

25 Years Ago Savannah Lakes Village Opened Its Doors

But it didn't' begin then!

Property owners, you have a rich history and I am proud to say my family has been a part of it since the early 1700s. We hope you enjoy the journey.

Theresa Bryan, Michael Sherard and Dot Sherard

The signing of the contract to purchase land as what we now know as Savannah lakes Village

Left to right

Frank Sherard, Jr., John McAlister, Strom Thurmond, Grady Patterson, John Cooper Jr. .

December 12, 1988



During the persecutions of the Huguenots in France, which had continued through the 18th century almost to its close, a colony arrived in South Carolina in 1764. Two hundred and twelve persons succeeded in eluding the vigilance of their pursuers, and arrived safely at Plymouth, England, from which point they sailed for South Carolina in April of the same year, their place of disembarkation being Charleston.

French Huguenots, seeking religious refuge, established a settlement on Little River in present McCormick County in 1764, the only one in upcountry SC. A tract of land on Long Crane Creek, Abbeville District was granted to them. Two ministers accompanied them, the Reverends Jean Louis Gibert and Pierre Botton and on their arrival at their new home they gave it the name of New Bordeaux after their homeland. **(Personal note: I am a seventh generation Huguenot, my forefather, Pierre Gibert, III, succeeded to the leadership of the seventh settlement of Huguenots in South Carolina at the death of his Uncle, Rev. Jean Louis Gibert)**

The first commercially produced wine in the United States was by French Huguenot, Jean Louis du Mesnile de St. Pierre in 1771 at New Bordeaux.

New Bordeaux was located at, or near, the junction of Long Cane Creek and Little River, about three

and one-half miles above the confluence of the latter with the Savannah River, and five miles south-east of the village of Willington. It is now designated as "Old French Town" on the County Map. Many names of the neighborhood and streets indicate some of the descendants of the original settlers.

The town of New Bordeaux was established as part of the Bounty Act of 1761 which encouraged township settlement as a deterrent to Indian attacks. There is the stone monument marking the place of worship for the old Huguenot community located on the Savannah River close to the Savannah Point Subdivision. Their community of New Bordeaux is now a part of the Savannah Lakes Village. The one remaining structure from the New Bordeaux settlement, the Guillebeau House, has been moved to Hickory Knob State Park.





Badwell Cemetery: Final resting place for my relatives and the original French Huguenots



Guillebeau House,



Savannah lakes Village occupies some 4,000 acres of the land settled by those early Huguenots.

There are numerous historic sites of interest in the county, too many to name, but just a few.

“Badwell Cemetery,” home site and family cemetery of prominent leaders as well as all my ancestors located right here at SLV.

“Noble Cemetery,” which contains the grave of Patrick Nobel, 1787-1840, a Governor of South Carolina from 1838 until his death.

“Bradley,” a 200 year old church with an adjacent cemetery containing the graves of newspaper magnate, William Randolph Hearst’s ancestors, and “Lower Long Cane Presbyterian Church” near Troy. An entire church congregation came to America from Newry, Ireland with no disruption of religious services and founded this church in 1771. Services are still held in the two-story structure built in 1856.

Huguenot settlers immigrated to the American colonies directly from France and indirectly from the Protestant countries of Europe, including the Netherlands, England, Germany, and Switzerland (the Huguenot haven of Geneva is pictured below). Although the Huguenots settled along almost the entire eastern coast of North America, they showed a preference for what are now the states of Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and South Caro-

McCormick County was created February 19, 1916

McCormick County and its county seat, the town of McCormick, were named for inventor Cyrus Hall McCormick (1809-1884). The county was formed in 1916 from parts of Edgefield, Abbeville, and Greenwood counties.

This area was settled in the mid-eighteenth century by Scotch-Irish, French Huguenot, and German farmers. Some of the early inhabitants were massacred by Cherokee Indians at Long Cane in 1760, and the British subsequently built Fort Charlotte to protect the region. That fort was one of the first seized by the Americans in the Revolutionary War.

About 1850 gold was discovered where the town of McCormick now stands. The Dorn Gold Mine, which later also produced manganese, was bought by Cyrus McCormick in 1869 and donated land for the town, which was named for him in 1882. The mine supplied half the gold used to fund the Civil War. Cyrus Hall McCormick was an Inventor and founder of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company.





The County Court House was constructed in 1929

The cotton boll weevil was a very destructive little bug. Cotton was the cash crop for most people living on farms as there were few "cotton mills," as they were called, that could employ people, so farming was it for making a living. If a family didn't have enough kids to do the work, sharecroppers were the other source for "hands" to help farm the land. McCormick County was no different. With the arrival of that destructive bug, farmers realized cotton could no longer support their families. Land was sold to the Federal Government, or timber companies, and sharecroppers moved as there was no way they could be paid. Many small towns simply "dried up." Somehow McCormick County held on although a magazine labeled them a "ghost town" at one time as it was the poorest county in the state.



In 1890, Lieutenant Oberlin M. Carter of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, (USACE) Savannah Office issued a survey report that recommended the construction of dams on the Savannah River in order to prevent flooding in Augusta, Georgia. His report was overlooked until the 1927 Rivers and Harbors Act allowed the USACE to investigate development of the Savannah River for the purpose of hydroelectricity, navigation,

flood control and irrigation. In 1933 the USACE completed the report for the entire Savannah River Basin that recommended against government flood control development of the basin, but did propose two hydropower dams in the upper Savannah Basin, the Clarks Hill and Hartwell Dams.

Construction on the Clarks Hill project was not authorized until 1944 by the 78th Congress. Prior efforts by local leaders in Augusta were instrumental in gaining approval. Support from the USACE, along with Georgia Senators Walter F. George and Richard Russell and Georgia Congressman Paul Brown, were important towards getting President Franklin D. Roosevelt's blessing in a 1935 plan. Roosevelt ordered a feasibility study to be done on the Clarks Hill Project amongst other dams in the plan.

The results were sent back to the President in 1937 and other reviews were conducted until focus on the Second World War slowed the approval process. The next comprehensive study on the Upper Savannah Basin was not completed until 1943, but the project was authorized by Congress with Public Law 534 in 1944. A clerical error at the time named the project "Clark Hill" instead of "Clarks Hill". The final report on the Upper Savannah Basin was issued in 1946 and initial construction began soon thereafter on August 1.

Construction was at first ceased until November 1946 as President Harry S. Truman had halted funding for many government programs in order to handle a post-Second World War depressed economy. In 1947, diversion of the Savannah River and construction of a cofferdam began while the contract for the actual dam was awarded. The construction plant for the dam was also completed in 1947, containing equipment to create concrete that would be transported anywhere on the construction site via three-revolving gantry cranes with 124 ft. booms. In 1948, after the foundation was excavated, workers began to pour concrete on site for the spillway. In 1949, initial work on the concrete spillway was completed, the original coffer dam was removed and a second cofferdam was installed in order to restore the flow of the Savannah River to its original channel but now through eight-sluice gates in the spillway structure. Concrete operations on the main part of the dam had halted in 1949 because of a steel-strike, but resumed in 1950 and much of the spillway was completed by the end of the year.

In late 1950, contracts for construction of the powerhouse and 7 generators had been awarded a year prior. Construction on the powerhouse would lag initially because materials were needed for the Korean War, but by July 1952 60% of the powerhouse was complete. Each generator required for the power house needed 32 railcars to transport on site. By July 1951 the reservoir began to fill as most of the embankment part of the dam was complete and filling would finish in October 1952. By November 1952, the first generator was operating and began transferring power to South Carolina early the next year. The six remaining generators went online between 1953 and 1954. The project was completed at a cost of US \$78.5 million compared to the estimated cost of US \$35.3 million in 1944.

Since completion, the J. Strom Thurmond Dam has prevented an estimated \$185,000 annually in flood damages. In one specific case, the dam decreased the height of the March 1964 flood from 38 feet (12 m) to 25 feet (7.6 m) at Augusta, where the flood stage is 32 feet (9.8 m). The dam also helps maintain the 9-foot (2.7 m) navigation channel near Augusta along with reducing silt in the channel by 22%.

Frank Sherard was so very interested in the development of McCormick County. After being appointed to the SVA he was excited to be associated with the SLV project because of the history of his early ancestors, The Huguenots, who chose this area to settle so long ago.

Pierre Gibert, III, was born around 1755 in Southern France, Province of Languedoc and was the nephew of The Reverend Jean Louis Gibert, Huguenot pastor of the “wilderness” and leader of the seventh settlement of Huguenots in South Carolina. This Pierre Gibert was the Great, Great, Grandfather of Frank Sherard, Jr. and would be Michael’s triple great grandfather. He was the successor to his Uncle’s co-leadership of the New Bordeaux Huguenot settlement and was a Revolutionary War officer. He arrived in America around 1772, age about 17 and was a schoolmaster having had schooling in England where the family had migrated before coming to America. He taught English to the children and older colonist. Rev. Gibert died in 1773 and Pierre became the leader of the colony, but in 1779 he became active in the Revolutionary War serving in the Carolina Militia until 1780. At age 20 he married Elizabeth Bienaime who had arrived in 1764 with her mother in the original colony. Pierre was also a Surveyor, farmer and astute at most anything he did as he and Elizabeth had a large family and extra work was required to support them. Pierre died at his plantation in 1815 as the community leader.

It was only natural that Frank was so interested in the development of SLV. As a member of the SVA the committee was charged with helping all thirteen counties seeking development, not just McCormick County. Trips were made over the state, visiting different counties to observe needs or to view developments that might “fit” into the scheme for McCormick County. As a board member of the CHRA, and later the Savannah Valley Authority, Frank was one of many instrumental in the work that would eventually become Savannah Lakes Village. His thought was that as a member of the board, we should own property. So, the first lot was sold in the Village by our son, Michael, 25 years ago. Frank was a sales agent with Cooper for a time, and eventually we, Sherard Real Estate Company, became the re-sale broker for SLV. At that time Cooper did not have a division. Frank encouraged me to obtain my real estate license. Taking his advice I went back to school and in November of 1990 secured that “piece of paper” which allowed me to work in our own business. Frank passed away in 1999. Having a license has given me the opportunity to work with Michael, first at Savannah Lakes Real Estate Group and now Savannah River Realty. It has been, and continues to be, years of watching Savannah Lakes Village grow from that “pipe dream” to a reality that skeptics could not even dream of, yet, here we are, 25 years from the “ground breaking” on June 17, 1989. We need not wonder what the next 25 years will bring to this thriving and growing “ghost town” written about so long ago. Let’s just dream and imagine - and it will be!!! Dorothy W. Sherard

Contract for Frank and Dorothy Sherard on the First Lot Sold by Michael Sherard

Monthly Dues were \$30.00

P.O. Seq. # 0002283777

Prop Rpt. # 021 (2/22/89) Date April 1, 1989

Received of S. F. Sherard, Jr. (sole owner)

Address P.O. Box 605 Tel. (803) 447-8282

Calhoun Falls, S.C. 29628 SS # 251-40-6138

SS # _____

Cash ()
Check (X) Six hundred and fifty and no/100 Dollars \$ 650.00
M.O. ()

Lot No. 1 Block No. 24 Addition Southwind (001)

Price 6,500.00

Down Pay 650.00 ^c \$650.00 \$650.00 Now 4/1/89

Equity TRF .00

Balance 5,850.00 to be paid in 120 Monthly Payments of \$ 90.13 @ 13.8 % Int.

Plus a BALLOON PAYMENT of \$ n/a due on n/a, 19 _____

Remarks Monthly payments to Cooper Communities, Inc., begin on May 1, 1989

\$30.00 monthly payments to SLV Club, Inc, begin on June 1, 1989

Recieved \$37.68 as prorata share of Ad Valorem taxes

Trade _____

SALES PERSON	NUMBER	%	\$	OTHER
<u>Management</u>	<u>9999</u>			
<u>S F. Sherard, Jr.</u>	<u>3622</u>	<u>10</u>		

COOPER COMMUNITIES, INC.

No. 07-89 00001 By JL Ed (Goodwill)

THE CLARKS HILL
RUSSELL AUTHORITY
WAS FORMED AROUND
1946 TO PROMOTE
PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT
OF FEDERALLY OWNED
LANDS, ESPECIALLY
SURROUNDING THE
RESERVOIR
CONSTRUCTION
PROJECT IN MCCORMICK
COUNTY AND TO
PROMOTE TOURISM.

ABBEVILLE COUNTY
WAS ADDED IN 1978 AND
ANDERSON COUNTY IN
1985. DURING THE YEARS
FROM 1988-1993
THIRTEEN COUNTIES
TOTAL WERE IN THE
SAVANNAH RIVER
BASIN AND
DEVELOPMENT
PROJECTS NOT DIRECTLY
ASSOCIATED WITH THE
SAVANNAH RIVER WERE
AUTHORIZED. THE
AUTHORITY WAS
ALMOST DEFUNCT
UNTIL 1971



*My father, Frank Sherard, is in the right hand
corner and other members of the Clarks Hill
Russell Authority and dignitaries - 1988*

BUT, that year the Authority was revitalized to persuade the Federal Government to release lands for development specifically for the McCormick County basin. After that date the Authority did OPERATE CONTINUOUSLY UNTIL it was abolished by the GOVERNOR.

DEDICATED RESIDENTS tried their best to bring improvements to McCormick County. The idea was to get folks from other states to consider the area as a retirement community. Years went by and nothing seemed to jell. That did not deter the many who wanted to save their town from "a wide place in the road."

A name change occurred in 1988, Clarks Hill – Russell Authority became the Savannah Valley Authority and the Board expanded to 13 members, appointed by the Governor, one from each of the counties. Frank Sherard, Jr., my father, was one of those appointed by the Governor.

Many trips were made to Washington, DC by Authority members who tried to convince the government to “turn loose land.” The Federal Government did not think there was any land they could release, but the entity toiled on for years to bring some kind of economic development to the area — skeptics said it was “a pipe dream.” Again, perseverance continued. In 1976, 800 acres was made available by the Corps.

Almost fifteen years passed and in 1986, 3,159 acres was obtained

adjacent to Clarks Hill Reservoir. (The name was changed to Lake Thurmond in 1987) and was deeded to the Savannah Valley Authority, the state’s representative who was to oversee any development. During the years 1987-1988 an agreement with Cooper Communities, Inc. of Bentonville, AK was reached and property was sold to them. Cooper purchased other private acreage making a total of 3,987 acres that would eventually have 5000 home sites. The signing of the documents sealing the agreement between the Savannah Valley Authority and Cooper Communities was December 12, 1988. (Front Cover Photo)

Army engineers planning to sell McCormick land

Shil News 3/28/83

By Laura Hubbard

News staff writer

MCCORMICK — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has tentative plans to sell 4,500 of its 31,500 acres in McCormick County, which might allow the county to increase its tax base and free up land for development.

The land will be sold through the General Services Administration in Atlanta.

“Whenever we have a land surplus, they dispose of it,” said Larry Meier, lake manager for the Corps. “We have 1,500 acres in very small parcels around Clarks Hill Lake. None of it is waterfront. Most is so isolated from the water there isn’t any reason for us to hold onto it.”

Meier said the land must first be offered for sale to other federal agencies. “If they have any interest in the land, it is transferred to them at fair market value. If not, it is offered to the state. If they don’t want it, it goes to the counties through the same procedure.”

If the county also fails to buy the land, it is then bid out to private individuals.

The McCormick County Council plans to consider buying part of the 1,500 acres for industrial development.

“The county is looking at the possibility of buying about 140 acres,” said County Supervisor Curtis Baggett. Baggett said he does not yet know how much the land would cost

or when it will be put up for sale.

Regardless of whether the county purchases the land, Baggett said, he is glad to see it for sale.

“Anytime we can free land it is a help. We can get it on the tax books. We would like to get a lot of it released,” he said.

Forty-six percent of the land in McCormick County is federally owned and thus is not taxable.

Another 3,000 acres of Corps land is scheduled for sale to the Clarks Hill Russell Authority, a state agency which coordinates the development of Lake Russell.

“It’s (the land) right around on the lake in the fork section of the Little River on both sides of Lake Russell above Baker Creek in the Buffalo Creek area,” said Jim Workman, executive director of the Clarks Hill Russell Authority.

Workman said the authority would purchase the land and develop it for apartments and/or condominiums.

“We’ll get us a real good landscapist and a plan and will follow that plan as we develop it slowly over a period of years. We want the area to be compatible with the natural surroundings. We are very pleased with our environment and want to keep it that way: not overly developed.”

Workman said the planned development of land along the lake will increase McCormick County’s tax base by \$2 million or \$3 million over a period of years.

Interesting Facts

In 1986, the SVA purchased more than 3,100 acres of undeveloped timberland in the vicinity of Lake Thurmond from the federal government.

Savannah Lakes Village was undertaken jointly by SVA and Cooper Communities, Inc. Cooper purchased the former federal land, valued at approximately \$6.4 million, from the authority for approximately \$1.68 million in 1988. The difference, approximately \$4.75 million, was considered economic development by the SVA.

Assistance by the SVA also granted an additional \$3.3 million to the project for roads, water, and sewer systems what we now call SCRUT to be paid back within 30 years.

The State provided Cooper Communities with a \$5 million incentive to own and operate Savannah Lakes Village.

SVA also paid \$148,000 for engineering studies for water/wastewater infrastructure along with \$375,000 to the SC Water Resources Commission to develop a computerized hydrology model of the Savannah River Basin.

In 1992 the SVA reported that overall, the community's wide economic benefits would not accelerate appreciably until McCormick developed a stronger base of retail, wholesale and service business to serve Savannah Lakes Village residents and visitors.

In the original "Land Purchase and Development Agreement" Cooper agreed to build a 18-hole championship golf course at a cost no less than \$1.5 million, a club house for no less than \$750,000 and a recreational center for no less than \$1 million dollars. The recreational center was not obligated to be completed until 2,500 lots had been sold, When all recreational facilities were completed, Cooper also agreed to convey them to the Savannah Lakes Property Association.

By the year 1992 over 23,000 people had visited Savannah Lakes Village. Residents from states other than South Carolina accounted for more than 72%.

By Carl Langley
South Carolina Bureau Chief

McCORMICK, S.C. — A congressional subcommittee has started review of the proposed sale of more than 3,000 acres of federal government lands at the Clarks Hill Reservoir to a South Carolina agency.

The review is the final hurdle for the Clarks Hill-Russell Authority before the state agency can reclaim the land for \$4 million, or about \$1,250 an acre, and use the property for private development.

General Services Administration officials, charged with disposing of federal properties, agreed to the sale several weeks ago and now only congressional clearance is needed to conclude the transaction.

Patricia Bailey, a realty specialist with the GSA in Atlanta, said the congressional review is expected to take about six weeks and if approval is granted the sale will be completed.

"It could take at least two more months," Ms. Bailey said when asked when a decision could be expected.

Meanwhile, there are opposing views about the validity of the project.

A McCormick County official has referred to the sale as "the biggest thing that has happened here since Deering Milliken (textile plant) came to town in 1948." But a spokesman for an environmental group worries about the impact on future generations and who will profit from the venture.

The 3,195-acre Indian Hills development lies between federally owned Baker Creek and Hickory Knob parks, both under lease to South Carolina, and is a pristine wilderness with 30 miles of lake shoreline.

The Clarks Hill-Russell Authority, established by state law in 1971 to attempt recovery of private lands lost when the lake was built in the early 1950s, has been pursuing the Indian Hills project for a decade.

Clarks Hill was created by the damming of the Savannah River and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers took more than 162,000 acres of private land for the huge reservoir.

Since 1958, the Corps has been returning some of that land to the private sector, but usually in small tracts and on an irregular basis. To date, 6,916 acres have been returned to South Carolina and 12,330 acres to Georgia, according to Jim Parker of the Savannah office of the Corps.

If Indian Hills goes through, it will be the biggest single reclamation of South Carolina

properties, according to Parker's records.

Authority and county officials say Indian Hills will take years to develop, but when finished will include almost 3,800 single- and multi-family home sites, a golf course, recreation center, nursing home complex, boat marina and other amenities that make up a community the size of a small town.

"Over 95 percent of the people in McCormick County are behind this project," said John McCracken, a former weekly newspaper publisher who now is county tax assessor.

McCracken and other residents call Indian Hills one of the most beautiful pieces of real estate on the huge lake. Its woodlands and streams are popular with hikers, canoeists and naturalists and it is home to turkey, deer and other wildlife.

Local supporters hope the beauty and quality of the land will make it attractive to a future generation of retirement home buyers, especially in the nation's so-called "Snow Belt" states.

But while political and business interests in McCormick are in a state of near jubilation over the project, the ecstasy isn't shared by some members of the Corps and environmentalists, mainly about 5,000 members of the Sierra Club in South Carolina and Georgia.

The Corps employees aren't talking — at least on the record — and environmentalists haven't mounted a coordinated campaign against the project, but Sierra Club official Judith Gordon wants a public hearing before the transfer papers are signed.

Mrs. Gordon, a member of the Sierra Club's South Carolina chapter and a North Augusta resident, said in a two-page letter to the Corps that "there are several questions that must be answered" about the proposed sale.

Mrs. Gordon, state conservation chairman for Sierra, has not received a reply to her request. She acknowledges the Corps is not required to hold a hearing but might do it if enough voices are raised in protest.

The Sierra Club, which has about 5,000 members in Georgia and South Carolina, had been the only organized group asking questions. But in the last three days the South Carolina Wildlife Federation and the National Audubon Society have joined Sierra in asking for a public hearing.

McCormick County Rep. Jennings McAbee, a reclamation advocate, says the public has been informed about the transfer, noting

that talks and meetings on Indian Hills have been going on for years. Mrs. Gordon disagrees, saying no public hearings were advertised or held.

Mrs. Gordon claims her organization has been unable to determine why the government is willing to sell such a large tract for such a small price after issuing statements that "less than 500 acres are considered excess."

She also isn't satisfied with claims that the state is compensating for the loss of game management acreage with fishing and hunting sites at other locations. And she says Si-

era members want guarantees the project will not create "numerous environmental problems ranging from sewage field overflows to runoffs from fertilizers and insecticides."

Mrs. Gordon fears if Indian Hills goes through, others will take that as the signal to press for more developments around the lake.

"It will set a precedent," she predicts.

Responding, McAbee said only about 50 game management acres are involved in the transfer and more than that has been made up by getting paper companies to open up

The pipe dream of a “retirement community” was now a reality. It has been rumored that Mr. John Cooper and Mr. Sam Walton, Wal-Mart, had coffee together on many mornings – two very powerful men – how could the new village not succeed? Cooper named his new development “Savannah Lakes Village.” How appropriate! Before the damn was built it was the “mighty Savannah River,” what better name could they have chosen?

Many knew it would cost a fortune for roads, water and sewer and the cost would be added to lot prices. That did not happen! The state did something never before done in history, nor since – issued bonds to cover the cost of providing infrastructure to the new community. It was to be repaid by a monthly assessment (SCRUT) of each property owner. As to date, the SCRUT will be paid off in 2016. Folks, that wasn’t all! When the bond is repaid that tax will disappear and the assessment will end. What a huge coup – most taxes placed on anything never ends –not so with SCRUT. A big plus also is it helped make lot prices more affordable.

Back to the “pipe dream” coming true. On April 1, 1989 the first lot was sold to Frank and Dorothy Sherard of Calhoun Falls by their son, Michael, who was also the first agent hired by Cooper Communities, and is still selling property twenty five years later.



First Sales Office Was The Old Welcome Center on Highway 378 At The Little River Bridge: There were 50 Sales Agents Present That Day Along With Everyone Associated With Cooper Communities.



FIRST SAVANNAH LAKES HOMESITE PURCHASED—
Frank Sherard of Calhoun Falls is the first person to purchase a homesite on Savannah Lake Village, the residential community being developed on Thurmond Lake. Sherard is a long-time member of the Savannah Valley Authority, the state agency that originated the project and selected Cooper Communities as the developer. Pictured from left to right are Cooper Senior Vice-President Weston Tucker, Sherard, Mr. Mrs. Frank Sherard and son Michael Sherard. (Photo Savannah Lakes Village.)



Michael Sherard in front of the Cooper's second office. This was just temporary until the sales complex was completed. As you can see, it was a trailer located across from the Village store where the old fire department use to be.

Today First Citizens Bank is just about 75 feet from this original location.



Nursing Home, Property donated by Cooper

Savannah Lakes Village Launches First Commercial Business Venture

The new store now under construction in Savannah Lakes Village on Lake Thurmond (formerly Clark's Hill Lake) is a prime example of the jobs quickly generated by the project, according to Dewitt Smith, Wednesday at the official ground-breaking for the building at the Village Center near here.

A large crowd gathered at the site to participate in a bar-b-que dinner and observe the ceremonial beginning of the Village Commercial Center.

Others participating in the festivities were Curtis Baggett, McCormick County Supervisor, and Dwight Bassett, Business League

Consultant. Representing Lincoln County were Paul Mims, Commissioner's Office, and Barbara Judson, Chamber of Commerce.

When open in late fall, the Village store will feature a deli, groceries, light hardware, magazines, non-prescription drugs and self-service gas. Prince Oil Company of Edgefield will be the distributor. Contractor for this building is J. W. Spartlin & Son and the manager is Ernie Guthrie, both of Lincolnton.

Savannah Lakes Village will be built on 3,987 acres with 20 miles of shoreline on the J. Strom Thurmond Reservoir.

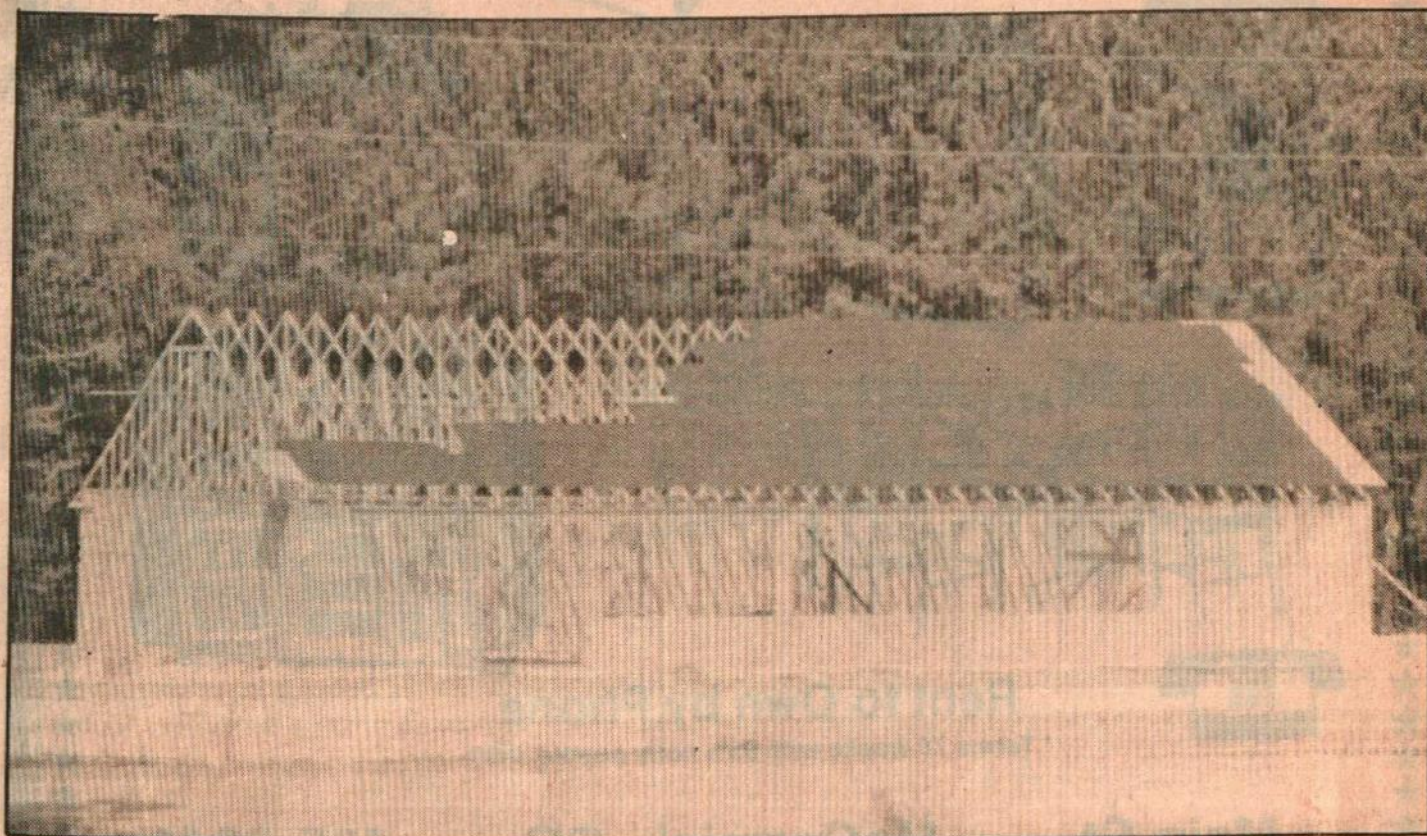
Sales were opened April 1 and

have passed the \$4.6 million mark.

A total of 285 persons have signed sales contracts with most of these coming from within the local region.

Nine detached homes are under construction and several more are on the drawing board. An 18-unit townhome complex in Southwind Cove is under construction with two units already sold. The contract for an additional 4 units in Tara Shores will be signed in early September.

Other major amenities planned for the community include a championship 18-hole golf course, a clubhouse, fitness center, an 80 room-lodge and restaurant.



A 4,000 square foot convenience store will be the first commercial venture in the Savannah Lakes Village development. It is located at the intersection of Highway 378

and 7. The building and property are owned by Cooper Communities, Inc. and leased to the operator, Ernie Guthrie, from Lincolnton.



Thanks to all who saw the need to keep records along the way. Now, let's fast forward through the years and reminisce as to how it all became a reality. Road construction started in 1989, but for months agents navigated muddy and rutted roads prior to real roads and often found themselves stuck with potential buyers in their vehicles. Try selling lots under those conditions, but they did!



June 17, 1989 was the first ground breaking for Savannah Lakes Village. Dorothy Sherard could not attend because she was at Palmetto Girls State in Columbia. Later that evening, at the Palmetto Girls State banquet in Columbia, Senator Strom Thurmond delivered a message to Dot that she was going to be a grandmother again!



Look at all the Gold Shovels turning the first spades of dirt- thus the beginning of Savannah Lakes Village!



The Lodge and Administration Building were ready at the end of 1990 and 648 lots had been sold with 17 homes completed. The complex had a putt-putt miniature golf, swimming pool, and tennis courts.





Visitors Center Opened 1990

The visitors center was actually the sales center and restaurant until Cooper Communities left. It was purchased in 2002 by a private company and operated as a Lodge, Restaurant, and Marina. In 2004 it was sold to the Trupp Group who maintains ownership.



The new sales center had an open concept where all agents and clients met in the same room at the same time. Cooper believed it created a sense of urgency and demand.

What Was It Like in Savannah Lakes 25 Years Ago?

Some of the things that I remember from 1989-90 when Savannah Lakes first opened for lot sales. There were 11 builders who were allowed to build a model home. From these, four were chosen to continue building here. They were Spratlin, Smoak, McCormick Home Builders & Unireal. All these homes were in Tara. The first couple who built and moved into the Village were the Spanglers in July of 1990, followed by the Adams in August, the Sanders that fall and the Zusts in Jan. of 1991. We were the only ones here, so we did everything together. There were no golf courses or restaurants in town except on Thurs., Fri. & Sat. If you wanted to go out to dinner you traveled to nearby towns. We would pile into one car and head out. We all came for the same reasons: scenery, tranquility, lakes and the Cooper reputation & to enjoy our retirement.

The new post office is across the street from where it used to be. The library was in the basement of the old building across from BB&T. The senior center was in the log cabin up town & there was no Lutheran Church. The Catholic Church had a crowd when there were 13 people in attendance. Any dogs that were caught running loose were in a long cage next to the Court House (where Hardy's is now). The only grocery store was a small convenient-like store on the way to town. The fire department was across the street on the property where First Citizens Bank is now located. There was no Republican party. If you wanted to vote, you voted Democrat. The schools were in three different locations & in deplorable condition. The price to build a house was about \$55 per sq. ft. There were no docks, so people didn't have boats unless they kept them in their garage. The road to Tara stopped right in front of the entrance to the Tara golf course (which opened in 1992). The fee to play 9 holes of golf was \$1 and that included a cart.

As more people moved here & the Tara clubhouse opened, we used it for our pot luck dinner parties. Everyone brought something, 2 couples brought the meat and the fee was \$1 per person. We were given the key to the facility so we could lock up when we were done. If you had a party at your house, you invited everyone who lived here. Since there was not a lot going on some days, you did a walk through on any new homes being built. We watched the Marina area being built. Once that restaurant opened we would go there for lunch or dinner. Times were changing!!

Things we didn't have at that time and we didn't realize how important they were in our lives----Neighborlink (thank you Chuck and Noreen Eichem!), First Responders (thank you Ed Meyer and the rest of that crew) and in our case, neighbors. We have come to value all of these and many more. McCormick has given many of us the opportunity to give back. There are so many places where one can contribute. We are called volunteers or "unpaid workers!" We get our fee in the form of a good feeling to know that we have helped. Try it. You might find a talent you didn't realize you had. I hope you enjoy your first 25 years here as much as my (late) husband and I have. We could not have chosen a better community in which to retire.

Barbara Zust

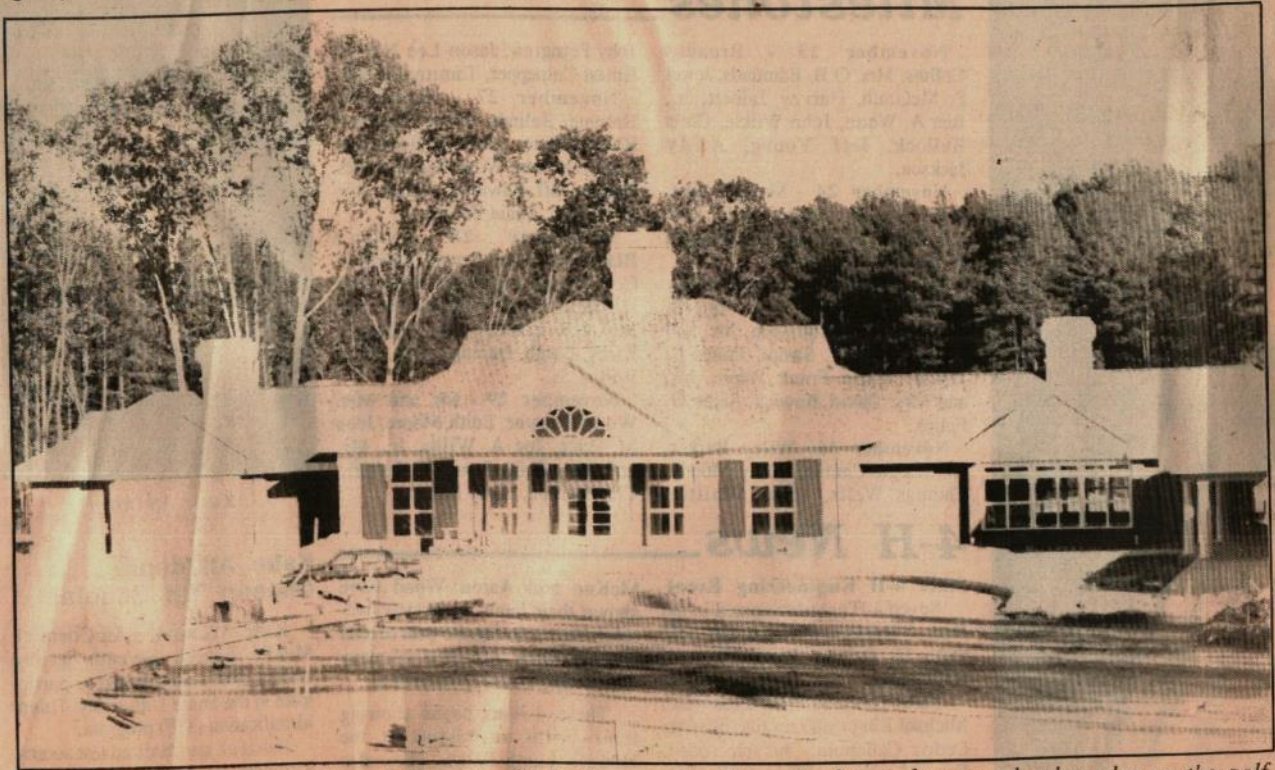


The Cove Restaurant opened in July of 1990. It was an elegant dining experience. Cooper provided 2 nights and three days lodging free for perspective property owners and believed it was important to have an on-site restaurant.

We decided we wanted to retire in South Carolina after traveling in almost every state of the union and stumbled upon Savannah Lakes Village by accident. We were the 28th couple to build and now there are over 2000 residents. SLV is ideal for retirees. We have golf, tennis, Thurmond Lake Power Squadron with all types of water activities, fishing, hunting, hiking, biking, arts and crafts, music, drama, all types of card games and other board games. This is just a particular list.

With all of the activities available it is easy to expand your circle of friends.

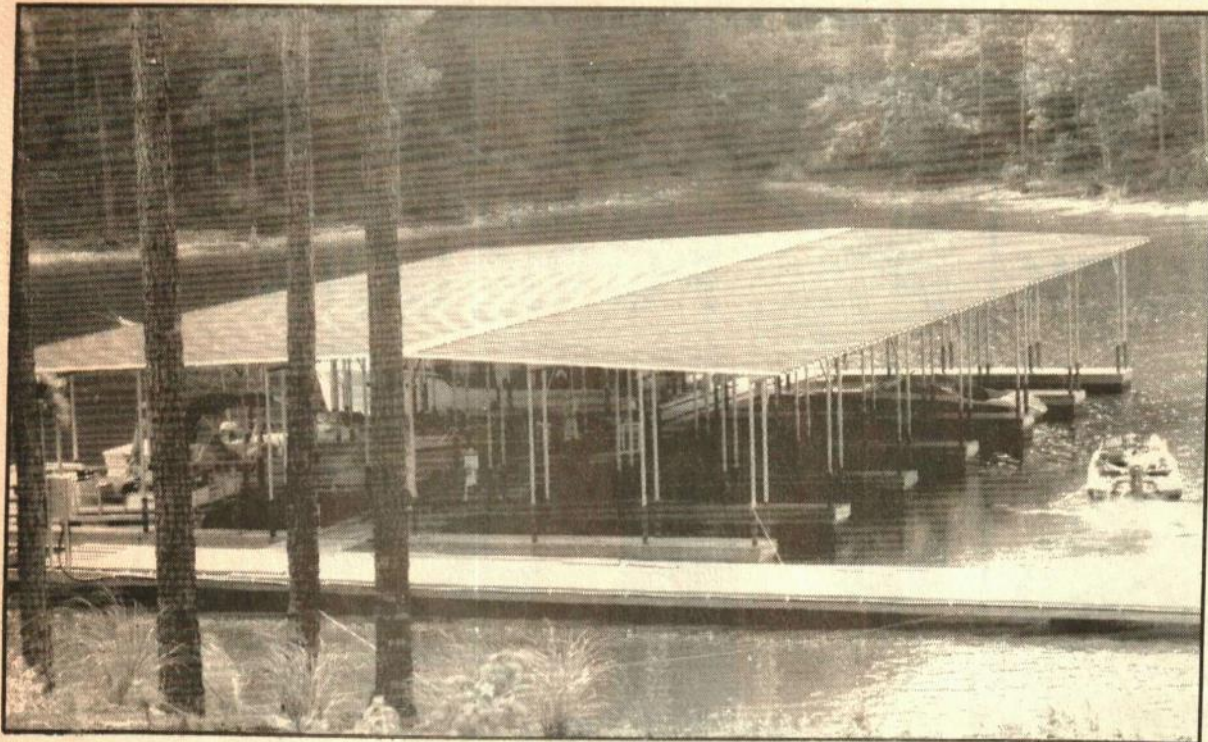
Ted and Linda Hansen



The Savannah Lakes Golf and Country Club is "basically complete", according to SLV Property Owner's Association Director Larry Stamps. "We're looking at possibly opening up portions of it in April of this year," said Mr. Stamps. The right portion of the building is the

Pro Shop, the first to be opened, when play on the golf course starts, also scheduled for April 1 opening. Neal Prince & Partners were the architects and Meyholm Contractors from Augusta, was the general contractor.





Savannah Lakes Village's new marina on Lake Thurmond offers full-service to the lake's boaters and fisherman. Gas, fishing supplies and boat rentals are available at the 26-slip marina owned and operated by Toye Hill.

Savannah Lakes Opens New Marina

Lake Thurmond's first marina in almost 20 years opened over the Fourth of July weekend, offering the public boat access to a resort lodge and restaurant. The Savannah Lakes Marina is adjacent to the Southwind Lodge and the Cove Restaurant in Savannah Lakes Village, a 3,987-acre resort community in McCormick County.

Twenty-six boat slips are in place and approval has been granted for 120, according to Dewitt Smith, the community developer's president for Savannah Lakes Village. The marina is owned and operated by Toye Hill, who obtained the lease from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In addition to boat slips, the marina offers a convenience dock, gas and fishing tackle sales and boat rentals.

"The marina is a real asset for everyone who enjoys fishing and boating on Lake Thurmond," said

Smith, who added that the lake access should help Savannah Lakes Village's resort restaurant and lodge business.

Opened in 1989, Savannah Lakes Village is being developed by Cooper Communities, Inc (CCI), a private, Arkansas-based builder. Savannah Lakes Village is the fifth community developed by CCI since 1954.

Smith said Savannah Lake Village is considered an integral part of a federal and state effort to stimulate economic development in the upper Savannah River Valley. The Savannah Valley Authority, a state economic development agency, has worked with the community's private developer to assist in the success of the venture.

The community has already attracted approximately 1,700 property owners and 75 residents to date. Smith said the community

expects to have 5,100 property owners and about 1,300 residents by the end of the decade.

Savannah Lakes Village property owners share in the ownership of an 18-hole championship golf course and a country club. CCI has also constructed an 80-room lodge, restaurant and office and recreational complex. CCI development costs are expected to top \$14 million, according to Smith.

Smith pointed to the marina as one more example of how Savannah Lakes Village is bringing jobs and prosperity to McCormick County.

"By choosing this location, Mr. Hill is investing in the future of this community, and that's certainly good news to us," Smith said.

The new marina is the first opened since 1973, and only the sixth constructed on the 70,000 acre lake since the reservoir was built in 1954.



Present day Marina with Restaurant and Beach

My husband and I were raised in New York City, worked and raised our family. Then it was time for us to enjoy the rewards of all our hard work. We looked up and down the East Coast never finding exactly the right place to call home. After spending a month exploring Florida, we returned home. My husband coaxed me to attend one last home show which was in Tarrytown, NY. That is where we met Realtor, Michael Sherard and became very intrigued with the community, so we made a trip to McCormick, SC to view the area. We were immediately captured by the beauty, serenity, pristine lake and the truly wonderful people. The rest is history. We bought a fabulous golf lot in 2004, built a beautiful house and moved in the following year. As my husband says, "it is the best decision of our lives." We are thankful each and every day to be living in beautiful Savannah Lakes Village, eleven years and counting.

Rosemarie & Frank Nalevaiko

Our Home in Savannah Lakes in Monticello



Progress marched on. Tara Golf Club opened, Shenandoah and Magnolia Subdivisions had lots ready for sale. THE SUN newspaper, with Sam and June Wininger as owners, kept property owners up to date on all of the “happenings” at SLV and surrounding areas.

A special tax to support police, fire and emergency service was instituted, a new fire truck purchased, and 1,770 lots had been sold with 85 homes built by the end of 1992.



This Savannah Lakes Village Property Owner's Association (POA) office complex is the newest commercial construction in the Village. Located behind The Village Store on Highway 7, it will offer several units of office space for future occupancy by commercial businesses, in addition to housing the POA's offices.

In February 1992 the building that housed the marketing department for Cooper was built. After they moved out, it was occupied by Savannah Lakes Real Estate group and First Citizens Bank.

Ground Breaking of the Catholic Church in 1993



Savannah Lakes Village residents and church members taking an active part in maintaining the grounds of the Church of the Good Shepherd are, l to r, Ted Hansen, Barbara Zust, Willard Goley, Michael McDonald and Ike Burgluno.

The Village Voice

by June Winger

There's high energy levels at the Catholic Church of the Good Shepherd with work details sprucing up the grounds and maintaining the considerable acreage. Villagers and long-time parishioners have joined hands to volunteer their time and effort to Spring cleaning. The church interior sparkled last Sunday when Betsy Dillbeck and I were invited to attend Palm Sunday service. I understand the interior clean-up crew was Linda Hansen, Hazel Haza and Sara Albino. Handymen have surfaced from the membership to replace gutters and drains, repair the mower and just about anything else that comes up.

It's a big week around SLV since The Masters is in "full swing". Dot and Mac Arnold are entertaining Bill and Ina Mau from Mt. Pleasant for the practice rounds Monday through Wednesday. Daughter, Joan and son-in-law, Michael Hearn, and grandson, Grayson from Charlotte, N.C. and daughter, Ann and her husband,

Alan Watkins will join the family bringing grandchildren, Maggie, Rick and Elizabeth to visit through the weekend.

Lil and John Stinson are entertaining James and Marge Smith from Apopka, Florida for a practice round one day then Scotty and Ellie Callum, also friends from Apopka, will join them Thursday through Sunday. The Callums will attend the tournament each day.

Mary Mulcay's uncle and aunt, Max and Liz Marshall from Lees Summit, Missouri, visited last week along with her sister and brother-in-law, Marilyn and Dudley Meyers from Stone Mountain, Ga. Friends, Mary Ann and Vern Danielson are guests this week. Vern is going to the Augusta National every day of the tournament. Mary prefers to explore the shops in the area.

The first Fun Play Day for the Women's Golf Association winners were: 1st, Betty Cox; 2nd, Betty MacDonald; 3rd, Marti Hurst; 4th,

Georgie Matthews, 5th Mary Mulcahy.

Frances Rock has been in California for her granddaughter's wedding and returns Wednesday. Ed's cousin Joel Garrett from Troy, Michigan plans to fly into McCormick airport in his twin engine plane to attend the practice rounds at Augusta National Tuesday and Wednesday. They will be joined by another cousin, Richard, from Arcadia, Florida.

Frank and Helen Schay of Midlothian, Virginia and Fred and Audrey Smith of Ridge Manor, Florida will be the house guests of Gene and Mick Goode for Masters week.

The Haislips have Bill's mom and stepfather down from Hot Springs Village in Arkansas to visit until Easter.

I would like to hear from any of you Villagers who have tid-bits of news to share. Call me at 391-4135.

During 1994 and 1995 Savannah Lakes Village was no longer a "pipe dream," it was becoming a reality. The Public Safety Building and Phase One of the Huguenot Parkway was completed. This allowed Monticello and Savannah Point Subdivisions to open. 2,015 lots had been sold and 258 homes built.

Wonderful of compounds.

1/6/94

Messenger

There is a little piece of history I'd like to tell you about, that in the next year or two, will not be visible to residents and history students of our past.

It's one that many residents can relate to and I think worth mentioning.

There is a plan to construct a highway through the north edge of Savannah Lakes Village to connect with an existing road in Baker Creek State Park.

Funds have been allocated and some cutting of timber is already being done to plan the new portions of the roadbed.

It will cross Little River at one point on an old train trestle that has been abandoned for many years.

It has been a favorite fishing and swimming spot for many in their youth, and still attracts campers and teenagers as a spot to swim and frolic on a hot summer day.

It is located off of the Long Cane boat ramp road, to the left of Highway 28 North.

I had heard about "the trestle" from some teenagers very close to my heart, but never went there, un-

til last week, when I realized that it would soon be a story related to growth and development in our County, and that I should get a photo for posterity sake.

One of these teenagers, (who said I could not, under any circumstances use his name) wrote a story about "the trestle" for an English class during his junior year.

The setting is beautiful. You must see it before the road is built. But for many teenagers, like this one, it apparently holds special meaning.

"It's a huge dinosaur like metal skeleton supported me like an ant on a picnic table. It stands motionless, and anyone who saw it for the first time would think no more of it than an abandoned piece of railroad history. But the trestle is much more than that...it is where young men go to test their manhood.

Your adrenaline begins flowing when you first enter the dusty, wooded road. You get to think a while, going down that serpentine, ungraded path. You talk about things like music, trying to take your mind off what lays ahead. When you reach the last straight-a-

way, you catch a glimpse of its ponderous bulk, and you can only begin to grasp what you've come so far for.

It stands fifty feet high, at least two hundred and fifty from beginning to end, and about fifteen feet across. From the first time you step on the old but firm ties, your stream of adrenaline hits a dam, and the only thing you can think of is, "My God, I'm going to die here today". You keep walking to the middle and then you realize what is expected of you.

When your friends take off their shirts and ascend the 30 degree angle of steel I-beam, which is only 1 1/2 feet wide, you begin to think of epitaphs. Once you've conquered the steel Kilimanjaro, you sit down to catch your breath and this is when you start thinking, and that is when the test starts.

You sit motionless, occasionally spitting, and figuring how far down it is. For me, it happened suddenly. My mind went blank, the floodgates of my adrenaline dam opened, and my testosterone took over. That first step takes so much courage, it's like reading something

so important it could get you killed when you read it.

In that one second, before you jump, you feel the hot sun on your back and you see the cool promise of God below you. The sensation of flying cannot be described in finite books, so I won't try to explain it either, but when you are engulfed by that most wonderful of compounds, it is like being born again.

When you look up and see your comrades cowering and still arguing about who wasn't going "on three", is when you realize you passed the trestle exam.

This is unedited and was submitted to me by this young "stranger's" teacher last summer.

After seeing the trestle, I can fully imagine the gatherings of teenagers through the years that have enjoyed that experience.

Sort of a "rites of passage" piece.

I have talked to many men even in their fifties who have said many days of their youth were enjoyed at "the trestle".

McCormick County life at its best!!



The real thrill, according to the author of the story, is jumping at night, when it is so dark you can't see the below, to tell when you are going hit "the most wonderful of compounds".



Savannah Point Entrance



Today's Bridge

Moving on to 1996 and 1997. The 23,000 sq. ft. Activity Center opened in March. Phase Two of the Huguenot Parkway was completed. Monticello Subdivision lots were opened and they would get a new golf course. However, the agents were now riding on 50 plus miles of good roads and the Medical Clinic opened in a temporary building. Savannah Point Subdivision opened with 133 lots bringing the total lots sold to 3,605 and 414 homes built.





For years Sleepy Scruggs gave a tour of the village by boat. Seeing Lake Thurmond for the first time, and by boat, was often the highlight of their trip. For many it was the catalyst that swayed them to purchase property.



The Lutheran Church By The Lake Was Founded in 1998. The land was donated by Cooper Communities

I was the first person hired with Cooper Communities by the President, Dewitt Smith. What an opportunity to be involved in this 4000 acre development and see the amazing growth from the ground floor - up! I was born and raised in McCormick County. This development was truly an economic boost for our County. Dewitt Smith was my mentor. When he suggested that I get my real estate license I was thinking, "and why do I want to do that?" Thank goodness I did. It was a stepping stone for me. I am now a Commercial Real Estate Broker in Augusta, GA. Even though my husband David and I live in Augusta, it is just a short drive to go spend the weekends with our friends, Bob and Theresa Bryan and Michael and Wanda Sherard, to play on the lake. On Friday afternoons it is truly "our" lake. We have it all to ourselves. Once you drive into McCormick County, you just feel all the stress leave your body. Lake Thurmond is an awesome playground for families to ski, cruise, fish, etc. Even though I live in Augusta, I love going back home.

Cathy Goldman





The Dorn Cotton Gin was constructed in 1898, but with the invasion of the boll weevil the mill was converted in the 1920s to a flour and gristmill. It operated continuously until the 1940s.

The Keturah Hotel was built in 1910. The original building burned in 1898 and was replaced with this structure. There were 8 passenger trains that came thru McCormick daily. The people would stay at the Keturah Hotel or the McCormick



Hotel (now Fannie Kates Inn) right next door. It was vacant for 40 years until Patti McAbee turned it into the McCormick Arts Council at the Keturah - or the MACK as it is better known. In 1985, the McCormick Arts Council was established



Fannie Kate's was built in 1905 and was named after the Kate's seven year old daughter who later in life inherited the Hotel. It is located over the Dorn's Gold Mine tunnels that were discovered in 1852 and is rich in history and stories.

Well, time for a revisit. CNN came to do a follow up on the “Ghost Town” theory for McCormick County that had been published in US NEWS AND WORLD REPORT but, to their unbelieving eyes, they found a thriving Savannah Lakes Village under construction with more grand plans on the board.

1998, 1999 and 2000. In 1999 Savannah Lakes Village assumed control of the POA and Monticello Golf Club opened. In December of 2000 Cooper closed their lot sales division as only a handful were left unsold. They constructed the building where the POA is located and continued building homes. By the year 2000, 4,836 lots had been sold and 658 homes built.

One very interesting and fun entity established – The Neighborlink by Noreen and Chuck Eichem. Looking back how would residents get along without that link when neighbors are always in need of a “ride to the airport, art supplies, someone to repair the garage door, pick up a package in Augusta, etc.” What a great community service.



Monticello Golf Course

2001, 2002 and 2003. What a star in their crown? Monticello Golf Course received national recognition from Golf Digest as being one of the top, new courses and the Hooter's Professional Golf Tour held its first tournament in SLV. These young golfers are extremely fortunate as "local villagers" house them during their stay. Again, where else but Savannah Lakes Village? Of course the friendly welcome, players, their fans and family become "vocal ambassadors" for SLV as they travel to other tournaments.

The magazine, **WHERE TO RETIRE**, named SLV to America's 100 Best Master Planned Communities Honor Roll in July of 2003. This year also saw Cooper end their presence in the village, but the hard work started many years ago as a "pipe dream" had now come full circle. Savannah Lakes Village was McCormick's answer to the "Ghost Town" theory. The town has had great growth with new businesses, spruced up buildings, many clubs and organizations for the enjoyment of county residents and visitors. So now, let's move forward to the years following Cooper's departure.



Sometime in the early nineties, David and I got the invitation from Cooper Communities. He's from Australia, I'm from Tennessee, neither of us had lived either place since we were 21, and had moved around a lot, even as separate households, and had always adapted. Contemplating retiring seemed like another move. Simultaneously we, for some reason I cannot remember, became gripped by what would become of us when we retired. So we took the Cooper bite and bought a small lot thinking we could "trade up" later. What sold us on the place at the time were three things: the pool, the fact that Cooper would put in two clay tennis courts, and a restaurant, 'The Plum.' We used to drive down here once or twice a year, often with friends, to play golf, tennis, swim, and eat at The Plum and Tara and explore the area. (Later, The Plum burned.) I told David, "If that grocery store gets organic plain 1% yogurt and milk and shitake mushrooms, we can maybe agree to move there. (They got the shitakes way back. They just got the milk. I am waiting on the yogurt.)"

An amusing side: After the real estate tour and presentation, and a golf game, I announced, "I don't see how we can lose with just buying this lot!" A-hem! That is the last time I ever took anything he said at face value.

Flash forward to 2001. We were getting serious, but decided we had to be on the water. There was no more Cooper and no more trade up. So we called Michael, whom we had gotten to know along with wonderful Wanda, as we had stayed several times in his townhouses near the Marina. We looked at houses--but if I was going to move here, I wanted to have my house. I didn't see my house for sale. So then we looked at lots. Michael never let on if he got tired of our cross-purposes and indecision. Nor was he ever pushy. He just quietly listened and asked questions. Close friends were visiting here with us while this was going on. They loved the golf lot at Monticello. It had a water view, but it was a golf pond and you had to look through a flag to see it with golf carts whizzing by. Nope--I'm a writer and scholar by trade. Can't have golf carts whizzing through my work. Birds and critters, nature, yes. I loved the water view that just blinked occasionally from the Tara (loop) lot Michael showed us--you only saw the lake if you took a meandering walk down the back over the Corps property (and not then during drought). Of course, a "discussion" ensued between David and me that lasted some time, as we could not agree. Michael grew quiet and figured out, from really listening and hearing us, what we really wanted, because we obviously didn't know how to move from our antithetical desires. He showed us a lot that wasn't quite for sale yet, but which we both fell in love with instantly! We each saw aspects of our individual but opposed "water view" associations in that lot. When he saw the smiles spreading across our faces, Michael took a discrete walk up the road with his cell phone, called the owner and came back to us, not with a compromise, but a synthesis..

There is a psychology of lot buying, I guess, when you are looking for a "from now on" home and not a temporary residence. David grew up on a golf course in a house his dad built. His dad died suddenly when David was thirteen. There was a golf pond he could see from his window. I grew up in a small Tennessee town, in a house where you couldn't see the deep, dark green, slow running river where I ran and played beside and climbed the bordering cliffs throughout my childhood and adolescence. What each of us had been trying to replicate in our water view "home" were of course the childhood homes we each had been happy in. What goes around, stays around and comes back around.

That is Michael Sherard's special kind of genius, finding us the perfect water lot that was greater than the sum of what we had each wanted, that we could build the Italian/Spanish plan that I had sketched, not 75 yards from the deep cove that looks like a river in the back of us, with a golf course view we can stroll down and see and even kayak to as we are heron and kingfisher watching, and not 5 minutes drive from the first tee at Tara. When you get tired of real estate, Michael, you can hang up a shrink or marriage counselor shingle.

That is the story of our buying into SLV, twice. That we actually wound up here is all due to Michael Sherard. But what keeps us here, after eight years of living, are not the house, the lake, the property, but rather the communities within SLV, that we cobbled and nurtured through practicing what we have professed-- for David, professional tennis, for me aquatics and poetics (of body, mind, language, water); and for both of us, a poetics of writing and teaching. I look around and watch people who move here practice their professions, work, and talents and carve themselves out the niches of their communities within the larger community of SLV, and the community frames and supports their happiness as they go about building a whole life and household. Dostoevsky's The Grand Inquisitor called community the greatest of the three temptations of Jesus to attempt to divert him from his divine destiny by denying people free choice of belief (by proving the reality of his divinity and thereby establishing the divine community of heaven on the earth and foregoing all discussion about it thenceforth). I tend to agree with him. I have never understood how crucial the sense of community and belonging and camaraderie is until moving here, nor how that intensifies with aging. It's the lynchpin. So Savannah River Realty has the secret of the next 25 years-- you show people the vision of shared communities, of finding & nurturing and building their special communities. You don't sell real estate as much as lives that are fulfillments.



Lucia Getsi with David Staniford

Resident since 2006 Land owner since 1993



In 2004 McCormick saw the completion of it's new Library. What a difference from having to go to the "basement" for books.

Awards and Achievements for Savannah Lakes Village



2004 – Savannah Lakes Village designated as the first "Firewise USA Community" in South Carolina. Recognition was given for ongoing proactive efforts to protect homes from any potential forest fires. Nationwide, fewer than 100 communities have been awarded the Firewise status.



2004 – The Monticello Golf Course's 5th hole ranked as one of the "18 Most Spectacular" holes in the Carolinas by an independent panel of judges for the Center For Carolina Living.

1999 & 2003 – Savannah Lakes Village listed as one of the "100 Best Master Planned Communities" by the Where to Retire magazine. New rankings are conducted every two years.



2004 - Savannah Lakes Village ranked as one of the "Ten Great Affordable Golf Communities" and one of the "50 Top Golf Communities" by the Carolina Active Retirement Association and Retirement Lifestyles Magazine

2003 & 2004 – Savannah Lakes Village listed as one of the "50 Fabulous Communities in the South" by Living Southern Style.



2000 – Monticello Golf Course y ranked as the "8th Best New Affordable Course in the Nation" by Golf Digest.



2009 saw the building of the outdoor swimming pool. Though many felt it was pre-mature to build, once it was completed, everyone could see the benefit.

By 2009, 991 homes had been completed.



Savannah Lakes Medical Center: For many years the center was located on this property but in a trailer until 2009 when the 7,000 square foot Greenwood Self Medical Center was built.

By 2011, 1014 homes were built or under construction.



Tennis Complex in 2011

As the tennis club grows and becomes one of the most popular sports, new tennis courts as well as renovation of Tara Country Club's expansion is approved with construction to begin in 2012.



New Complex 2013

In 2012 the Lady Lakers Tennis Team won back-to-back South Carolina State Championships and won the 2012 Southern Regional Championship. The Lady Lakers represented Savannah Lakes Village and the Southern Region in the National Championships in Arizona finishing 5th in the country.



Monticello greens are to be replaced with Mini Verde Bermuda and Hooter's Golf Tournament continued into its 9th year.

Joanne and I moved to Savannah Lakes Village in 1997 and purchased a resale lake lot through Sherard Realty (Frank and Dorothy, Michael's Mom and Dad). We moved into our new home on the Little River in 1998 and immediately began enjoying the many features that the village has to offer – boating, golfing, fishing, and many other social and recreational activities. We did not miss the Michigan snows. In 2007, we decided to down size our house and Michael helped us sell that home. Although we planned to rebuild here, we did look around the area to see if we should consider relocation to a different community. We quickly determined that we were already in the best village available and rebuilt here. We moved into our second "new home" in SLV in 2008. The village has seen changes since we first moved here and we, unavoidably, have gotten older. We have lost some of our friends but many remain and we plan to stay here enjoying the good life as long as we are physically able. We have never regretted our move to SLV.

Roy and Joanne Wells, 209 Pirates Cove

In 2013 the Tara Club House renovation is complete as well as the tennis courts.

Here is a short list of companies that have grown up with the village and would not have opened their doors had it not been for the Savannah Lakes Development.

Food Lion	Michelle's Pizza	New High School
Subway	First Responders	Village Spirits
Hardee's	Nursing Home	Wilkie Insurance Agency
Family Dollar	City Office Building	Sandy Branch Fire Dept.
Dollar General	New Elementary School	Savannah Shore Line
Post Office	Water Treatment Plant	Humane Society
White's Marine	Verizon Phone Towers	
Little Italy	New Sheriff's Building	

Sherard achieves \$1 million in homesite sales at Savannah Lake

Abbeville County resident Michael Sherard became the first homesite sales associate in the history of Savannah Lakes Village to achieve \$1 million in homesite sales in one year.

He was recognized as 1995 Salesman of the Year for the third year in a row.

Sherard has been with Savannah Lakes Village as a sales and broker associate since April of 1989, selling the first lot in the 4,000 acre recreation/retirement community in McCormick County.

Ken Brown, from Michigan, pushed Sherard over the million mark in October when he traded his interior lot for a waterfront lot

in the new Monticello subdivision.

In Sherard's six years with Savannah Lakes, he has sold to over 280 property owners from 30 states.

At the 1995 sales award banquet held last month at the Tara Golf Club, Sherard was presented with the salesman of the year award along with his fellow associate Eddie Addison, of Martinez, Ga. This was the second year that he and Addison have shared the top sales honors for the highest volume of homesite sales and the third year consecutively that Sherard has been named the top salesman.

Sherard was also recognized with honors for number of self-produced guests visiting Savannah

Lakes Village and number of total homesites sold. Through April of this year, Sherard has a total volume in excess of \$5 million dollars in homesite sales since beginning his career with Savannah Lakes

Village in 1989.

Sherard is the son of Frank Dorothy Sherard of Calhoun F His wife, Wanda, is a third g teacher at Diamond Hill Elea tary School in Abbeville Cou



I hope that you enjoyed our 25 year history of Savannah Lakes Village. As you have read, I grew up just up the road in Calhoun Falls and thought farming was going to be my future. Cows, horses, cotton and soybeans were all I knew and quite frankly all I ever wanted to do. It was my turn to take over the family cattle ranch, but the downturn in the 70s hurt a lot of farmers including us. Then, in 1989 Cooper Communities came to McCormick and changed mine and many other lives. I was the first salesman hired and 25 years later I am still here. I look back at those Cooper days with the 50 sales people and seeing 100 tours a day, 7 days a week with all of us in suits. There were over 300 sales people that came through our sales force, some here for less than a week before moving on to an easier venue or back to time share sales. The many stories I heard from some of the sales people stay with me today due to the outright mistruth they told just to get someone to say yes to a \$6,000 lot. For instance, did you know that our medical center, which was a triple wide trailer, was going to have a helicopter landing pad on it? Also, behind the practice Greens at Tara looking over 9 and 18 it was told there would be 1 million azaleas planted? What is now Garden Dr. across from the AC used to be called Mall Drive. Big mistake, heard many times that Mall Drive was going to be a one mile Mall right here in SLV. It was told Cooper had already named the street in preparation. There were apology lots due to the fact the lot was too rough to build on, so Cooper lowered the price to apologize for how bad it was. There are countless stories like this over those 10 years, and even today I sometimes hear more stories as owners come to sell or purchase a home and share more stories.

Many changes and adjustments had to be made after Cooper closed their lot sales division, including finding potential buyers for SLV. Cooper's millions a year in marketing were gone and we all knew that McCormick was not a destination point. Most of my success came from going to boat and trade shows all through the north and mid-west. Many of you reading this may have met me at one of those shows in Mi. NY, or OH. and many other states where I went to find new clients. I would spend as much as two months every winter traveling from show to show, meeting people and handing out information about the village. I use to fondly say to my friends that "I was going up north to RE-Yank"

It has been a 25 year career of which I never dreamed. I have met thousands of people over the years from all walks of life. This career has also created a whole new set of friends for Wanda and me. Perhaps you are one of the families that I said hello to at a show somewhere up north and now call SLV home. It has been challenging over the years when we hit the down turn but, SLV kept growing. We continued calling and traveling and somehow here we are today talking about a 25 year history.

Where so many developments around us have failed, filed for protection or sold the amenities to get out of debt, SLV has stood its ground. We are at the cusp of being one of the strongest in the south east and we know and have more to offer than any other community. It is you, the property owners with the great attitudes and personalities that make us great and make this place special. It has pushed and kept us successful. We, at Savannah River Realty, pledge to work even harder to make SLV a household name. Thank you for your kind words, referrals, hard work and volunteering that have kept us going strong. Thanks for a wonderful 25 years and here's to 25 more.

Michael and Wanda Sherard



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The information contained in this book is considered accurate but not guaranteed. Through research, newspaper articles and folks just remembering, we have compiled our history the best we could.

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