises as much as 20 feet above the surrounding property, and it was built shortly after the 1862 battle of Secessionville, a Confederate victory at the other end of James Island.

The five-pointed earthwork was named after Confederate Brig. Gen. John Pemberton, commander of Charleston's defenses. It never saw any action and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

Mayor John Tecklenburg has called the site "one of the best sunset views in the Charleston region," and much of the park's popularity could stem from the vast lawn overlooking the docks, the Stono River and distant marsh.

"That's really where the magic occurs," Kronsberg said, "in that inter-tidal zone and that sunset view."

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A Civil War-era artillery mound remains on James Island property, which also includes earthen, star-shaped fort.

Tuesday, August 13, 2019

POSTANDCOURIER.COM

Charleston, S.C. \$1.50

our house on Yates Avenue in 1957 backed up to Ft. Pemberton, it was Ft. Pemberton

Fort Pemberton: Historic home to city park

James Island property, bought for \$5.8M, overlooks Stono River

BY ROBERT BEHRE
rbehre@postandcourier.com

The city of Charleston has bought Fort Pemberton, a historic James Island property with a commanding view of the Stono River, but it will take the city some time to figure out how to turn somebody's home into a new park.

Part of that process involves giving the homeowner, Peter Evans, up to six months to stay there before the city moves in. His right to remain factored into the city's \$5.78 million purchase

price, which was lower than its \$6.1 million appraisal.

City Parks Director Jason Kronsberg said the site off Yates Avenue in Riverland Terrace will not open to the public until the middle of next year, at the earliest.

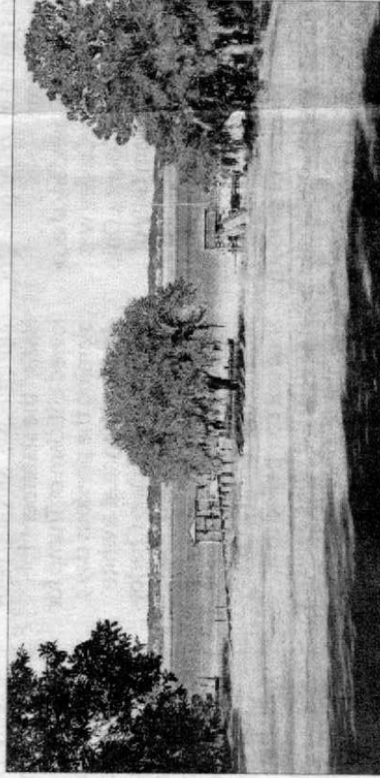
As soon as the Evans family departs, the city will begin a public process to plan the park's future.

"We want to wait until the seller has moved so we can host one of our meetings on the site," he said. "We want to kick it off on the property so everybody who has not been able to access

the private property will be able to get a glimpse of what the future holds for this city park."

Charleston County's greenbelt program has provided the city with the bulk of the money for the city's Fort Pemberton deal, and Kronsberg said the program also will give the city about \$261,000 to make minor improvements, such as unpaved trails and parking areas. The county grant is contingent on its development as a passive park.

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FILE/BRAD NETTLES/STAFF

The Stono River is seen from atop an earthen Civil War-era fortification on James Island known as Fort Pemberton. The city of Charleston has closed on the land and plans to create a park there.



ALAN HAWES/STAFF

This recently renovated house was built in 1949 and is typical of many of the houses in the neighborhood. It has 1,322 square feet and is situated along Charleston Municipal Golf Course. The home lists for \$165,000.

Families return to their roots at Riverland Terrace

BY BOB LANG

Of The Post and Courier Staff

The tree-lined streets of Riverland Terrace are graced with houses of all shapes and sizes, from tiny one-bedroom cottages to huge waterfront estates.

It's an eclectic mix that gives this seasoned James Island neighborhood its charm, residents say. Indeed, no two homes are alike. Even the lots are carved up in a seemingly endless array of configurations.

"It's everything that a cookie-cutter neighborhood is not," said David Werten, an agent with RE/MAX Professional Realty who grew up in Riverland Terrace and moved back there recently. "It's one of the most diverse neighborhoods around Charleston."

Of roughly 1,500 total homes, about a dozen or so are for sale at any one time. Prices start as low

as \$90,000 and climb into the millions. Most homes sell for between \$130,000 and \$300,000 -- about double the range of five years ago, but still a good deal, agents say.

"It's a neighborhood that's affordable for any price range," said Lori Nolan, of Trademark Properties, who has been selling in Riverland Terrace for about 18 years. "It's a nice, old neighborhood of the type you don't find much any more."

Residents can thank the Great Depression for its charmingly jumbled look.

Riverland Terrace originally was to be an upscale development with large lots and big houses. Situated along the Stono River and Wappoo Creek, the property seemed ideally suited for such a project. Wealthy families could build on a waterfront lot, entertain under giant oaks in their back yard, and play a round of golf at nearby Charleston Municipal

whenever they wanted.

The first homes started going up in the mid 1920s. But after the stock market crash of 1929 and ensuing depression, few had any money to build a big house. The developers were forced to scrap

See RIVERLAND, Page 6B

ALAN HAWES/STAFF

Situated on an extra-large lot, this 2,300-square-foot ranch house (at top, right) on Old Point Road features extensive wood paneling and a remodeled kitchen. It lists for \$325,000.

Why buy at The Battery when you can have this waterfront estate (at bottom, right) at Riverland Terrace for \$1.95 million? It's on a 3.1-acre lot and is surrounded by a slew of magnificent live oaks.



Plymouth Ave. Station

Fire station to be replaced

Nov 4, 1993

The board has recommended that a rescue boat facility be established there because of its proximity to the water. The Plymouth Ave. Boat Landing is adjacent to the station.

In addition to a fire truck, Charleston County EMS vehicles use the location as a permanent substation and the new facilities will accommodate that use more comfortably.

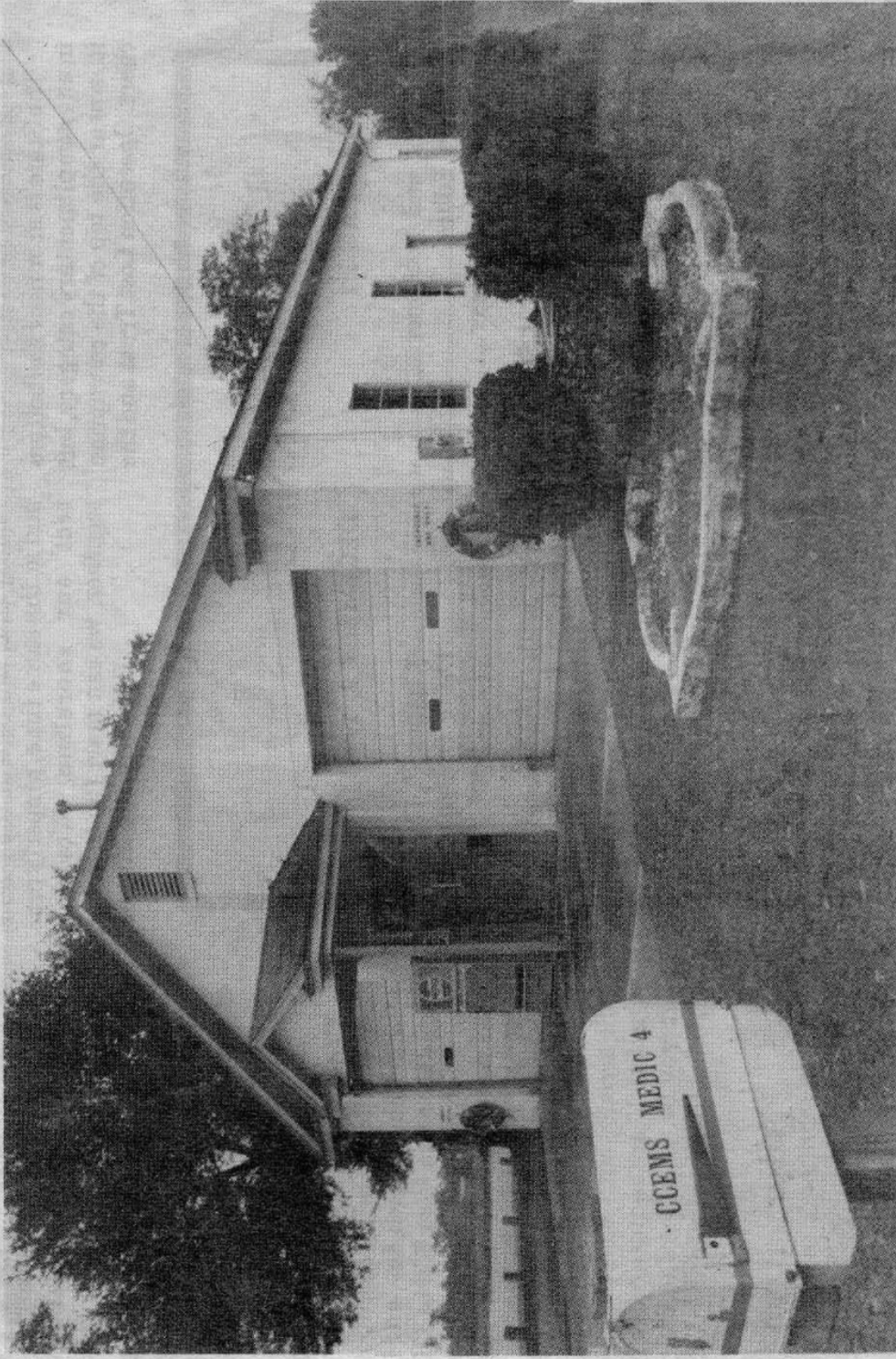
During the construction of the new station, fire trucks and other equipment will be housed in tents on the property and the firemen will be housed in a trailer.

Commissioner Ruth Glover brought up the fact that the new building will not be completed in time for the first primary elections in 1994 and would create some problems and was concerned that this was not taken into consideration.

"They have to find somewhere else to vote," said Glover. "Of course, the election com-

mission has used trailers before also."

The new station should provide the area with first-class facilities and service to that area of James Island for many



The old Plymouth Ave. Station

Sunny Side Up



STAFF PHOTO BY JAMES LEE

Riverland Terrace offers many of the island's best vistas, nestled around unassuming corners, draped with grand oaks and decorated by water, whether in calm ponds or rushing currents. There is something simply Lowcountry about one of the island's oldest neighborhoods.

MAY 4, 2006