

**The Complete History
Of
Carolina Trace
By
D. C. "Charlie" Pence**

**From notes and documents
Of Charlie's
Assembled by
John W. Altenburger
February 24, 2004**

Editor's Notes

This written history of Carolina Trace is Charlie Pence's, not mine. I acquired a stack of 16-year-old documents from his daughter, Susan Link, through a mutual friend, Harold Crawford. I simply put it all together.

Charlie Pence wrote a "Part I" and a "Part II" that he submitted separately for his friends to critique in 1988. Included in distribution were W. M. "Bill" Arnold Jr., Otis Batchelor, W. J. "Joe" Brinn Jr., W. J. "Joe" Brinn Sr., Raymond "Buck" Cox, Mary Lewis Dusenbury, Marvin Gaster, Van R. Groce, Jim Hickey, Bill Little, Worth Pickard, Judge W. W. "Woody" Seymour, Hal Siler, and Parker Wicker. I would not be surprised if others were asked to critique the work as well. Others in on the project with names in the text include Truby G. Proctor Jr., William McKay Johnston, and Tommy Pickard.

I have most of the returned and critiqued copies marked up with their recommended changes. Changes were primarily names and places but also were more extensive at times. I've tried my best to do what I thought Mr. Pence would have done while incorporating these changes, but that is impossible to know what he would have done. I've used my judgment on some conflicting recommended changes. There were no wholesale changes recommended that I had to worry about.

D. C. Pence mentions Bill Arnold's dreams at the beginning of his History of Carolina Trace. At the back of this booklet is part of a circa 1975 Carolina Trace sales brochure. The original is in color and printed on high quality paper, as you would expect. Mrs. Jane LaRue, the daughter of Judge W. W. "Woody" Seymour, who is mentioned several times by Mr. Pence, gave it to me.

Bill Arnold fulfilled his dreams in many ways by creating a permanent community with wonderful amenities that is the 2nd largest community in all of Lee County. Some of the dreams shown in the sales brochure that didn't make it to reality include:

- Traceway Road completes a loop around the Lake by continuing over the dam.
- An equestrian village is on the south side of the lake next to a recreational area.
- A chapel is on the peninsula of land where the security gate is.
- A water village with homes built out over the water is in the south end of the lake.

I think most of us would be proud to have the vision and foresight of Bill Arnold & fully understand that all of our dreams aren't expected to come true. He did get a lot of them to come true!

John W. Altenburger
Sanford, North Carolina
February 24, 2004

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Foreword

Donald "Charlie" Pence was born August 20, 1921 at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas during the time his father was assigned to the 9th Infantry. He grew up on Army Posts throughout the U.S. and overseas. He graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point with the class of 1943. He joined the 70th Division at Camp Adair in the state of Oregon and was B Company Commander of 275th Battalion during WWII. During this time he was severely wounded while on a combat patrol near Grosbliederstoff, Germany and lost a leg. For his action during the fighting, he received the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second highest award for valor. He was medically retired from the Army in January 1946. Major Pence worked for the CIA until retirement in 1973. Whereupon he and his wife, Mary Sue Wilson, started looking for and found, Carolina Trace, a perfect location and setting for retirement. During his retirement, he was very active in the 70th Division, and co-authored "Ordeal in the Vosges" with Eugene Petersen. He loved the golfing and fishing at Trace, but he also took an avid interest in the history of Trace and began to research the families that owned the land in the 1800's, to the people involved in its evolution to Carolina Trace. The bulk of his research is contained within the pages of this booklet.

John Altenburger, kindly took all the stacks of pictures and notes organized and put them together for a clear presentation of the facts that were accumulated over time. No easy task, but it results in a fascinating account that colors the past of Carolina Trace that might have been forgotten otherwise.

In 1982, Charlie was part of a group to receive the "Outstanding Trailblazer Award." This was an award given by the 70th Division in recognition for his many years as the Association's historian. In 2000, he was elevated to the position of "Historian Emeritus" in recognition of his many years of dedicated service to the 70th association, as it's historian.

In December 2003, an auditorium at Fort Lawton, Washington was named in his honor.

Major Pence passed away August 27, 2003. His wife, Mary Sue, preceded him in death in August 1989. Four daughters, eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren survive them.

Susan Link
Daughter
February 28, 2004

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Dear

October 20, 1988

This manuscript is made up from the various installments of the "Trace of the Past" series recently published in the Carolina Trace monthly TRACE TALKS. Several of my copy submissions for the series could not be published in their entirety due to TRACE TALKS space limitations--the versions included herein are all complete. In addition, these have been supplemented with additional details which I, conscious of TRACE TALKS space constraints, originally omitted myself. The entire writing has been somewhat revised and edited; many errors in it have been corrected, in some instances because additional information became available after the errors were published. I don't kid myself that there aren't many others.

The intention here is to complement this account and make it as accurate as possible. However, I realize that anything like complete accuracy is impossible because much of the story has had to be based on what individuals have remembered. Little of what is here comes from published material. Moreover, I have detected what I thought were errors in pertinent published material. Still I want, with your help, to clear out as much garbage as can be found.

This manuscript is being done in two parts. This is Part 1, and a copy of it is being provided to you with the request that you read it for accuracy and return it to me, annotated with your corrections and remarks. I will thank you for your frankness, not for being nice to me. While you are doing this, I will be working on Part 2.

Why am I doing this? Most of all, I have wanted to present complete versions of this to persons who were particularly helpful while I was writing the original version. Consequently, I decided that now, when there is no pressure of monthly deadlines to interfere with check-ups on information and to cause hurried writing, would be the time to do the job reasonably well. With your help, I expect to generate a final version of this for distribution before going to another undertaking.

I intend to finish my work on Part 2 around November 10 and will check with you then about picking up your copy of Part 1 with your notations on it.

(Editors note- Signed by Charlie Pence)

October 20, 1988

TRACE OF THE PAST SERIES—Part 1**INTRODUCTION**

Bill Arnold in 1956 made his original purchase of land on what later became Carolina Trace. The seller was Mrs. L. S. Summers, whose farmhouse stood on east side of Route 87, near the site of the Trace firehouse. This new property comprised 227 acres around Arnold's Lake, on which Bill a few years later built his log cabin home, now owned by the Alan Kyles family. It was an active farm until 1969. It was understood that Arnold intended to farm it. However, he soon decided that some other application of his land would yield better returns.

Subsequently, as Arnold traveled in conducting his golf course irrigation business, the many layouts he visited gave him the idea of converting his land into a golf development. As time passed this idea grew into a dream. Consequently he purchased several hundred more acres, including 104 from Herman Carter, this one of some 70 acres which later provided land for the Lake Nos. 15 and 16 golf holes.

But Arnold's dream remained only that until 1967, when Sanford oil dealer Truby Proctor, Jr., introduced him to W. J. Brinn, Jr., a young Sanford realtor. After that meeting, the dream snapped into focus as a reality.

Together Arnold and Brinn decided to put together a total package of home sites and recreational facilities in the Upper Little River watershed, starting with Arnold's acreage. A property ownership map was drawn, started by J. Chandler Eakes, Lee County Register of Deeds covering a total of 1570 acres, and the two set about acquiring the additional land. Financing for the project was provided through a group of North Carolina savings and loans. The land acquisition turned out to be an arduous two-year project for the two men to which they could give their attention only part of their time--there were many other involvements to a land development, and these demanded their time and attention too.

"GIANT GOLF-RECREATIONAL SITE PLANNED FOR AREA"

Under the headline above, THE SANFORD HERALD on Feb. 10, 1969, announced plans for development of a golf and country club south of Sanford. It was the public's first knowledge of Bill Arnold's dream, which, except for a chosen few, he had quite understandably kept to himself for over 10 years.

"A group of local businessmen, including William J. Brinn, Jr., and W. M. Arnold, Jr.," said the HERALD article, "have teamed up with a former head football coach at the University of North Carolina to build a new 1,500 acre golf course and recreational development in the Sanford area. A spokesman for the group, Sandhill Properties, Inc., said this morning that the project, still without a name, will be located on the east side of Highway 87 starting at the site of the Carolina Irrigation Co., operated by Arnold, and

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stretching back for about 600 continuous acres to the Lower (sic) Little River. The property will include land on both sides of the river, which will be the source of water for the club's proposed 350 acre lake ... Jim Hickey, the coach, has resigned as athletic director at the University of Connecticut to go into the golf business. . . ." "Other principals named in the article were Truby G. Procter, Jr., Van R. Groce, and, from Lillington, William McKay Johnston.

The Arnold dream had not always been blissful. Indeed, before the successful achievement of Carolina Trace's development, Bill would make difficult decisions which eventually had his entire fortune staked on its realization. Consequently, there were times when the dream became nightmarish.

The 1967 introduction by Truby Proctor of Joe Brinn to Bill Arnold brought the two men together in planning for and acquiring additional land. Arnold had for some time been confiding in Proctor about his undertaking and had done so at this meeting—about procuring a tract on the south shore. When Proctor suggested that Brinn be brought into the picture to negotiate the deal, Arnold agreed; and Joe was invited to join the meeting. There was an additional significance to that meeting: Bill remembers that Truby had seemingly come to a decision to invest in the Arnold undertaking, for Proctor advised Arnold to go ahead and assured him of his (Truby's) support.

WHAT CAN THEY EVER DO WITH THAT SWAMP?!

In 1969, when THE SANFORD HERALD make public the plan to build the country club community which became Carolina Trace, the view from Route 87 of what became the entrance way past the gatehouse was indeed forbidding. Today, one can get some idea of what that view was like by looking down-stream from the bridge on the Cox Mill Road just down the river from Carolina Trace. The steep banks, dense underbrush and huge trees laced with heavy vines appear as an impregnable primeval fortress. That is why, after reading the HERALD announcement nearly 20 years ago, **(35 years ago as of the date of this publication-editor's note)** one incredulous Sanfordite wondered: "What can they ever do with that swamp?!" Otherwise the news of this new undertaking, according to Sanford newspaperman Bill Horner, did not generate much interest—with the exception, of course, of the area's golfers. However, Bill has pointed out that this was the first instance in his long memory when local businessmen joined together in promoting a large land development and here another meaning—that this united effort has been imminently successful—was implicit.

Two years before Sandhill Properties made its plan public through the HERALD, there remained much land still to be acquired before construction could be started. That was when Joe Brinn joined Bill Arnold in this acquisition work. There was need for a property-ownership map covering the projected area of the development, but there were no Lee County tax maps in those days to serve this need. For a period of over a year Joe Brinn, joined by stockholder Tommy Pickard, visited the Lee County courthouse searching out deeds and sketching scale drawings of property outlines from their descriptions—the style of the older ones yielded to interpretation only with reluctance. Cut out, the sketches became plats applied in place to a plywood board in Brinn's wood working shop—the master map. It was an arduous process. the evolving map looking like

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a jig-saw puzzle being solved at a frustratingly slow pace, with the missing pieces still to be contrived out of writings hidden in the courthouse. It was a super scavenger hunt but was not done for amusement--the outcome was essential to consequent land acquisition planning. Understandably, the land purchases still had to be negotiated confidentially so as to not attract attention. However, Brinn usually explained what was being attempted to a landowner he was making an approach to. Since funds available for acquiring land were limited, Joe tried to capture the owner's interest in the Sandhill Properties development so to arrange an exchange of the owner's land for stock in the development. Fortunately this was sometimes successful. In a similar arrangement, Robert Trent Jones agreed to accept stock as partial payment for his service in doing the development's golf architecture. In many other cases, the corporation conserved its cash by paying stock or property in return for services rendered.

The acquisition of the Ernest McSwain tract is noteworthy because, although the owner was known as a hard bargainer and rejected stock in payment for his land, he took a positive view of the development and readily agreed to a reasonable price. The McSwain tract covered 132 acres straddling Trace Way in the vicinity of its Fairway Lane intersection on the North Shore. At one time, sand and gravel was commercially extracted from this property, the origin of the pond on the north side of Northridge Trail. Near by, a dirt track for auto races was operated for a time, the outlines of which are still visible from Traceway in the scrub pine woods to the rear of the Ron Parker home.

The Godfrey tract acquisitions involved a not-so-usual coincidence of buyer-seller desires. In 1967, shortly after Brinn had joined forces with Arnold, Joe took on the assignment to obtain from tobacco farmer Harvey Godfrey some of his land. Within a few days, before Brinn could contact Godfrey, his son Wayne appeared at Brinn's Sanford office to represent his father in selling land for him. Joe bought the desired tract immediately at a mutually agreeable price. The land thus acquired provided for 50 acres of what are now the Golf East and Golf West subdivisions. About 10 years later Wayne represented his father in a second land transaction with CTC, this one making available the acreage now occupied by much of Golf North. Wayne Godfrey remains closely involved with land transactions here, selling properties for Carolina Trace Real Estate Company. Doubtlessly, he has resold lots from land earlier owned by his father.

There were other, more difficult transactions. For example, one negotiation had to be conducted with some 20 heirs to a deceased owner's property. Prolonged bickering among them over the sale was finally ended when Brinn managed to get all 20-odd heirs together in his Sanford office on a Sunday and issued them a take-it-or-leave-it ultimatum.

HOW DID THEY PICK THE NAME " CAROLINA TRACE"?

Lewis Clarke is the acknowledged originator of our community's name, Carolina Trace. Hired by Sandhill Properties in 1969 as land planners for the corporation's new development below Sanford, the Raleigh landscape architectural firm of Lewis Clarke and Associates became the logical members of the team to perform this task.

Recently, Lewis reviewed the process followed in deriving the name. He and his fellow

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planners set out with dual objectives in mind—not just a name but also a logo. The two had to be closely associated and in appearance one should suggest the other. The logo would be distinctive and convey something more than simply the community's initials. Too it would possess a subtle character and be effective in multiple uses—in reproductions on golf clothing and equipment, trophies, silverware, letterheads, and so forth. And so the logo, which emerged, is the Carolina Trace monogram. However, at first glance, it appears to be a symbol, which only admits its derivation after closer study.

The theme for the Carolina Trace name was derived from the planning concept for the development of a big lake encircled by a major trail (which became Traceway) connecting individual communities along the shore (the subdivisions). This was suggested by the area's Indian history and the mystique and mythology associated with that history. The long-ago presence of Indians had become quite evident during the land-clearing operations when a rich harvest of unearthed arrowheads and other Indian artifacts was collected by one amateur archaeologist, a member of the land clearing crew.

"Carolina" was chosen as the specific element of the name. While defining roughly its southern geographic setting, Carolina was also seen to have a positive perception among the American public. "Trace" was chosen for the evocative quality of the word; it has many meanings, but one, "... some mark that has been left by something, which has preceded", seemed to hint at the area's Indian heritage.

Lewis Clarke chose Carolina Trace after a lot of thought and experimentation. When he was satisfied, he presented his proposal to the Sandhill Properties board and it was readily accepted—it never came to a vote. Clarke may not have anticipated one unspoken reaction provoked in Bill Arnold, who, on hearing Lewis' choice, was brought to imagine himself sitting in a wagon while contemplating the rear appearance of a mule in its draft harness! Then, having thought it over, Bill expressed his approval and the rest of the board readily agreed.

Another explanation sometimes heard for the origin of the Carolina Trace name—the route followed by Cornwallis' army back in 1781 as it moved toward Wilmington from its battle at Guilford Court House—is firmly rejected by Clarke. Incidentally, it appears that Cornwallis did cross the Upper Little River within a few hundred yards and to the east of present Highway 87 bridge, "near John Morris' (a member of the early pioneer Morris family) place," according to Marvin Gaster's historical sketch in the Sanford centennial history 1874-1974.

Further north, the "trace" of Cornwallis' march crossed the Deep River near its junction with the Haw forming the Cape Fear River, then followed "Sheppard's Road" south, past a point where Salem Church, in East Sanford on Route 42 now stands. A vestige of this sunken road is said to be visible near the Jonesboro Elementary School. Thence, the Cornwallis march route probably passed several hundred yards east of Carolina Trace land to its crossing of the Upper Little River.

Another link between Cornwallis and Trace's past relates to the Gaster family, whose

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forebearer was Henry Gaster, most probably the original pioneer in the Upper Little River area. Henry had two sons, both active militiamen in the Revolution. One son, Jacob, was captured near Swann's Station by Cornwallis' dragoon leader Tarleton, sent to scout ahead as the army approached the Upper Little River. Jacob Gaster survived his imprisonment to serve nine terms in the State Legislature and become the forefather "of all the Gasters in the Lee County area," according to the Marvin Gaster's history. Another historical connection pertains here: A cavalry force was sent ahead by General Greene to shadow the Cornwallis army's passage through this area. Greene's cavalry commander was Colonel Henry Lee, father of Robert E., for whom Lee County was named.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE UPPER LITTLE RIVER AREA

In 1745 a team of surveyors, moving west as they marked the historic Granville Line, reached the Saxapahaw River. There it paused after learning that further west the team would find no settlers to recruit as helpers in the survey work. The Granville Line later became the boundary between Chatham and Moore counties, and in 1907, when Lee County was formed of land from both counties, the former Moore land, to the south, included that which became Carolina Trace. At the time of the Granville Line survey, grievances in the American colonies against England were already festering. However, in this instance, the settlers north of the Line had to pay Lord Granville's much steeper quitrents and so became even more restive than those who, by this division, were subjected to complete jurisdiction of the King. The Saxapahaw is now the Haw River, thanks to some practical minded Tar Heel.

In the middle of the 18th century, the early colonist penetrations into the Upper Little River area began. The forerunners were surely hunting parties from the eastern Carolina settlements, attracted by the game (including buffalo) which abounded here. They came not for sport but to bring away subsistence, and some hunters later returned with their families to resettle. A Moore County history states that early settlers were a mixture of English, Irish, Ulster Scots, and Highland Scots, with some French and Germans (including "Pennsylvania Dutch") thrown in. It notes that these early arrivals preceded somewhat the Highland Scot immigration surge, which followed Bonnie Prince Charlie's defeat by the George II. However, concerning the Upper Little River area itself, Lee historian Marvin Gaster has found that most of the first arrivals were Scots.

Henry Gaster, a real Dutchman, was the original pioneer of record to move into the general Carolina Trace area. There was a Gaster claim made in 1787 on the "dreans (drains) of Carr's Creek." However, Henry had arrived here much earlier and acquired land as a squatter, registering a "cattle mark" (brand) as early as 1754. Incidentally, Carrs Creek may have gotten its name from Robert Carr, who in 1757 married one Barbara Beverette, to whom land on this stream had been willed by a ship's captain lost at sea.

During the 1781 campaign which brought British and American forces through here, the opposing commanders, Cornwallis and Greene, both seem to have been misled in their impressions of local attitudes toward the Revolution. Cornwallis is said to have hurried his march across the Upper Little River to Cross Creek (Fayetteville) as much because

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of the disappointing non-support by local settlers as of his troops' poor condition making it advisable to avoid any engagement with the enemy, following behind. On the other hand, Greene too was surprised at the "inhabitants' disaffection" as he passed through. These reactions seem to have been provoked because local farmers denied their food and livestock to both armies. However, there is doubt that much could have been spared, for most of the farmers here were barely making ends meet. However, they did participate actively as belligerents on both sides.

How did the local settlers decide which side? The Moore County history cites various reasons--political, religious, and economic--behind their decisions and seems to indicate that the economic predominated. Accordingly, the better off settler was likely to take the Tory side. In the more recently settled Upper Little River area, this should have meant a strong sentiment favoring the Whigs.

To the extent that the economic factor may have prevailed, the two most famous individuals in the area's Revolutionary history were exceptions. Colonel Philip Alston was a large landowner on Deep River, scion of an aristocratic Virginia family, and an elected local official. And yet he was the leading anti-Tory fighter around. On the other hand, local Tory leader Colonel David Fanning was a runaway apprentice from Virginia when he joined the loyalist South Carolina militia. In 1775, as a militia sergeant, Fanning was required to take an oath for one side or the other. Fanning chose the Tory side and fought with distinction against South Carolina patriots until coming to this area in 1780, then receiving his colonel's commission.

The local fighting between Whigs and Tories has been called "bitter, cruel and destructive." At the Cornwallis headquarters on Deep River in March 1781 Tarleton's Memoirs stated: "Nothing but blood and slaughter has prevailed among the Whigs and Tories, and their inveteracy against each other must, if it continues, depopulate this country." However, the animosities thus engendered seem to have soon dissipated, perhaps forgotten in the common cause against the North, which later preoccupied the community. Local sage J. Marvin Groce, now well into his 90's, has recalled that his mother talked about what her elders passed on concerning the Revolution. There was no mention of interfamily feuds or old Whig-Tory grudges--only that living had been awfully hard in those years. Groce's mother was of the Morris family.

After the Revolution as immigration continued, small communities grew up in this area supported by an economy based mainly on agriculture. Originally, most farmers raised corn and livestock simply to survive; in time, they added other grains, then cash crops, primarily cotton and tobacco.

The establishment of post offices by the middle of the 19th century marked a growth of some localities sufficient to support such service. While Sanford was not established until after the Civil War, the forefathers of its citizens had earlier acquired postal addresses with names still familiar in the area--Long Street (now Longstreet Road), postmaster appointed in 1837; Pocket (Creek), in 1832; Buffalo (Creek), in 1854. Laid out in 1860, Jonesboro's settlers earlier had been served by the post office at Rollins Store, its proprietor Thomas Rollins, having been appointed postmaster in 1841.

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However, all these post offices were discontinued in the early post-Civil War years.

Railroads provided a stimulus to further growth of existing settlements which led to Jonesboro's and Sanford's being chartered as towns; significantly, both towns were named after men credited with building the railroads that arrived at and served these young communities. In 1860 the Western Railroad extended its Wilmington-Fayetteville line to Egypt (new Cumnock) on Deep River to haul coal from the Egypt mine to Wilmington for firing boilers of ships serving the Confederate cause. A station was established at what was later Jonesboro, and during the war was used by Confederate soldiers from this area to join/rejoin their units elsewhere. Jonesboro, named after Colonel Leonidas Jones, builder of this line, was incorporated in 1872. After the war, stations on this Western line extension were established to serve the citizens living near Swanns Station and Olivia just south of Trace.

In 1871 the Raleigh-Augusta Railroad started south from Raleigh building a line which the following year made a junction with the Western Railroad at a point near one Buchanon's Store, then standing alone in dense woods. Work on the new line paused there for several years before being resumed. The Raleigh-Augusta planners originally envisioned that their new line would cross the Western in Jonesboro. but the company was unable to acquire the necessary land for the right of way there. Founder of the town of Sanford, Major John W. Scott, who owned much of the land, which the center of town eventually covered, came to the rescue. By the time construction of the line started from Raleigh, Scott had laid out a town plan centered on the two intersecting railroad rights of way with 80-foot wide business streets all bordered by surveyed lots ready for sale. Incorporated in 1874 the town was named for Colonel C.O. Sanford, Chief Civil Engineer of the Raleigh-Augusta Railroad. According to Scott's records, Colonel Sanford acquired four of the town father's new lots. Scott's town plan labeled the new Raleigh-Augusta line the "Chatham Railroad."

South of Sanford the Western Railroad line from Fayetteville paralleled present-day Route 87, and its elevated roadbed and bridge piers and abutments on the Upper Little River are still visible from the highway on its west side. After the Civil War the line added naval stores and lumber to coal haulage and prospered for a time. Over the years Egypt became Cumnock, and the coalmine there finally closed in 1953 after going through several closures and reopenings. The fortunes of the Western line, which owed its birth to this coal mine, also waxed and waned. The decline in U.S. railroads after World War II affected the Western particularly, and operations on the stretch south of Sanford were discontinued shortly after the War. North of Sanford, however, the line was extended to join and be incorporated into operations of the Southern Railroad. It is still in use.

THE OLD GASTER PLACE ON LAKE COURSE NO.7

Among the five identified cemeteries scattered through Carolina Trace, the largest and most familiar is the Gaster family's, near the Traceway - Lakeview Drive intersection, behind Lake No.7 golf green. In addition to a score or so graves of Gasters, the cemetery accommodates several Clarks, Gilmores, and Hunters, most of them identified on headstones as related by marriage to Gasters.

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A Gaster farmhouse once stood at a spot about 250 yards down No.7 fairway from this cemetery. In an obvious reference to the site, a statement in a 1971 Moore County historical compilation reads: "Henry Gaster lived on the top of the hill leading down to the Upper Little River, near the road leading from Jonesboro to Fayetteville." However, Marvin Gaster insists that his forefather Henry Gaster lived elsewhere, about a mile west of the Harvey Faulk Road (off Rt.87), on the historic Pee Dee Road, long since abandoned in the march of time. So the cited statement's associating the well remembered farmhouse and cemetery with Henry, the original Gaster in the Upper Little River area, seems to have been an understandable mismatch.

The 1850 Moore County census listed many Gaster households, one of them being that of David and Jemimah Gaster and their seven children—four girls and three boys. If legend is accurate, the immediate members of the David Gaster family were the only Gasters ever to reside in the house near the cemetery. Three of the girls were unattractive, and their grandfather Jacob, Henry's son, is said to have despaired that any of them could come by a husband. So, according to the legend, he built the house for their security. He was right--the oldest sister did marry and move away, but the remaining three never did and lived out their years in the house that Jacob built, probably a little before 1850.

The house stood near its big sycamore landmark, remembered as a story-and-a-half frame, shake-shingled structure with two rooms upstairs. There was a separate cookhouse with other outbuildings for ginning, baling, and storing cotton, in which most the farm's many hundreds of acres were planted. Much of the still open land in this part of Trace, plus additional land now grown over by predominantly pine woods, were covered by this farm. There was no well. Water had to be fetched from the deep hollow north of the house. The source, "Gaster's Spring," was there but is now submerged in the cove in Arnold's Lake's south shore. Through this same hollow from up to the North, a spring-fed run called Brick Mill Branch ran south across (what later became) No.8 and along No.9, then across the driving range and into the arm of Lake Trace which claims so many second shots on No. 18. An early brick-making enterprise along the lower stretch of this brook gave it its name and, to the fireplaces and chimneys of the Gaster place, their bricks.

David's and Jemimah's second son, John Morris Gaster, was a memorable man. In the Civil War he served in the Confederate cavalry and was discharged a corporal in 1862, disabled after his first wounding. Family members pointed with pride to the cavalry saber he'd brought home as emblematic of John's rank as an officer. Whether John originated the deception or simply tolerated its commission by his kinfolk is not remembered. Until his death John remained a Yankee hater, and the mere mention of the words "United States" could provoke his fury. This explains his activity in the Klan, which brought his arrest in 1871 along with five other local Klansmen. They had been taken in by a turncoat KKK member--a secret agent for the Reconstruction government in Raleigh. The agent had been ordered to penetrate the Klan group around Swann's Station after a local Republican had died mysteriously. An election shortly after turned the Reconstructionists out of office, and the accused Klansmen, out on bail, were never brought to trial.

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Aside from political dust-ups, Gaster, with wife Margaret, pretty much settled down after the war, building their own home and adjacent smithy on the north bank of the Upper Little River. He was industrious—did good ironwork, made caskets for the community, and ran his own farm. John Gaster was well liked, except when he once in a while became engaged with John Barleycorn. When he died in 1912, his burial at the Gaster cemetery received an uncommonly big attendance. At the end of the ritual, a group of six hooded horsemen was seen to emerge from an adjacent wood and ride off in silence.

The three old maid sisters, Mary, Margaret, and (Jemimah) Jane, lived on for a time after John's death. Alone, they coped in the Gaster house with support from farming tenants and money brought them by brother (William) David. Between 1924 and 1926 all three sisters found eternal rest side by side in the family cemetery--eight of the nine members of this Gaster family are there.

The youngest member of this family, brother David, had left home years before, but returned now and then to visit his sisters during their last years. The sisters' spoke of David's occasionally having them make their marks on a paper brought with him. In those early days, work demands on farms took priority and rural schools were few. Education for farm children, particularly girls, was irregular at best. The three Gaster sisters are remembered to have been illiterate. J. Marvin Groce recalls that his mother was an exception. She told of boarding during school terms closer to town at a Doctor McIver's home. The house can be viewed from Route 87, near the Harvey Faulk Road south exit. It is now in neglect, but its former grandeur remains evident. From the McIver place, Marvin's mother--then "Pretty Jackie" Morris--commuted on foot the several miles to Jonesboro to attend school.

In 1933, Gaster heirs had to sell the 438 acres remaining from what once had been much more. Payment on \$2400 in notes held by a Fayetteville lumber company had been demanded. The following year, the house burned down, set afire ironically by a modern convenience, a wood cook stove installed by its new tenant. Some old out buildings, tumbled down, and the sycamore tree remained for removal during the Trace golf course construction in 1970-71.

Part 2**THE COXES, MORRISES, AND GROCES SOUTH OF THE RIVER**

Most of what is now Carolina Trace lying south of the old Upper Little River channel was once owned by members of three families with roots deep in the area's history. Coxes and Morrises were farming in this area even before the Civil War. A family genealogy identifies one Isaac Cox as the first member of that family to arrive in "central North Carolina" after migrating across the Atlantic around 1760. Then Thomas Cox, Isaac's son, moved from Cape Fear Township, on the east side of present day Lee County, into this area, to resume farming near "Cox's Bridge" on the Upper Little River in 1835 or shortly after. An 1850 evaluation of Thomas' land holdings showed them to be among the largest in Moore County while son John's were well above average in appraised value.

Soon after the Civil War two Groce twin brothers, Confederate Army veterans, arrived on the River to take up farming there. Then came for the brothers the same struggling start faced by earlier settlers--they had first laboriously to clear their rough land, much of it densely wooded, then begin its tillage with implements wrought by their own hands.

The original church of the community joined by the Groces had been built around 1860 on site next to the school, raised by its congregation's members themselves. One of them was John Morris, a co-founder of the church. Torn down and rebuilt in 1904, the Morris United Methodist Chapel stands on the (new) Cox Mill Road. Adjacent to the chapel, its cemetery is shaded by a huge magnolia. Neatly kept, the chapel and its cemetery impress the viewer with their simple dignity and beauty. After joining the congregation, farmer-shoemaker Atlas H. Groce began serving as undertaker for its departed and soon was appointed caretaker. On Atlas' death in 1924, his son J. Marvin succeeded him as caretaker. After retiring from this duty with many years of service, Marvin Groce, until his death in 1988, remained the principal fount of knowledge concerning the Morris Chapel and those who rest in its cemetery. Over the past several years, Raymond "Buck" Cox, retired farmer and recently a Lee County Commissioner, has engaged in a thorough updating of the church's graves records and renewal of headstones, anxious to avail himself of J. Marvin's (age 96 at his death) capacious and still keen memory.

Former Cox family land provided most of Trace's south shore property at the northeast end--primarily for Hidden Lake and Woodfield. Although many Coxes are buried at Morris Chapel, there is also an old Cox family cemetery about 75 yards east of the Kentucky Avenue - Louisiana Avenue Junction in Hidden Lake. Abandoned and overgrown, the old roadbed angling off to the east from this junction is of the original Cox Mill Road which ran down to the grist mill for which the road was named. Cox's Bridge, cited in the family genealogy, was built much earlier and, it seems, provided an ideal site for the subsequent construction of the Cox Mill. On higher ground off to the right of the roadbed, some 15 graves can be counted in the cemetery. The oldest is that of John M. Cox (1809-1878), son of Thomas Cox. John's land had included the family

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cemetery plot, "near Cox's Bridge." Two of his sons, Duncan and Joe, built and operated the Cox Mill during its 30 years of service beginning around 1880. In the cemetery, two obviously newer headstones— of Dr. John Lewis Cox and his wife Amy—were emplaced, with guidance from J. Marvin Groce, many years after their burials. Earlier, graves were often marked with rough stones or wooden slabs, some with short-lived inscriptions; in time many such graves lost identification.

Brother of Duncan and Joe, Doctor John Lewis Cox served in the Civil War, being wounded at Malvern Hill in 1862. He obtained his medical training at "Edinburgh, near Laurinburg," according to the Cox genealogy. "The North Carolina Gazetteer" identifies no Edinburgh but includes an Edinburg, a town which faded out of existence late in the 19th century, not very far from Laurinburg. Back home from Edinburgh, the Doctor resumed farming and took up serving the medical needs of the community, treating patients in his farmhouse and making house calls in a horse and buggy. On one remembered house call, the Doctor, while staying up most of the night with the family's ailing husband, napped briefly in a bedroom. The patient was better in the morning, and Doctor John Lewis collected \$10 before departing. The patient grouched about having to pay his guest any fee after bedding him down for the night. According to the Cox genealogy, John Lewis came to an untimely death—at age 73—killed in an argument "at a sawmill." His killer escaped and disappeared from the area.

"Buck" Cox tells how, as a youngster, he heard older relatives talk about how the family farmland had once covered a huge area, the cultivated fields extending as far as the eye could see. That negroes were employed working them was indicated when a "Cox slave graveyard" was once pointed to by Marvin Groce in the rear of the Sherensky home on Carolina Drive, Hidden Lake. However, the Cox genealogy notes that Thomas Cox, the pioneer farmer of the family in this area, disapproved of slave owning; so it seems to have been the next generation that took up the practice. Thomas sired 14 children, including eight males.

As was usual for the time, many children were born into most Cox households. Over the years the Cox lands were subdivided and bequeathed to successor generations. The once vast fields thus became progressively smaller, and those on which tillage was sometimes discontinued became in a few years overgrown, mostly reclaimed by woods in which the prolific and fast-growing pine predominated—underbrush and other tree varieties couldn't compete. In the now wooded former farmland, old plowed furrows can still be found, covered under a blanket of pine straw.

Other Trace subdivisions south of the River came from old Morris or Groce land, except for one Gaster tract extending across from the north side. In addition to the Cox Mill there were two other grist mills in this general area, both operated by Morris. One was west of the highway; the other, on the brook on the south side of Harbor Creek, was run (1890-1905) by old John Morris' son, also named John. For many years after the mill's abandonment, the pond continued to attract picnic visits by locals. During the

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development of Carolina Trace, the dam was bulldozed to drain the pond from the residential lot at the end of West Mooring. A remnant of the dam raceway is still there. Unlike the Cox Mill, this and other gristmills on Carrs Creek were simply equipped to grind only meal since corn was the basic crop and the moderate flow in their streams precluded multi-purpose operations. However, the Cox Mill on the Upper Little River could mill corn and wheat, gin cotton, and saw wood. The main mill house had three stories in which all types of milling was done except sawing wood, done in a smaller adjacent house. The two Cox brothers who operated the mill also ran their own farms. J. Marvin Groce recalled how, as a boy, he assisted Duncan Cox, driving cows and hauling lambs in a horse-drawn wagon to Raleigh for marketing.

With the turn of the century, the day of the water powered gristmill serving neighboring families reached sundown. Improved roads and faster transportation enabled farmers to haul their harvested crops further for processing, and the development of more efficient and reliable power generators rendered the water mill, once an essential service, uncompetitive. All of the local water powered gristmills seem to have gone out of operation by 1910. Standing for many years after its abandonment, the Cox Mill survived storm and flood, succumbing at last in the World War II era to the ravages of time.

In the early 1960s the City of Sanford offered the old Cox tract which included the mill site for sale at auction. Years before, Sanford had bought the property in expectation of using it to meet the growing demand for municipal water. Later this plan was discarded when the City decided to use the larger Cape Fear River as its new water source. Learning of the City's auction, Dr. Bill Settle, Sanford veterinary, decided that a country home with some acreage and livestock on it would befit his profession. So he made a bid and it was accepted. However, Settle hadn't reckoned with his wife's strong preference for living in town and, after a time, was glad to accept a Sandhill Properties offer to buy.

In 1974 a water wheel, some beams and decking were found by Joe Brinn nearly buried in silt at the Cox Mill site. These were removed to and stored in the Trace clubhouse basement. Left there to dry out over the intervening years, they provided materials for the arm and footrests of the new bar in the 1982 remodeling of the clubhouse interior in which the barroom and lounge were moved to their present location. Of the materials salvaged from the Cox Mill site, another artifact, the oak shaft on which the recovered water wheel was mounted is with the collection of memorabilia at the "Ole Gilliam Mill" on Route 42 west of Sanford. Like the Cox Mill was, it is a multi-purpose three-story mill. It was restored by Worth Pickard, who has it--along with his large collection of old-time agricultural power equipment--for public viewing on weekends. From time to time, Worth offers for sale his operable mill's excellent product--corn meal and whole-wheat flour. Moonshine--not for sale--is also distilled there at the annual Ole Mill Crank-up in the spring. The energetic and gregarious Pickard has his own business and maintains the establishment at the Ole Mill as a hobby--and to raise money for the Northwest Pocket Fire Department.

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THE CARRS CREEK AREA WAS REMOTE, OFTEN INACCESSIBLE

Along its eastern perimeter there is now no open vehicular entry to Carolina Trace. Rather, a semi-beltway comprised of Pickett, Cox Mill, and Cox Maddox roads provides surrounding communities access to Route 87 and points north and south of Trace.

In times gone by there were several unimproved roads branching off from this semi-beltway to serve points within what is now Carolina Trace. A short distance from its junction with Cox Maddox, Wilmer Road deadends at the Trace rail fence marking the east boundary of Woodmere subdivision. From the Wilmer deadend a "post road" once ran due west into (now) Trace land crossing Carrs Creek just below the Thomas mill and passed the Rosser school (still standing in the thick woods just east of Sedgemore recreation area) to reach the Fayetteville highway (now Route 87). The Cox Maddox - Wilmer junction was the exit point of another road north from the Laurel Thicket area. This road crossed the Trace boundary at the Newberg home, near where stood the unpainted frame, tin-roofed house of Byrd Wicker, WW I vet. Several hundred yards south the road ended at a Wicker farmstead just above the family's cemetery on Traceway. There lived the household of the brothers Dock and France--uncles of Byrd, his brothers and a sister. Another road ran from Cox Mill Road south to serve the Harvey Godfrey tobacco farm in the Golf East area.

West of the Wicker cemetery is Carrs Creek. There, at the second golf cart bridge on No.5 Creek, is the remnant of a gristmill dam. Area pioneer Henry Gaster obtained Moore County permission in 1787 to operate this mill, and it was surely the oldest in the Upper Little River area. Upstream, on No.11 Creek, ahead of the ladies tee and in the woods to the right are the remains another mill dam. Built by Jones Thomas some 100 years after the Gaster mill, the Thomas mill was operated by Jones' son Joe--J. Marvin Groce's uncle--when it closed around 1910. On each side of the creek, the dam remained intact until removed during the final phase of Creek Course construction. Back downstream, on No.8, in the woods to the left of the green, an old excavation, water-filled and flanked by earthen dikes, extends back from woods edge. A recollection that this was once a slate mine has been endorsed by an acknowledged expert on her Thomas family genealogy. Yes, she said, there was a slate mine in the Jones Thomas history but could say no more.

The Carrs Creek area, along with that around the two Pocket creeks on the north side of the County, is one of the better remembered centers of moonshining activity in Lee County. With a reliable flow of good water from numerous springs, Carrs Creek was remote and, depending on the weather, more or less inaccessible; its relative privacy was a prerequisite for would-be whiskey-still operators. The County has had a long tradition of being legally dry. Identified with this tradition has been a considerable prohibitionist sentiment, which, while moonshining continued, was often the cause of raids against the makers of "white likker." Members of the raiding parties were usually county sheriffs and their deputies and township constables; federal officers were rarely involved.

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Byrd Wicker did a lot of moonshining, and some have said that the "revenueurs" went easy on him because his WW I disablement by poison gas left him no means of support other than moonshining. Not so, says his nephew Parker Wicker, who knew him well-- Byrd wasn't disabled, he was just too clever to be caught, except maybe once.

Illustrating Byrd's resourcefulness, Parker remembers Byrd's last still, just north of Wood Wedge Way. There, Byrd had found a seep high on the bluff above Carrs Creek, which yielded sufficient water for a still operation. Byrd judged that raiders, who usually confined their searches for stills to the creek bottom, would never find it. However, eventually the still was found and "cut down". Byrd is buried in the Wicker cemetery his headstone inscribed "Joe B. Wicker", April 6, 1939 (date of death) and his WW I service troops unit designation.

Byrd's brother Kay moonshined with him until the War. After Byrd had gone into service, Kay was also inducted and immediately deserted, jumping off the train taking the draftee to Fort Bragg. He returned to Byrd's place taking refuge there. The public's attitude toward draft-dodgers, compared with that held toward moonshiners, seems to have been much less forgiving. A persistent hunt for Kay was taken up, but for a time he succeeded in evading capture while continuing to stay in his sanctuary near Carrs Creek. A story was that Byrd's house had some loose floorboards under which Kay hid when the approach of raiders was detected. Then one day a party of lawmen managed to surprise him there and he barely escaped, high-tailing it amid a hail of bullets. One exasperated deputy profanely blamed a cow for getting in his line of fire, sparing the fugitive. Kay kept right on going, fleeing the area to the appropriately named town of Spring Hope for the duration. After the Armistice, Kay returned staying only briefly before moving on.

The Wicker brothers, Dock and France, are affectionately remembered by many older area residents. Their household included Dock's wife Hattie, Lina Wicker (her husband, Byrd's brother Carson, died in a drowning) and her three children. France (Francis) never married. The brothers raised sheep and cows and grew some cotton and vegetables, All on about five acres. Lina "worked like a man"--helped by her kids, she took care of most of the croppage. Not very strong, Hattie kept house and did the cooking.

Mainly, Dock and France dealt in produce, driving a black-mule and Chestnut horse team and wagon from farm to farm for buying and, on Saturdays, into Jonesboro for selling. Wearing farmer's straw hats and overalls and growing full beards between rare shaves, the brothers with their team and produce loaded wagon were an attraction in the town. Completing their selling, the brothers usually resorted to the old Jonesboro Cafe on Main Street for beer refreshments, perhaps staying longer, sometimes too long, when sales had been good. Besides their 3-room dwelling, a drafty frame structure with only sliding wood shutters at the window openings, there were also a log cookhouse and a small barn for Dock's and France's draft team. Alike in appearance, the inseparable brothers are remembered as twins by some, but Dock was several years older. France died in 1948, Dock and Hattie two years later. Lina was no longer there after her

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children had grown and left, she had remarried and moved out. France's death occurred during a wet spell; so a farm tractor and trailer from the Thomas farm near Wilmer Road had to be sent to haul the body to a waiting hearse, which could get only part-way in from the Cox Maddox Road. A day or so later the hearse returned with the now embalmed body for the burial. Again the hearse could get no further than before; this time the pallbearers were summoned from the cemetery for an extended carry of casket to graveside. The Gunter sisters were there and recall that the remaining member of the Wicker draft team--the horse, the mule had been sold--untethered, joined the small attendance at the grave and watched the ceremony attentively. In the Wicker cemetery, Dock and Hattie have a fine inscribed headstone, but the hand printed card on France's stamped-metal grave marker is barely legible.

The June Gunter family sharecropped on Walt Thomas' big farm, on which cotton and tobacco were grown. June's wife Annie kept house and cooked for all the farmhands, summoning them from the fields for meals by blowing her conch-shell horn. The conch's blast could be heard far and wide, and neighbors kept up with the time of day for her noon meal, 11:30 a.m., which Annie signaled quite promptly. The two Gunter daughters, who worked in the Thomas fields, knew the Wicker family quite well. Recently they agreed: "We had it hard, but compared to the Wickers' our life was easy. A few years after Trace was opened, an old army overcoat was found in the Wicker barn. His great nephew Parker remembers it was Dock's. The coat must have come from surplus; Dock was too old for WW I." During WW II Parker, in the service, had visited home on furlough. During the visit he gave France his spare pair of army-issue field shoes.

In the early 1920s the one room Rosser (also called Clark) school was closed and a two-roomer near the Cox Maddox/Wilmer junction took its place. The Oakgrove school, an adjunct of the Oakgrove Church, served the area children for only a few years before consolidation caused its closing. The two Gunter sisters attended it and recall that both Wicker and Gilmore children were there too. The former schoolhouse burned down after being converted to living quarters for sharecroppers.

THE GASTER BRIDGE GAVE A HALF CENTURY OF SERVICE

The Gaster bridge, built soon after the Civil War, spanned the old Upper Little River channel below the bluff from where the Ted Burkes in South Landing now enjoy their view of Lake Trace with Lake No. 18 in the background. The bridge is thought to have been built by John M. Gaster. His own home and smithy were on the north bank near the bridge, and the bridge was needed to give him access to farm acreage south of the River. He may have been joined in the bridge building by David Hawley, another Confederate veteran, who farmed on both sides of the River. J. Marvin Groce recalled that the Gaster bridge remained in service until the 1920s, when the then Morris Chapel preacher regularly drove his Model-T south across the bridge to reach the Chapel and perform his duties.

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From the south bank, a wagon road crossed the Gaster bridge to a junction, the left fork connecting John M.'s place with the original Gaster homestead (Lake No.7), then running due west to exit on the highway near the site of the Alltel-Heins Telephone Company building. The right fork ran north to the Gilmore place (Lake No.1), swung northwest across the hallow where the divided Traceway lanes today pass the Cleary and Peterson homes, then west (across Lake No.3 and thence along the Trace boundary) to reach the highway at the former Trace maintenance area near the Hawley home. Along the way, this road passed the Hawley family cemetery (now overgrown, in the thicket in the "Calihan National Forest" flanking Lake No.3). Both Gaster and Hawley acquired their farmland south of the River through their wives, born into the Morris family.

The Hawley home once stood beside the willow oak at Lake No.4 green. There David and Mary Hawley lived in a fine two story frame house built by him and raised eight children and many crops of cotton. David was founder of the Jonesboro Heights Baptist Church, at present-day services of which a granddaughter is a pianist. The three male offspring of Dave and Mary moved away as young men--with them the Hawley name, in effect, left Lee County. The Hawleys gave up the farm in the 1920s. The house was still there many decades later when Bill Arnold bought the property. In the end it was destroyed by fire.

WILL GILMORE AND HIS MOONSHINE WERE POPULAR

The big oaks on the right, near the green of Lake No.1 (**Now Creek No. 1 editor's note**) mark the site of the Gilmore place, of which the 2-room log cabin core became in time the oldest remaining in the County. In time add-ons to the cabin provided living and dining rooms and a kitchen. A smokehouse and barn were outbuildings. The Gilmore cemetery with rail fencing is to the left of the path between No.1 green and No.2 men's tee. Born during the Civil War, Mary Jane Gilmore lived most of her 80 years there, and the adult lives of her sons John B. and William J. were more or less devoted to her support.

John Gilmore at first tried farming at home on the scant family tillage, meanwhile working as a hand on nearby farms. Later, between two periods of tenant farming near Swanns Station, John spent five years striving in vain to expand the Gilmore acreage into sufficiency, again having to resort to part-time work for other farmers to supplement his income. One time when he was on in years, John was harvesting tobacco as a hired hand for George Batchelor. Working with John in the field was Batchelor's teen-age son Otis. While they paused for a drink of water, the sweating and weary middle-aged man urged the boy to get his schooling so to rise above Gilmore's struggling existence as a farm worker.

A daughter says John, in contrast to his brother Will, eschewed moonshining--he thought it a poor example to set for her and her sister, whose mother had died while they

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were quite small. Of Will Gilmore, John's girls remembered their uncle's warm heartedness as a bright spot for them while they lived at the Gilmore—"Grandma's"—place. From the drudgery of farm work, their father found occasional diversion fox hunting. Another farmer, a Maddox, and John each kept foxhounds and, for hunts, gathered them into a pack, which the two men followed on foot. The foxes were plentiful but also elusive; so the fun most often was confined to the chase—as remembered, few victories over Reynard were scored.

"Will" Gilmore remained with his mother at the farmstead when she died in 1941. A few months before, Will—then 54—took Lina Wicker as his only wife and brought her over from the Wicker place near Carrs Creek, some say, to take care of his mother. In the Upper Little River area, Will Gilmore and moonshining were synonymous. He took pride in the excellence of his spirits, and his reputation was evidently far reaching. Otis Batchelor recalls that from his farm across the highway he could tell when Will had run off a new batch of mash—there was a sudden splurge of auto traffic turning off the highway onto the road to Gilmores'.

Other moonshiners took advantage of Will's popularity delivering their product to him for bootlegging, and Will always sampled it testing the quality before acceptance. "Johnny Marvin" Groce, J. Marvin's son, was visiting Will one night when a car drove up. Getting out, the new arrivals eyed Johnny Marvin suspiciously until a remark from Will assured them that his visitor was okay. Will went with the newcomers to their car trunk from which the moonshine cargo was removed—after Will had given it his customary test for goodness. Will Gilmore was an affable and discreet man who lived by his principles, and his vocation was popularly excused on grounds of necessity. The Batchelor family nearby were staunch Baptists but tolerated Will's operations without complaint.

However, Will was not entirely immune to anti-moonshiner action. One effort backfired when a candidate for election as township constable sought to curry favor with the dries by publicly demanding Will's arrest. The indignant reaction of Will's many friends—wets and neutrals—brought defeat at the polls to the "mischief-maker."

Withstanding that, on at least one occasion prohibitionist pressure did bring Will to trial. One time he was arrested, caught at a still with the operators, whom he was only advising how to stir the mash Judge "Woody" Seymour remembers reluctantly having to fine Gilmore in the late 50s—the evidence was conclusive. Coincidentally, the first ABC store in Sanford opened in 1961, the year of Will's death. In his last years Gilmore may have forsaken the still—some remember his working as a part-time cook in town restaurants. Bill Arnold recalls that Gilmore was respected, among other things, for paying his bills promptly. However, when he died the family place remained without electricity or inside plumbing—mute evidence that his income from moonshine had never been much.

When Will Gilmore died, Bill Arnold offered to buy his property. However, Clayton

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Wicker--brother of Trace golf cart specialist Charles--also wanted it. As Will's health declined, Clayton had befriended and helped him and his wife around their place; so Wicker's offer was accepted. Later Wicker, beset by debt, sold the 53 acres to Arnold for "3300 dollars and a used Ford tractor," much more than Clayton had paid for it. After Will's death, Lina moved away, joining one of her daughters in Virginia. The graves of the two Gilmore brothers and their mother are among those in the family cemetery.

HOW THE PLAN FOR LAKE TRACE WAS KEPT QUIET

The planning in secrecy for development of Lake Trace presented a delicate problem to Bill Arnold and those who later joined him in the Sandhill Properties corporate effort. The construction of Jordan Dam on the Cape Fear River stemmed from a Government decision, which also discarded an alternate plan to build many smaller flood control dams on Cape Fear tributaries, including one on the Upper Little River. U.S. Army engineers studied this area in 1959, and Arnold obtained a copy of the resulting survey map. While this helped convince him that a lake could be built there and indicated the dam site, much more geographic information was needed. To meet State and railroad demands as a condition to their approving the project, Arnold had to come up with a much larger scale topographical map of the intended lake and its surroundings. This had to be done while keeping secret the golf and country club development objective, for on the corporation's property map many gaps still remained to be filled. Arnold hired a highway department man to make aerial photos of the area, and the hireling agreed to use a cover story to explain his flights for this purpose. From the resulting photographs the required topo map was drawn by additional moonlighting state employees, all working in secret. For the future of Trace, it was an essential document, but the price to Arnold was considerable.

The clearing of woods and thick underbrush for construction work on the surrounding land was a monumental job, as was that which attended the preparation of the Lake Trace bed itself. This included moving a huge volume of earth in accord with landscaping plans--for instance, for constructing the causeway entrance approach and adjacent peninsular base for the Carolina Trace logo and name displays. Much additional earth-moving was done to make the lake outline conform precisely to its plan presented to the State and railroad representatives. For land-clearing operations--on both the lake bed but not on the golf course --a "Wicker blade" pushed by a huge tractor was the principal piece of equipment used to cut the brush and smaller trees. For larger trees, a spike in the center of the blade was driven into the base of the trunk splitting it for easier cutting. The Wicker blade kept a team of three bulldozers busy pushing its cuttings into piles to which used tires hauled in from Sanford and Fayetteville were added as fuel. Then teams of torchers started and kept the fires burning. So employed in the summer of 1970, much of the Sanford high school football squad is remembered to have earned some money and gotten in plenty of pre-season conditioning.

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For building the dam spillway, the contract between the corporation and Sanford Construction was a cost-plus arrangement, unusual for the Sanford company. Bill Arnold divided his time, among other projects, between overseeing the lake-bed preparation and dam construction and the golf course. Sanford Construction's Dick Barkley well remembers being impressed by Arnold's hands-on style of management--working and sweating right along the laborers and obviously enjoying himself doing it. Too, Barclay recalls that Arnold, mindful of the contractor's costs, kept a eagle eye on spillway construction making certain that wastage of time and materials was kept to a minimum.

For limited cross-river access, a rude bridge--two large tree trunks as beams for support of timber decking fastened to them--was thrown together near Captain's Point (Golf East). The bridge was used while land clearing and earth moving for the middle and lower parts of the lake proceeded. This was already under way when spillway construction started and was nearly completed by the time the spillway was finished.

Sanford Construction's access to the spillway site was obtained from the Cox Mill Road to the east, and the Company was able to open work roads on both banks of the River. The dam was planned by William F. Freeman and Associates, engineers for the Corporation. Freeman estimated that 2300 cubic yards of concrete would be required for the spillway. Arnold recalls that when Barkley's company was being engaged for the job, Dick studied the plans and inspected the site. On the spot he concluded that the dam would take more concrete--2500 yards in all. Later Arnold was astonished when the bill paid for concrete showed that Barkley's quick estimate had been exactly right. Dick, impressed at the great size and strength of the dam's design, once asked Freeman what maximum flow of the Upper Little River was assumed in the engineer's plans for the dam. Though Barkley thought it extravagant, Freeman's answer--a 2-foot high overflow at the spillway--has since once be matched, after a heavy rain spell in 1987.

The spillway construction by Barkley's 20-man crew went smoothly, concrete being poured from October 1970 through April 1971. Pouring went on right through the winter, when concrete was heated, as necessary. Freeman's instruction that the drilling for the spillway base be done "right down to bed-rock" was followed faithfully, and the interface between the concrete structure and the granite foundation was bonded with steel bars-along the front face of the dam. While the earthen flanks to the spillway were under construction, a pile of rock next to an old excavation drew attention where the south wing of the dam abutted into the bluff overlooking the river. J. Marvin Groce remembered that during the 1920s a "miner" named Glendon spent several months blasting out the excavation and removing the rock fragments. The story was that the miner was prospecting for gold and that he did find some, but not enough to make it worthwhile. That other gold mining, some of it more successful, has been done in this part of the State adds credence to this memory. Local geologist Russell Patterson has advised that some prospecting for copper was done near the north wing of the dam. The old Cox Mill site was a couple hundred yards downstream from the spillway, where the waste-water treatment plant operates today.

The day the spillway job was done, Joe Brinn picked up Barkley at the site and made a

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sales pitch to him. Noting that Barkley's company had profited handsomely, Brinn observed that it would be only right for Barkley to show his appreciation by buying a Carolina Trace lot. Dick immediately agreed, asked to be shown some lots, and was driven to three adjacent ones on Traceway. Without getting out of Brinn's car, Dick said he'd take the middle one--he knew his wife Mary Ellen wanted to live and play golf on a Robert Trent Jones course; so he figured he had a no-lose situation. Dick Barkley continues to live in his house on Traceway, and Mary Ellen played many, many rounds on the Trace courses before cancer took her.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF OUR ROBERT TRENT JONES COURSES

Having joined Sandhill Properties in 1969, Jim Hickey first took up overseeing golf construction according to Robert Trent Jones' designs "for easy bogeys and difficult pars" along with Bill Arnold. Jones' principal rep for our courses' development was Roger Rulewich. Rulewich had become associated with Jones after meeting him through his son Rees, whom Roger had gone to school with at Yale. Over the years Rulewich in his own right has become widely recognized among golf architects and was recently president of their national association.

Robert Trent Jones came to the new development, looked over the land, and concluded his agreement with Sandhill Properties. Sandhill Properties earlier had considered a number of golf architects, and it was Jim Hickey's insistence, which led to the selection of and agreement with Robert Trent. After that initial visit, Jones returned to the new development infrequently and, as recalled, not at all after the original 18 holes were finished. To guide course construction, Rulewich usually--Jones occasionally-- sketched tasks out on a master contoured chart of the golfing areas. Arnold's topo map and overall land plan Jim Hickey then assigned the tasks to the contractors, supervised their execution and notified the Jones headquarters in New Jersey when an assignment neared completion. The Jones rep would then pay a visit to prescribe the next go-round. Principal contractors included the Bruce McKinney company of Lillington for land clearing and the James Goodson firm from South Carolina for fairway construction. All greens, by agreement, were built by Jones' own Land Golf company.

Jones placed major emphasis on golf greens, and his personal style of designing one was impressive. He would prowl at length around an intended site, completely absorbed in his surroundings. He gave the impression of a man seeking inspiration for solving the problem at hand. Finally, having thus divined his plan, Jones would sketch free-hand the outlines of the green and its constituents on a yellow legal pad. His sketch, transposed to the golf master chart, became the plan for that green.

Robert Trent Jones was a man used to having his way. On one of his visits to Carolina Trace, Jones had gone out checking the rough-hewn course where he was overtaken by another developer--a man from Charlotte--for whom Jones had agreed to be golf architect. Pointing to two adjoining parallel fairways, the developer excitedly informed Robert Trent that he would have no adjacent fairways on his course. Jones promptly told the man to get another architect and walked away from his surprised former client.

The Complete History of Carolina Trace – Part II

Another time, Jones inspected old No. 18 (No. 9 Lake) as its construction neared completion. The tee was an elevated serpentine area, curving with the bends of Brick Mill Branch beside it. Jones ordered the tee straightened out. When Jim Hickey protested that the tee conformed to the design done by a Jones assistant, Robert Trent was unmoved. And so the tee was straightened.

The first greens superintendent, John Warko, was brought in from Walterboro, NC. His experience was with Bermuda there, not with the bent grass planned for Trace. Another man, Stan Boyer, who later became superintendent no. 2, arrived with the Land Golf Company. While working with Land Golf at Trace, no. 2 told Hickey that he liked the setup here and wanted the Superintendent's job should it open up. After Land Golf finished its job and its crew dispersed, no. 2 returned, stopping off at Trace just long enough to solve a problem with the recently seeded greens.

The original superintendent quit soon after, still baffled by bent grass. Hickey remembered the Land Golf man's interest, located him in Florida, and by telephone offered the job. No. 2 took it and drove nonstop to Sanford. A couple of months after the new superintendent's arrival, Roger Rulewich visited Trace. Spying the new superintendent, Rulewich remarked that Robert Trent had been trying to find him for weeks-- evidently no. 2 had left Land Golf without giving notice. The man did a good job for a time; then one day he didn't show up for work and remained AWOL for over a week. When at last he reappeared, he reported to Hickey. With a big grin, he turned over his official keys to Jim remarking "I guess you want these." He departed without waiting to be fired.

Now greens superintendent at Carolina Lakes, Robert Pulley started at Trace in 1970 working as a laborer for golf course construction. He was the first man hired for course maintenance when golf play began the following year. At the time, golf clubhouse construction was still under way, and a temporary golf shop was set up near the first tee (now Lake No. 10) in a trailer-like house, later used there as a snack bar before being moved to Carolina Lakes to serve as the real estate office. Pulley well remembers the early days of operation when many rough spots on the young course had to be repeatedly patched over, usually after heavy rain. There was also the re-doing of (now) Lake No. 3, making the fairway dog-legged from its originally straight configuration and moving the men's tee to its present site in back of the Malletts' place from what is now the Calihans' front yard.

Pulley worked hard and learned well from a succession of Trace greens superintendents. He particularly appreciates the guidance given him by Peter Burr, superintendent in 1971-74, and by Ron Hall since his arrival at Carolina Trace. For his part, Ron notes that Pulley has helped him through Robert's thorough knowledge of the older parts of the Trace golf layout. Despite Pulley's lack of formal training, Hall rates his competence as "very sharp."

CAROLINA TRACE OPENS FOR BUSINESS

Early in 1970 Sandhill Properties became the Carolina Trace Corporation--simply a name change made when the corporate board accepted Lewis Clarke's proposed name for the young development. Above, brief reviews describe the planning and work done on major construction projects at Carolina Trace, which created its 325-acre lake and original golf course. Much work on both projects was done in 1970, but the turn of the year arrived with the two jobs far from complete. Lake construction continued until the end of September 1971. Golf play is remembered to have begun in the middle of the same month.

A letter dated Aug. 25, 1970, signed by Jim Hickey and addressed to the Carolina Trace club members (all were still nonresidents), updated them on what was happening at their development. It noted that Mr. Hyatt Hammond of Asheboro had recently been selected as architect to design the clubhouse. Also reported was that, despite heavy rains, the grading of all golf fairways would be complete by the end of August. The last paragraph stated: "These first letters are being written by Mary Lewis (Dusenbury) and myself and the plan is for this letter to be continued by the Club Manager, once we are in operation. This series of letters was the antecedent of the TRACE TALKS news monthly. However, the plan miscarried somewhat--the take-over of TRACE TALKS production responsibility by the Club Manager was delayed by some 17 years, and Mary Lewis continued to be much involved in it until 1987.

Land planner Lewis Clarke is remembered to have made some suggestions adopted by architect Hammond on the style of the clubhouse. Hammond's plan for Trace's attractive contemporary community center, with some cost-saving modification, was put out for sealed bids, and the L. P. Cox Company of Sanford came in with the low offer. Albert Cox, recently retired head of the company, recalls that the job went without incident once he was able to get his work trailers snaked into the heavily wooded area at the site. Construction was completed in December 1971.

Even while the major construction projects were being planned, funded, contracted for, and gotten under way, the corporation management was mindful of the need for income-producing business early on. Advertising and sales activities were, of course, being conducted out-of-state, but these had longer-range objectives. Meanwhile, Carolina Trace was doing a good deal of selling within the local community. Mary Lewis Dusenbury was a member of a Sanford group who for some time had sought the development nearby of a dining and social club. However, its investigation of several properties had found none suitable. Then Mary Lewis was approached by Truby Proctor and Joe Brinn with a proposal that she seek to interest her group in promoting Carolina Trace among Sanford professionals, businessmen, and other likely individuals. The Corporation offered club memberships for an initiation fee of \$1000. Mary Lewis' group received the offer with enthusiasm, and the interest of the Sanford community in Carolina Trace received a booster shot through the group's efforts, particularly those of Mary Lewis.

The Complete History of Carolina Trace – Part II

Sanford also received Carolina Trace Corporation attention regarding the sale of the first lots, beginning with those in the North Shore area roughly bounded by Lakeview Drive and Traceway. A campaign was conducted to obtain deposits on lots divided into three classifications--lake front, golf course, and "view," priced downward in that order. For lot selection, three lottery cocktail parties, one for each lot classification, were held for depositors at the old Information Center. Incidentally, the Center is one of the very few buildings predating Trace remaining on the property. It was converted from a cattle barn on the old James Dalrymple farm--an acquisition by Bill Arnold--and the water hazard on Lake No. 12 nearby once served that farm for irrigation and livestock-watering.

These lottery parties were held after the first three lots had been selected by corporate officers Bill Arnold, Jim Hickey, and Joe Brinn. Each had picked a lake front lot, later built on it and moved his family in. At the lotteries, Sanford Judge "Woody" Seymour and CPA Charles McAdams were present to lend an air of propriety to the festivities. The drawing of numbers from a fishbowl determined the sequence of lot selection, to be made before an established deadline. There was much merriment, discussion of lots, swapping of places in line, and a good time was had by all. These arrangements resulted in the purchase and selection of nearly 60 of the 100 or so lots then available. From this group of lot owners, the Bill McNairs and George Palmers are remembered to have been the first families to move into their new Carolina Trace homes.

The new clubhouse opened in the spring of 1972, when only a handful of homes at Trace were occupied; so dining room and bar operations depended heavily on business brought in by non-resident members, chiefly from Sanford. Though early chef problems soured an occasion now and then, the new clientele remained patient, understanding and loyal. Wednesday night dinner specials became quite popular and on Friday nights the Club soon became "the place to go." Likewise, both seatings at Sunday buffets were usually fully reserved. In the early 70s while other similar developments became afflicted with financial troubles--which continue on some--it was Carolina Trace's good fortune to find a seller's market close at hand in Sanford.

Written by D. C. Pence

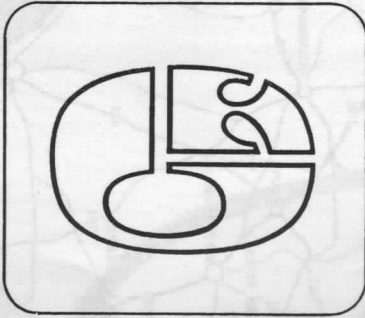


The total planning for Carolina Trace includes a variety of residential and recreational choices.

Single Family Lots. These choices include wooded sites, lakeside lots and sites adjacent to golf courses. Lots associated with riding trails for the equestrian enthusiast are also available.

Golf Condominiums. All units will be located adjacent to the pro-shop and will have distinctive views over the golf courses and lake.

Water Villas. Perched on the lake edge these units will have superb access to all water views and activities.



Golf Courses

The first of two 18 hole courses is well under way and it is anticipated that some play may be afforded the golfer by the Spring of 1971. Since the site at Carolina Trace combines the gentle contours and sandy soil of a Pinehurst with the rolling and heavily wooded terrain of the Piedmont, the golf courses take full advantage of these assets. The golf courses in good part overlook and play along the 300 acre fresh water lake. The character and challenge of the course derives from the beauty of this setting. Add to this the hazards of creek, pond, sand and subtle contour of finely shaped greens and the joy of golf becomes a real and tangible reward. Play the course from a length comfortable to your game from large and flexible tees. The strategic placement of hazards will test your skill without imposing unreasonable penalties on the occasional or even frequent misplayed shot. The only distraction from golf will be the natural beauty of the course and its surroundings and if one is tempted to linger a while or let thoughts wander, these are all ingredients in the total pleasure of Carolina Trace.

Marina

A first class facility which caters to all sports and water related activities, with storage and service capabilities equal to all boating needs.

Pro-shop and Club House

Initial architectural studies are nearing completion for an elegant facility which will overlook the lake and serve as the focal point for all golfing and club activities. Since both courses begin and finish at the club and tennis courts and a swimming pool will be available the recreation potential of the club will be significant.

Equestrian Village

This village area will be the center for an entire range of horse activities and the hub of a complete family social and recreational concept. Equestrian facilities planned are nine miles of horse trails, 40 acres of meadows, show rings, stables and riding school activities. Family recreational facilities are contemplated to include a teenage center, play school, swimming, tennis, field games, indoor game rooms and a health club.

Churches

Many churches are located in nearby areas. Carolina Trace has reserved a chapel site adjacent to the lake.

Commercial, Medical and School Facilities

Within a few minutes drive a complete range of all facilities are readily available to the residents of Carolina Trace.

MASTER PLAN

(Location Key)

1. Main Entrance Area
2. Gatehouse / Information
3. Future Chapel Site
4. Marina Club Facilities
5. Water Villa Reserve
6. Condominium Reserve
7. Country Club Area
8. Golf Villa Reserve
9. Golf Maintenance
10. Headwater Condominiums
11. Recreational Center
12. Equestrian Facilities



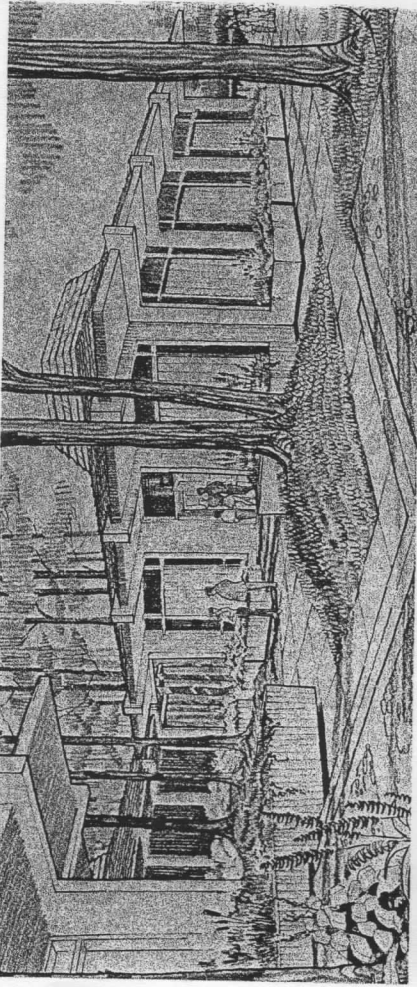
Carolina Trace Statistics

	ACREAGE
Residential Development . . . . .	.810 lots
Condominium Area . . . . .	.610.0
Lakes: . . . . .	.53.0
Main Lake . . . . .	.289.0
Minor Lakes: Existing	237.0 acres
Proposed	19.0 acres
Roads and Gatehouse	33.0 acres
Golf Courses	140.0
Course Number 1	137.0 acres
Course Number 2	134.0 acres
Practice Fairway . . . . .	.8.0 acres
Maintenance Area . . . . .	.4.0 acres
Pro-shop and Clubhouse . . . . .	.6.0
Parking for Clubhouse . . . . .	.5.0
Recreation Area . . . . .	.116.0
Tennis, Pool, Parking	10.0 acres
Equestrian Village	17.0 acres
Equestrian Trails	40.0 acres
Reserve Recreation	9.0 acres
Equestrian Pasture	40.0 acres
Marina Facilities . . . . .	.3.0
Chapel . . . . .	.2.0
Parks . . . . .	.42.0
Reserve Acreage . . . . .	.22.0
TOTAL	1571.0

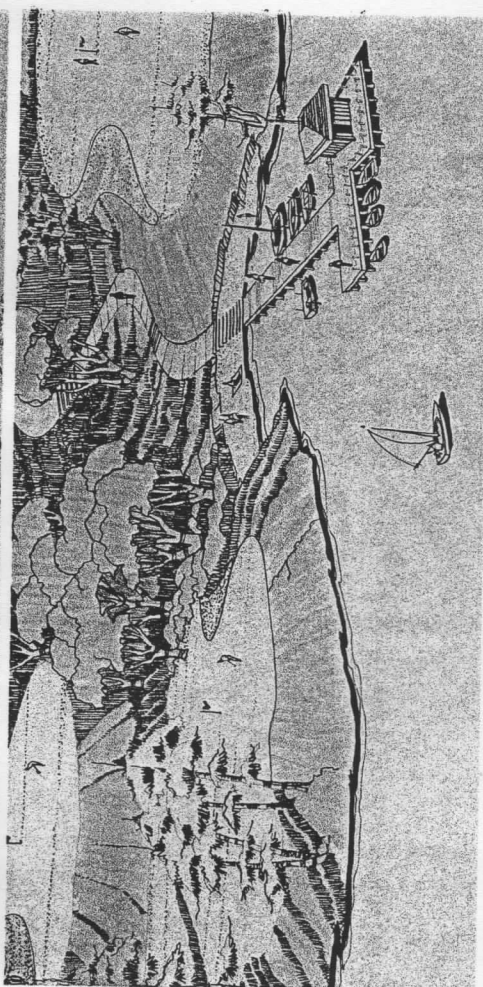
Golf Score Cards

COURSE #1		Hole	Par	Champ	Par	Champ
	Hole	10	4	210	3	400
	2	11	4	410	4	390
	3	12	4	400	4	500
	4	13	3	180	3	410
	5	14	4	500	4	420
	6	15	5	410	5	170
	7	16	3	210	3	530
	8	17	4	400	4	200
	9	18	5	520	5	410
	Total	Total	36	3240	35	3430

COURSE #2		Hole	Par	Champ	Par	Champ
	Hole	10	4	400	4	400
	2	11	4	390	4	390
	3	12	3	500	5	500
	4	13	5	410	4	410
	5	14	4	420	4	420
	6	15	4	170	3	170
	7	16	3	530	5	530
	8	17	4	200	3	200
	9	18	5	410	4	410
	Total	Total	36	3430	36	3430



▼ Country Club



▲ Water Village
▼ Lake and Docks

