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The Independent Republic Quarterly

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The HCHS was organized in 1966. Its mission is to discover and encourage the preservation of all written records and oral traditions touching on or pertaining to the history of Horry County, S.C.; to aid and encourage individuals and associations in compiling and publishing historical material pertaining to Horry County; and, to encourage the preservation and restoration of historic buildings and sites in Horry County.

Calendar Events:

- **Weekly Bryan House Tours** Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.
- **Christmas at the Bryan House** Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. and Sundays at 1 p.m. from Dec. 1 through Dec. 20. Tickets are \$5.

2012

- **Quarterly Meeting** on Sunday, January 8, 2012
- **Stories in Stone at Lakeside Cemetery Saturday, March 31, 2012 9 a.m.-5 p.m.**
- **Garden Club of S.C.'s Follow the Blooms Tour**—Bryan House Yard Saturday, April 14, 2012

Submit materials and comments for the newsletter to
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Independent Republic Quarterly, Horry County Historical Society, 606 Main Street, Conway SC 29526-4340.

Email: history@hchsonline.org
Web Site:
<http://www.hchsonline.org>

Strand Hotel Industry Pioneered by Strong, Energetic Women

Mrs. Pat Brittain gave a wonderful presentation at the October Historical Society meeting regarding the strong, energetic women who pioneered the strand hotel industry. The following is her presentation based on a article in the **Strand Magazine** by Connie Barnard from information provided by Mrs. Brittain. Additional information has been added and the sources noted.

...[T]he Grand Strand's hotel industry began at the turn of the twentieth century with the first tourists pitching tents on the beaches around Withers Swash, Singleton Swash, and Murrells Inlet. In 1889 a rail line was completed from Conway to transport lumber, turpentine, and farm products. Little by little, it also began bringing tourists, mostly farm workers, on day trips to the shore. Oceanfront land was cheap. After all, you couldn't grow any crops on it, what with all that salt and sand. An oceanfront lot cost \$25, but you could get two for the price of one if you promised to spend at least \$500 on a cottage. In 1901 the Strand's first hotel opened, the Sea Side Inn. It was a three-story, wooden structure on a boardwalk in back connecting to the train depot and a boardwalk in front leading down to the ocean. In 1923 its owners, the Myrtle Beach Farms Company, also built an oceanfront dance pavilion and a primitive bathhouse. Thus began the Myrtle Beach tourism industry which today accounts

for [six and a half billion dollars of economic activity.]¹

Many of those old motels and guests houses had interesting names, including Todlin Inn, Shallow Cove, The Placid, The Periscope, O'Henry Guest House, Justamere, Blue Sea Inn, Wee-Blu-Inn, Duck Inn, Bon Air, Kit-Kat, El Patio and a host of others.²

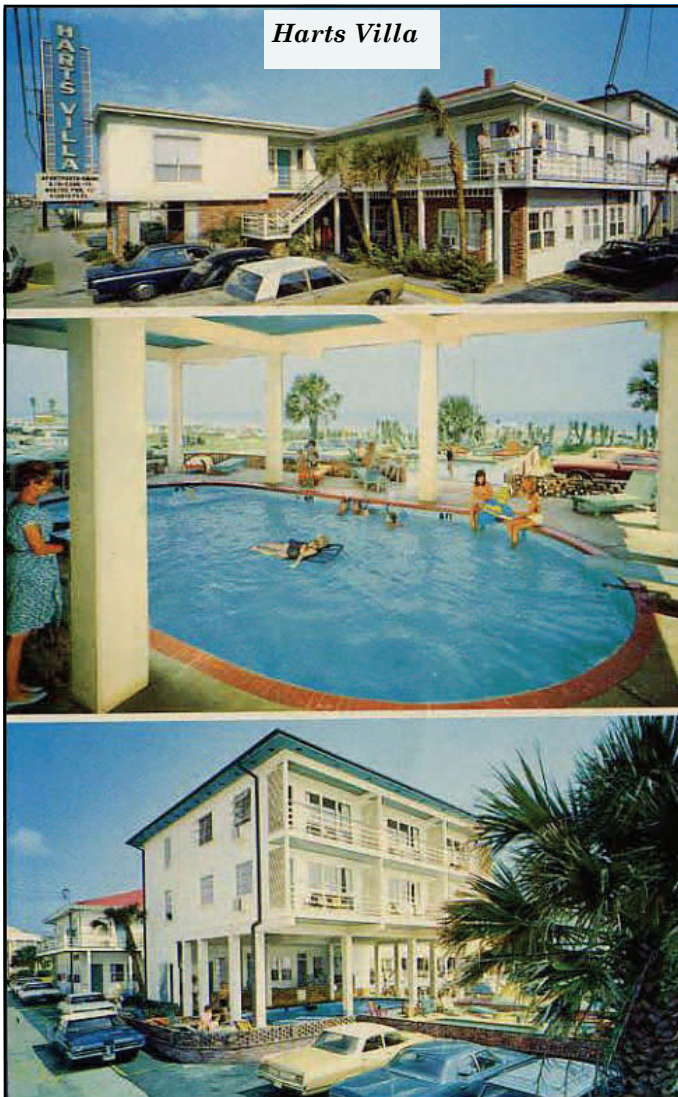
Interestingly, a majority of the hotels opened over the next 30 years began as guest houses, owned and operated by women. By 1930 there were 35 guest cottages advertising to take in guests.³ [There were no restaurants so meals had to be provided. They worked 16-18 hour days.]⁴ These early proprietors extended to tourists their familiar domestic skill of cooking, for a nominal charge. Some of these ladies were widows; others had feckless husbands unable to provide for their families. Still others had husbands already occupied with farming or other business enterprises. Like their predecessors who ventured west in covered wagons, these pioneer women were hard workers and bold adventurers. They were also very successful. In the early fifties when Chesterfield Inn owner, Clay Brittain, joined the Ocean Front Hotel Association, he was surprised to discover that he was the only male member of the group!

The legacy left by these original women hoteliers is still present up and

down Ocean Boulevard today. Many of their grandchildren and great grandchildren own the towering resorts sprawling the oceanfront. Others parlayed inheritances into the development of well-known golf courses and restaurants.

Mrs. Loucelle Gardner: Hart's Villa and the Florentine

Mrs. [Loucelle (1898-1988)] and S[id] K. (1882-1962) Gardner first arrived from Hartsville on [their] honeymoon in 1916.⁵ [They went to Chapin's Commissary and asked where they could find a room. They were unable



Harts Villa

oysters, and a box of saltines for fifty cents! However, this did not deter the Gardners from returning to Myrtle Beach.

Each summer they rented a room in the Florentine cottage in the 100 block of Ocean Boulevard until 1925 when Mrs. Gardner talked her husband into moving to



The Florentine

Myrtle Beach and purchasing the cottage across the street on the ocean. She renovated it and named it Hart's Villa. A few years later Mrs. Gardner swapped houses with Mrs. Monroe who owned the Florentine. She ran the Florentine for many years until her retirement, and her son, Jimmy, who grew up in the Florentine, told many interesting stories about life in Myrtle Beach, when ocean Boulevard was a dirt road. In the evenings his chore was to chip the ice for cold drinks. One charming, insightful tale involves a guest from New York who arrived on an evening when Mrs. Gardner was very busy. She asked Jimmy, who was just a little tyke, to show the guest to room 26 and tell him to wash up, then come back down for dinner. Jimmy returned to his mother a few minutes later saying that the gentleman wanted a key to his room. Mrs. Gardner directed him to a cigar box under the desk and told him, "find the key with the least amount of rust and give it to him." It appears that at the Florentine one key fit all! The Florentine...[was demolished in 2004].⁷ Hart's Villa was demolished in 1998.⁸

L'Nora Meisenheimer: The Driftwood

Across the Boulevard near the Florentine is another well-known hotel which began as a guest house owned and operated by the famous Mrs. [L'Nora] Meisenheimer [1892-1971], whom folks called "Miss Micey." In 1927 Mrs. Meisenheimer came to Myrtle Beach in a financial dilemma brought on by her husband's [Homer (1888-1959)] failed business ventures in Charlotte and Salisbury.

She sold her home in Salisbury and with the proceeds bought an ocean-front cottage where she raised her daughter and ran a very successful guesthouse, The

to find a place to stay in the off-season and ended up in Surfside [called Floral Beach at that time, at the Ark which was closed for the winter. Mr. Chestnut offered to let them stay there and gave them fresh linen to put on the bed. They asked where a restaurant was and they were told that there were no restaurants open but he would share a bucket of oysters with them.]⁶ Mr. Chestnut gave them a bed, a fire in the fireplace, a bucket of

Driftwood [located at 1600 North Ocean Boulevard]. She and her cook, Mariah, ran a very popular dining room famous for its fine cuisine, including delicious homemade rolls and fresh vegetables, many of which were grown by her husband on land she purchased outside of town.⁹ [She was creative in her meals and whatever was plentiful in the garden became the dinner for the evening. Zeb Thomas recalls coming from North Carolina to sell chickens and vegetables to the cottage/guest house women. The fishing boats came ashore and sold their fresh catch to them.]¹⁰ Her establishment was so popular that Miss Macey was known to rent out her bedroom and sleep in the hammock. Over time this tiny, energetic woman purchased several adjacent oceanfront lots on which The Driftwood expanded [and was renamed the Driftwood by the Sea and Driftwood-



The Driftwood

on-the-Oceanfront]. The property stayed in her family until [June 2003] when her grandson, James Ward, sold it. The colorful tiles hand-painted by Mrs. Meisenheimer still adorn the exterior arches of The Driftwood.

Pat Ivey Boyd: The Patricia

Another Myrtle Beach success story also began in the wake of personal tragedy for Mrs. Pat Ivey Boyd [1899-1999], who arrived here in [1929] in the middle of the Depression. Shortly after she and her husband, [Malcolm A.] Rousseau, purchased¹¹ the oceanfront cottage on 2700 block of the Boulevard from Mr. and Mrs. Vivian F. Platt, he committed suicide, leaving her alone with two children to support. Miss Pat obtained a loan from Myrtle Beach Farms to remodel [into] a 13-room guest house which grew to become The Patricia Court, named after her.¹²

[In the early 1930s], against the advice of Mr. [Jim] Bryan who approved the loan, Pat married Joe C. Ivey, who delivered laundry to The Patricia. Pat said to him, "Mr. Bryan, you can tell me anything I need to know concerning the loan you gave me, but you can't say a word about my love life. It's private!"¹³ They purchased an adjacent lot and built Patricia Manor. A three-story building was added in 1941 and called the Patricia Inn. After Hurricane Hazel damaged the hotel, a two-story



Patricia Court Motel was built with 23 rooms facing the ocean in the 1950s. The Iveys owned it for many years. In 1966, oceanfront rooms were \$16/person daily. The complex was sold in the 1970s and razed in mid-1980s.¹⁴

Mr. Bryan's daughter, Jackie Epps, who worked at The Patricia from its inception, described her as a strong woman who was the moving force behind The Patricia and the community. In 1985 this beautiful, charming white landmark was torn down to make way for the high-rise Patricia Grand. Pat Ivy Boyd's lovely colonial home is visible across from Dunes Village in the 5200 block of Ocean Boulevard.

Mrs. T. S. Means: The Breakers

The vast Breakers resort complex also had its start as a small guest house owned by Mrs. [T. S.] Means of Spartanburg, who brought her son to Myrtle Beach every summer in hopes of alleviating his asthma. She first opened a small guest house on the west side of the 20th block of the Boulevard. When she rapidly outgrew this facility, Mrs. Means sold her home in Spartanburg and with a partner, Miss Mattie Mae Avant, built The Breakers across the street. Mrs. Means had a reputation for running a very tight ship. Guests at The Breakers had to be highly recommended by someone of



The Breakers Hotel and Motor Lodge

prominence. Children who were too noisy had to eat with the hired help until they were old enough to behave properly in the dining room.¹⁵ [Some were known to call her Mrs. Mean.]¹⁶ A guest who appeared in the lobby in curlers was immediately told to return to her room. Despite (or perhaps because of) these stern restrictions, tourists clamored to come to The Breakers. Mrs. Means and her cook, Jesse, served three excellent meals a day, and the same guests returned year after year for generations.¹⁷ [The Breakers was first sold to Audy Yost Cunningham and then to a group of local businessmen.]¹⁸

Jewell C. Swain: Brunswick Inn

The Grover Cleveland (1884-1974) and Jewel Clemmons (1898-1989) Swain family lived in Brunswick County, NC where they farmed and raised cows and hogs. After spending the summer of 1935 in Myrtle



Beach, the decision was made to lease the family farm and build an inn in Myrtle Beach on the newly paved Highway 17. Construction began the fall of 1936 and trees were harvested from the family farm to supply the timber. The 22-room Brunswick Inn located at 613 N. Kings Highway (where the current Firestone store is located) boasted a 60-seat dining room where other townspeople joined the lodgers for meals. Three or four women were hired to work in the kitchen and as maids to help Mrs. Swain run the inn.

The two Swain children, Grover and Kenneth, were ten years apart. Kenneth, the youngest, had an English nanny, Mrs. Smith, to care for him. When his grandparents, Ephraim L. and Mary Lewis Clemmons, moved to Myrtle Beach they brought Mrs. Smith with them. She had worked with them on their farm and came to help Jewel at the inn. Eventually she would care for the Clemmonses until their death in April and June of 1948.

In reminiscing about the Brunswick Inn, Kenneth recalled their beloved fox terrier, Pippie, who met him every day after school at the old Myrtle Beach School (located where the U.S. Post Office is today). One guest

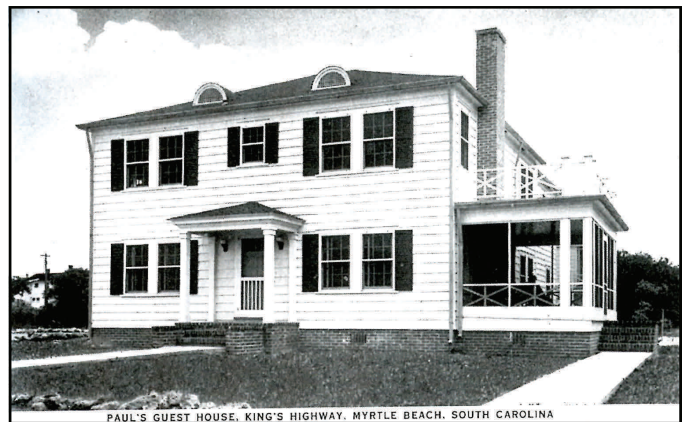
was especially cruel to Pippie and fed him beer until he was drunk. Another recollection is of two couples who had married in New York and were traveling together to Florida for their honeymoon. During their overnight stay at the inn, they switched partners. Many friends were made through the operation of the inn and restaurant and continued on long after they were closed.

About 1947, the inn was converted into apartments. The following year it was sold to Mr. James Calhoun Sr. who moved the building to Surfside Beach.

Kenneth went on to graduate from the USC School of Pharmacy and owned the Swain Pharmacy on 8th Avenue North across from the Pavilion in 1955 -1960.¹⁹

Henrietta Banner Abeles: Paul's Guest House

By 1935 the worst of the Depression was waning in Horry County and tourism was improving. Henrietta [Banner] Abeles [1902-1983], a single Jewish mother with a two-and-one-half-year-old son Sigmund, arrived in Myrtle Beach in 1936 from New York to be closer to her siblings' families and to make a fresh start. With some savings and a mortgage from Myrtle Beach Farms, Abeles built the eight-room, three-bath Paul's Guest House, located at 506 Kings Highway. "The rooming house was a real struggle at first," recalled Sigmund, who went on to become an internationally renowned artist. "You know, a room for three dollars a night. A very resourceful soul, described by her siblings and their offspring as a 'modern woman,' Mom designed our house and negotiated with...Chapin Company and Myrtle Beach Farms for the purchase of the two lots with a wooded back and a mortgage to begin construction. My mom chose to make her rooming house on [U.S. Highway 17] rather than the ocean front. She could have had her pick at that time of anything she



wanted, but because she was hoping to get some of the winter business of people traveling from New York to Florida, which she did, and she was worried about having the house blown away by a hurricane, she chose not to go to the ocean.

Growing up in a guest house gave Sigmund a view of the world he might not have seen otherwise. “From our front steps I viewed the world as a youth; there were indelible occurrences. I witnessed my neighbor Mr. Hollingshead get killed doing a U-turn on his motorcycle; watched the daily shuttle of German prisoners-of-war passing by in army trucks from field labor; saw a huge, stone, winged horse partly covered by tarps enroute to Brookgreen [Gardens] and caught sight of FDR and Churchill in an open touring car with motorcycle escorts heading to [Bernard] Baruch’s plantation.”

As a Jewish boy growing up in Myrtle Beach, however, Sigmund Abeles was afraid of the POWs because of his mother’s, aunts’ and uncles’ reactions to learning about the Nazi concentration camps. He said, “I grew up with fear [that] if I got caught they’d kill me because they were determined to kill all the Jews. And so I was really scared when those trucks would go by my house with the German prisoners of war. They would say, ‘Heil, Hitler,’ and all that stuff when they saw you.”

“Certainly another memory that was important to me was being a kid during World War II, because my mom’s [guest] house at that time was commandeered by the Air Force for young pilots in training,” recalled Abeles. In 1942 he was eight years old. “I was mascot to many of those people. They would put their big, heavy, leather and wool flight jackets on me, and they would put those flight helmets on me, and I would be dwarfed by them around the hallway. It was all kind of neat, except that two of those pilots, two of those incredibly young pilots, got killed in training. And my mother was devastated. She’d gotten to know them; she was surrogate mom for them. She had to pack their stuff and write letters to their parents about what lovely young men they were.”

[When the Myrtle Beach Grammar School building at 505 North Kings Highway (site of present-day U.S. Post Office) burned down in the early morning hours in February 1946,] Abeles recalled, “Firemen were wetting our house down and our roof, because...wind was blowing...burning shingles. And my mother kept telling me to go back to bed! There’d be no way I could go back to bed! I mean this whole excitement and everything, the most exciting time. And the school actually smoldered for a very long time...there were school buses that were damaged that were left in the yard that we would all climb in and pretend that we were driving.” He also recalled the sound of cans blowing up in the fire.

“Trying to survive on the income of a seasonal trade, whether one was running a guest house, a restaurant, or a gift shop, was not easy....Abeles continued, “but in those days it was feast or famine. There were at least two days that were sold out—the Fourth of July and Labor Day—and then in the winter I got a choice of any room I wanted. On the other hand it was

a fascinating business to see people. And since my work, my art, is focused on faces mostly, people, I know that my interest in being a voyeur came from being in that rooming house, from the good-looking people to the not good-looking people, to the people who were sober to the people who weren’t sober, to the good and bad. I mean it was great extremes. People probably are their best and worst on vacation. So it was fascinating...”

Abeles closed her house to guests in the 1970s but continued to live there until her death in 1983.²⁰

Julia P. Macklen: Travelers Motor Hotel and Lloyd’s Motor Hotel and Restaurant

H. Lloyd (1898-1973) and Julia P. (1902-2003) Macklen arrived in Horry County to become influential figures in tourism—not only in business but also in pro-

motion. Raised on a farm in Enterprise, near the Waccamaw River halfway between Socastee and Bucksport, Lloyd met Julia in Greenville, NC, where she taught school and he worked on a construction job. In 1935 the Macklens bought a grocery store [Lloyd’s Grocery] in Myrtle Beach and eventually operated

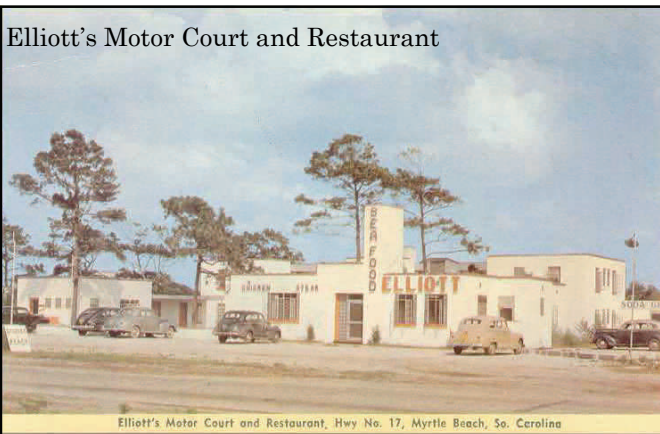


the Travelers Motor Hotel at 1803 N. Kings Highway and Lloyd’s Motor Hotel and Restaurant. The latter’s complex occupied all of the land between Sixteenth and Seventeenth Avenues North, with the Piggly Wiggly store across the street to the north and Chapin Memorial Park to the south. [Mr. Macklen purchased this motel from the Elliotts. “It was actually his third motel, the first being pretty small and located near Spivey’s [Beach] south of Myrtle Beach downtown. It was probably sold when he purchased the Travelers Motel.”] The Macklens’ endeavor made little distinction between family and business: “Employees were treated better than I was,” remembered their son Robert Pryor Macklen; “I worked seven days a week from age twelve till college.”²¹

The following is an excerpt from an interview conducted by Catherine Lewis with Julia on March 25, 1993, at Julia’s home, 3600 N. Kings Highway...The

transcript was annotated by Mrs. Macklen soon after it was typed, and in 2006 her son Robert made additions that appear with his initials. She is talking about her experiences at both Lloyds Motel and Restaurant and the Travelers Motor Hotel.

We sold the grocery business before Mack bought the motel. Actually I was at home [in 1949] and he was riding with Mr. John McLeod, who was a big realtor at the time, a very fine person. And Mack didn't know what he wanted to do. They passed one of the first two motor courts²² at Myrtle Beach—Travelers Motor Hotel—which had about twenty-four rooms and baths with a nice center arrangement that was attractively planted. [RPM: The motel bordered a horseshoe-shaped



driveway that enclosed a grassy area.] So Mr. McLeod said, "There is something that's for sale." And so Mack said, "Well, Mr. McLeod, write the people and ask-em how much I would need to pay them to move into it." He did and we moved into that motor hotel. And it was a wonderful business. It was in such demand because with having only two there [the other was the Ocean Pines], they were seen on the Highway [Kings Highway]. [Sometimes] we could sit down in our living room, which was our office, and see the cars slow down and then go on; and we would realize that we had



Lloyd's Hotel and Restaurant

failed to turn the sign from "No vacancy" to "Vacancy," and we could fill up in a matter of a few hours.

But listen to this. All of a sudden there was a man staying with us. This man and his wife built a motor hotel and restaurant [Elliott's Motor Court & Restaurant]. And they weren't in it hardly two years before they were ready to get out and talked my husband into buying it and selling Travelers. Actually there were times when I really regretted not leaving him when he made me do that. Because there we had these wonderful people that we served and a lovely place to stay, comfortable, with steam heat and cooling—and to get into a restaurant that I knew nothing about and he knew nothing about. But I guess I lived as well as a queen almost in my home because although there were so many of us, we had anything that was the desire of most wealthy people.

[RPM: The Macklens last home of any sort was Travelers Motor Hotel. We all lived in more of a house environment. Even the office for registration of guests was our living room and we had a kitchen, dining room, bedrooms all under one roof like "home." At Lloyds [their next motel] Mother & Dad had a bedroom that was connected to the office to rent rooms. The doorbell rang as late as midnight. The children slept in various rooms of the motel, so it was hard for our parents to keep up with where we were. Mother never had a real home till they lived in the house where you met her.]

You wouldn't believe how cheap [the prices were] written on that menu. I think you could get toast and coffee and one egg for about thirty-five cents. It was ridiculous. And we served things that they don't serve now. We were lucky because everybody needed something to get money for; we had colored men and white people to bring us wonderful food. Someone would go fishing, for instance, just to have something to do, and catch more fish than they wanted, and they'd bring'em to our kitchen to sell. Then we could dress them and serve the very best.

I've known of people bringing a whole twenty-four-pound size flour sack full of shelled, fresh butterbeans and lot of delicacies like that that other people had never known about. And I did a lot of salad work for the restaurant. We served fresh fruit salad and we served shrimp and other kinds of salads. I was very flattered one day, this nice-looking lady who had just eaten a meal there asked to be introduced to me. So she came on the salad porch and talked to me. She said, "I have traveled all over Europe several times and I have never eaten a salad dressing as delicious as you served on my fruit salad today. And if I was younger, I would ask you to go in business with me and we'd put that salad dressing on the market and make a million dollars."

[The restaurant seated] close to one hundred and fifty or two hundred. We had two dining rooms and the kitchen had glass doors that you could look into the kitchen from where you were seated to eat. Yes, [we operated year-round]. The guests were people going north and south to Florida. It was just amazing how many nice people we had. No [we didn't] really have an off-season]. We operated equally as well, if not better [in the winter].



It was that caramel nut cake [for which she was famous]. You see, I melt sugar, which makes the caramel. And I never test it at all now because I use the same stove, the same eyes [burners], the same pots and each container. 'Cause you have the melted sugar over here [she gestures] and you have this boiling syrup—that has the milk and the sugar and the butter in it—and when that gets melted and it's the same temperature as that, you mix them and add the nuts all after you've beaten it a while and spread it. But no one seems to catch on to how to do it. Although I tell them exactly what to do.

My husband was working to make Myrtle Beach better every minute of the day and night. He would do *anything*. He drove literally thousands of miles trying to sell the town, and every new customer that he met he wanted to tell them about it. [He served on Myrtle Beach City Council 1960-1963.] At the first meeting of executives in Myrtle Beach, he got up and said, "We have got to advertise! People don't know about us being here and how wonderful it is." He convinced the [president of Myrtle Beach Farms] at that time to start advertising, he'd already put some advertisements for Myrtle Beach probably to Georgetown, telling about our place. Nothing really big, but small signs to indicate that this was a good place to stop overnight.

I would say that he was [instrumental in forming the Chamber of Commerce]. And he was an official of

that probably every year. He taught the owners of Chapin Co., which was considered *the* business of Myrtle Beach at the time, to advertise, which they had never done before.

It certainly did [make a lot of difference in traffic after Kings Highway was paved, by 1941]. [Kings Highway became U.S. 17, which had until then been routed through Marion and Florence. "Dad did have lots to do with the development of a new Highway 17, so Myrtle Beach got more traffic and the Ocean Highway Association was formed." When the Macklens lived in Travelers Motel, "Kings Highway was a two-lane concrete road which had a one-lane dirt road parallel to the pavement." They paved this dirt road and added it to the highway in the early 1940s.] There were times when maybe the weather was so severe that you'd get such a crowd that it would be a little hard to serve them in the manner you prefer to serve them.

We had white waitresses all of the time, never had anything else. But Mack had some very professional caterers that we employed from time to time and they didn't want to be told anything about how to prepare the food. We felt like we knew something that the people we had to serve would enjoy better than something like they were serving. Also they could be pretty hard to deal with. They demanded more money and they just didn't please us. So we got where we just did without the men that managed the cooking, and started training our colored boys who were washing the dishes. He would approach them and say, "How would you like to make twice as much money as you are making now?" "Yes, sir boss," they would say. And he would say, "Furthermore, if you do that as well as I want it, I wouldn't mind doubling it again."²³



These are only a few of the many, strong, spirited women who made deep footprints in the sands of Myrtle Beach and started its tourist industry. Pat Brittain wrote, "These women should not be forgotten or overshadowed by the high-rises and mega hotels that now fill the oceanfront of Myrtle Beach, as they sent our first visitors back home well-fed and happy with their stay in the early guest houses of Myrtle Beach."²⁴

Footnotes:

¹Barnard, Connie. "In the Limelight: Strand Hotel Industry Pioneered by Strong, Energetic Women" Strand Magazine, Fall-Winter 2004, pp. 18-20, 21

²Berry, C. B., "Hotels Leading Business for Strand," The Sun News, April 18, 2002.

³Barnard.

⁴Pat Brittain, October 9, 2010 Speech.

⁵Barnard.

⁶Brittain.

⁷Barnard.

⁸Wren, David. "Out with the Old, in with the New," The Sun News, October 31, 1998.

⁹Barnard.

¹⁰Brittain.

¹¹Barnard.

¹²Stokes, Barbara F. Myrtle Beach: A History, 1900-1980. University of South Carolina Press, 2007, pp. 103, 113.

¹³Barnard.

¹⁴Stokes.

¹⁵Barnard.

¹⁶Brittain.

¹⁷Barnard.

¹⁸Brittain.

¹⁹V. C. Stalvey interview with Kenneth E. Swain 9/4/09 and 3/9/10. Mr. Swain became a realtor and finally an environmentalist for the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. In 2009 he donated one of the largest gifts in the history of Coastal Carolina University at that time to help with building the Swain addition to the R. Cathcart Smith Science Center.

²⁰Stokes, p. 53-54, 57, 77-78, 103-104, 127.

²¹Wells, Randal A. Old Times in Horry County: A Narrative History. Horry Press (Charleston, SC) 2007, pp.136, 155

²²The first motel was probably the Ocean Pines Motor Court at 3801 N. Kings Highway which opened in 1940.

²³Wells, pp, 135-141m 155-156.

²⁴Barnard

The Legacy of Manzy Avender and Myrtle Spivey Gause

By Barbara A. Avery, Granddaughter

The Gauses were visionaries who saw the future of Myrtle Beach. Their families have lived in the area for over 300 years, having adventured in their tiny ships from England and France to Virginia then to the Carolinas. One of the Grand Strand's earliest innkeepers was William Gause Sr. who operated a tavern along the old King's Highway in the Windy Hill area beginning around 1740. One of his overnight guests was George Washington who scouted the coast in 1791 while he was president.

The Spivey side of our family flowed in to the Caro-



Myrtle and Manzy Gause at the Seaside Hotel desk.

linas about 1778, leaving their families to fight, first in the American Revolution and then, in a later generation, the War Between the States, and later settling in what was then a new frontier along the Carolina coast.

Both Manzy and Myrtle came from large families. Manzy was the eldest of nine, and Myrtle the middle of eleven

children. Their families had adjoining land outside Conway in the Homewood community. A well-educated woman for her times, Myrtle Spivey went to college and became a teacher. In 1919, she married Manzy Gause, a farmer and visionary entrepreneur who started his own lumber and turpentine businesses.

My grandparents started coming to Myrtle Beach because they loved to fish. They brought their chairs to sit on the beach and danced to the strains of the music coming from the grand Ocean Forest Hotel. The hotel catered to the wealthier crowd and grandmother Myrtle saw how people of more modest means needed something to eat and a cold drink at the end of the day. She and Granddaddy Manzy began bringing cooked food to the beachfront and sold it out of the back of their pickup truck. Laughing and swapping stories with their customers was so enjoyable, they decided to invest in what they saw as an emerging tourism opportunity in Myrtle Beach.

In 1935, they purchased the Welcome Inn, essentially a tourist boarding house located across from Joe's Foot Long Hot Dogs on Ninth Avenue North. Originally, the Welcome Inn was a two-story beach cottage; it was well built and had a good roof. Granddaddy Manzy decided the structure should be enlarged in order to accommodate the growing business. He jacked up the structure, raised the roof and put a new floor under the old one to make it a three story building. The renovated Welcome Inn had twenty rooms including a lobby, kitchen and a wraparound front porch. Guests returned year after year to stay in their same rooms and loved being treated as if they were part of the Gause family.

Manzy and Myrtle had the opportunity to purchase more land, a half an acre at 1000 North Ocean



The Seaside Hotel with donut shop.

Boulevard on the ocean side at the end of the boulevard. It was located where Plyler Park and Mr. Joe White Boulevard now meet. Donald V. Richardson had built a summer beach house there in 1908. It was named in honor of the very first hotel on the beach, the Seaside Hotel. With plans and dreams in their heads, Manzy and Myrtle worked tirelessly to make the details shine, from the stacked stone fireplace, attic cedar closets, to the funny hand painted underwater mural behind the front desk. The Seaside Hotel grew proudly and opened its doors about 1951 with 26 double rooms, a lobby, a kitchen, three extra shower rooms, an ocean view rocking chair front porch, a basement under that porch, three rooms as living quarters for the year round staff and a fourteen table dining room. In a little patch of dirt outside the kitchen door, there was a garden next to the working hand water pump.

The meals served up were southern cooking at its best. Myrtle had the freshest produce and was not above asking a guest to "sit right down here and help us shell these beans for supper." Many discussions were held regarding where the big fish could be found and guests often accompanied Manzy on fishing and shrimping trips to help catch the evening's dinner. On Sunday, all the staff and kids would pile into the truck to go crabbing down at the bridge in Garden City. The next night luscious deviled crab would be on the menu. There was always talking and laughing in the living area with card games going on or someone tating a scarf. During the winter, the kids would sit on the porch in a rocker, listen to the surf, learn to ride our bikes, shoot off fireworks and skate on our part of the boardwalk.

One night Manzy and Myrtle were talking with their friend, Elbert Herring, and a Donut Shop was born. It became the first Krispy Kreme on the beach and was attached to the hotel.

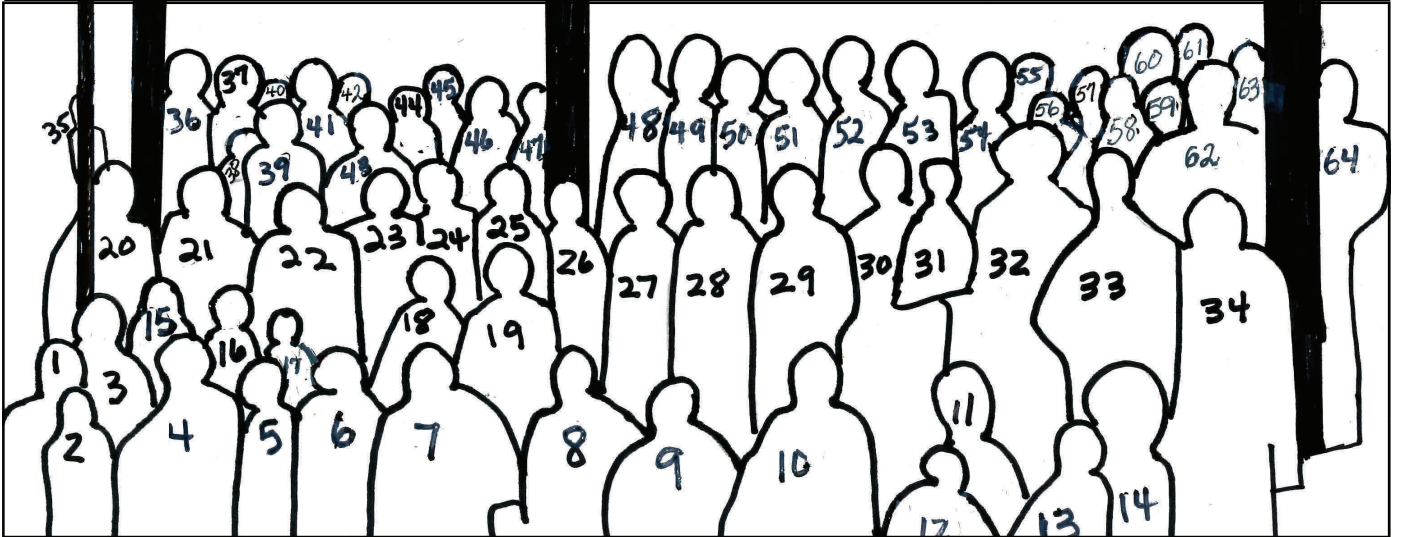
On 15 October 1954, Hazel came to visit, destroying buildings and trees. During the storm, Myrtle took all the cash out of the safe and put it in a jar "so it would float." The women left for the Methodist Church. The men, Manzy, his son Barry and nephew Dennis, climbed to the second floor of the hotel where they would be safe. When the water came up the stairs, they had to go out a window to get in the boat cousin Wendell Holbert brought to rescue them. The Seaside survived, wet and full of sand, but still standing and everyone was miraculously safe.

Our grandparents never sent anyone away who was hungry or needed a place to stay for a night. They were fine, honest, hardworking folks who laughed a lot, always told the truth and had a good word and a helping hand for a friend or a stranger. Myrtle was a member of the Business and Professional Women's Club, The Ladies Hospital Auxiliary Service and was active in the Methodist Church. Manzy was a member of the South Carolina Hotel Association, Conway Post 131, veteran of WW I and a leader in the Adult Men's Class of Myrtle Beach Methodist Church.

In all the Gauses had a total of four hotels from 1923 to 1970. The others were the Oceanic on Withers



Top is the Oceanic and bottom is the Ocean Terrace



Celebration for Mollie E. James Spivey on porch at the Welcome Inn @ 1949

and Tenth Avenue behind the old Rivoli Theater, and the Ocean Terrace which was next door to the Seaside, perfect for expansion. The 200-foot Skywheel which just opened in May 2011 is now on that lot.

Their daughter Hilda, married Lt. Col. Hamilton K. Avery II and son, James, married Sybil "Jimmie" E. Gaines. They married here, carried on the hotelier businesses, and bought property for homes here that remain in the family in 2011

This past summer, a monument was put up to honor this pioneer couple. The monument states: "In memory of Manzy Avender Gause (Jan 18, 1892 – Oct 26, 1966) and Myrtle Spivey Gause (Sept 13, 1893 – November 22, 1970). Site of the Seaside Hotel – Manzy and Myrtle were instrumental in the dreams and creation of early Myrtle Beach's hospitality industry. The Seaside Hotel, one of their most successful properties stood on this site from 1951-1973, a fore-runner of today's high rise hotels. The Welcome Inn, their earliest property (1936), stood on the boulevard across from Peach's Corner. Other Gause family properties were the Ocean Terrace and Oceanic. The Gause and Spivey families have been an integral part of the Grand Strand for many generations, over 300 years, and their descendants still reside in the Myrtle Beach area. They persevered through short seasons, hurricanes and lean times with grace and integrity. Dedicated June 2011."

Myrtle Beach is a place of mystery. Generations discovered the power of the ocean to make people take leave of their senses, starting with that first sniff of salt air and the grains of sand in their shoes. Those people, who the Gauses and Spiveys still serve, continue to prove Myrtle Beach a success.

Photo Identification:

Starting at bottom row left to right 1. Betty Jo Spivey Holbert (3 Sep 1924; 2. Shaula Belle Holbert (18 Nov 1947); 3. Wendell Joseph Holbert I (26 Jun 1917-20 Dec 2002); 4. Raymond Henry Singleton (1915); 5. William Metts Gause (6 Jun 1935); 6. Edward Washington Gause (13 May 1910-4 Oct 1931); 7. Dennis Carroll Spivey (8 Jul 1921-19 Sep 1979); 8. James Barry Gause (10 Oct 1926-14 May 1974); 9. Julius Columbus Gause (11 Sep 1933); 10. Carl Burns Singleton, Jr. (1925-4 Feb 2001); 11. George Inabinet; 12. Hamilton King Avery III (2 Oct 1947); 13. Freddy Lewis?; 14. Mildred Lee Spivey Lewis (12 Sep 1920-14 Sep 1994); 15. Unknown; 16. Unknown; 17. Unknown; 18. Unknown; 19. Unknown; 20. Sybil Elizabeth Gaines Gause (12 Sep 1926); 21. Dock Allen Grier Spivey (26 Oct 1883-3 Jan 1958); 22. Sir Walter Raleigh Spivey (27 Mar 1900); 23. Ervin Berry Singleton (9 Jan 1884-8 Jun 1958); 24. Fredrick Donald Lewis (22 Jul 1917-Dec 1986); 25. Ted Ludlam; 26. George Gurley Sessions-Spivey (21 Aug

1891-Jul 1973); 27. Leo McDuffy Spivey, Sr. (16 Oct 1896-26 Dec 1971); 28. Kenneth Baldwin; 29. James "Luck" Roberts, Jr. (17 Dec 1904-30 Oct 1982); 30. Charlie West Gause (23 May 1905-4 Apr 1976); 31. Paul "Pete" Dixon Gause, Jr. (4 Nov 1946); 32. Paul Dixon Gause, Sr. (25 May 1903-Mar 1976); 33. Hamilton King Avery II (22 Feb 1917-2008); 34. Hilda Mae Gause Avery (24 Sep 1920-25 Mar 2005); 35. Unknown; 36. Unknown; 37. Unknown; 38. Unknown; 39. Colleen "Mollie" Elizabeth James Spivey (20 Dec 1858-16 Nov 1953); 40. Unknown; 41. Unknown; 42. Unknown; 43. (Frances) Edna Spivey Singleton (23 Oct 1886-20 Dec 1978); 44. Unknown; 45. Mary Ellen Spivey Roberts (25 Sep 1877-21 Jan 1963); 46. Unknown; 47. Alma Metts Gause Gause (26 Aug 1912-14 Mar 1960); 48. Unknown; 49. Myrtle Spears Hucks Gause (20 Dec 1920-14 Jan 2001); 50. (Henry) Ethel Spivey (3 Apr 1895-12 Oct 1901); 51. Jean Spivey (26 Nov 1933-16 Dec 2005); 52. Ruth Maude Rheuark Spivey (4 Jun 1904-23 Feb 1968); 53. Annie Belle Gause Spivey (17 Jan 1894-9 Dec 1984); 54. Unknown; 55. Unknown; 56. Unknown; 57. Unknown; 58. Mary Trenholm Spivey Foxworth (Aug 1927); 59. Unknown; 60. Manzy Avender Gause (18 Jan 1892-27 Oct 1966); 61. Myrtle Marie Gause (4 Oct 1947); 62. Myrtle Vincey Spivey Gause (11 Sep 1892-22 Nov 1970); 63. Elizabeth Moore Spivey Hucks (1 Sep 1923); and, 64. Bertha Trenholm Morris Spivey (27 Jul 1885-15 Jan 1962)

Did you know the Bryan House Resource Room is open on Wednesdays from 1:30—4 p.m.? Available other times by appointment. Please call 843.488.1966 for an appointment.

A Letter from the President: June Brown

The Horry County Historical Society 2012 Membership Drive is well underway, and we invite you to renew your membership or join today. Response to the drive has been good with a number of new members joining. Your participation as society members and event supporters is what allows us to accomplish our mission.

Involvement is available at many levels, small and large. We encourage you to join this wonderful group of people who love our community and want to preserve our heritage as well as promote the vitality and community spirit among our people. Our events will mean so much more to the community with even broader participation.

Friends of the Bryan House is an auxiliary group of the Society especially interested in keeping the Bryan House as a visible symbol of the community's commitment to the preservation of our history, heritage, and remarkable development. Monthly operating expenses average about \$1000 a month, not to mention the continuing maintenance required on a historic home. Your participation at any level means more than you know.

Please utilize the form included in this "Quarterly," and mail in your membership today. With generous volunteer support, we have added activities and events described in this publication. We are an all volunteer organization and need your help.

As always I wish to thank all volunteers, the many workers who donate their time and resources to our community through the Horry County Historical Society. I also wish to recognize the Conway Visitors' Center, the Master Gardeners, the Conway garden clubs and Conway Alive for their efforts on our behalf.

A great big thank you also goes out to the Mayor of Conway and Conway City Council members for their continuous support of our mutual goal of making Conway the best of the best places to live and work.

Happy Holidays to all. We invite you to join the festivities at the Bryan House. —June T. Brown

How the Horry Beaches Stand: Signs Now Point to Coming True of Herald's Predictions

Reprint of article from Horry Herald, August 27, 1925.

Several years ago the **Horry Herald** printed an article which stated in substance that in the course of time, the coast of Horry would be the playground of the country, throughout almost its entire length; that the Summer and also Winter resorts business would not be confined to any particular part of this coast.

It went on to argue that some portions of the strand were then ahead of others by reason of better location and ease of access and because they had started first to build hotels and sell lots for the erection of Summer homes.

The predictions made in that article are coming true. Since that article was written many improvements have been made at Myrtle Beach. It does not look like the same place. It has more than doubled in size. Instead of one hotel there is now the Myrtle Beach Yacht Club and a number of boarding houses. New board walks have been built, clay has been used in surfacing the streets and roads about the place. There is talk of another hotel at Myrtle Beach, larger and better than any so far built.

While all this has been going on at Myrtle Beach, events have been shaping at other beaches along the strand.

The population of the section known as Murrell's Inlet has greatly increased. Lands have advanced in value.

Floral Beach has come into prominence by means of the advertising of its advantages since it was purchased by George J. Holliday in 1924. Lots are being sold there to the better class of people from far distant parts of the State. A total of seventy five had been sold up to two weeks ago. New cottages have been built and many more are in contemplation. A small hotel is now in operation there. There is a better road and many other improvements.

At Cherry Grove about a dozen cottages were completed for use this season. At last accounts they were being occupied by Summer visitors.

Further down in Little River Neck Horace L. Tilghman has erected a fine summer home. His brother has built a home. Mr. Tilghman has made large purchases of land in that sections [sic] and evidently aims at a large development within the next year.

The people of other parts of South Carolina have been brought to see the need of better roads in order that they may visit the Horry beaches. This will bring about a change in the policy of the Highway Commission, very soon if it has not done so already, and Horry

Continued on Page 14 Predictions

Step Back in Time to the Early Days of Horry County Saturday, March 31, 2012

Sponsored by the
Horry County Historical Society
in Partnership with
Peter Horry Chapter, Daughter of the American
Revolution and
Litchfield Camp 132, Sons of the Confederate Veterans



STORIES IN STONE AT LAKESIDE CEMETERY

HISTORIC DOCENT-GUIDED WALKING TOURS

Saturday,, March 31, 2012

10 a.m., 11 a.m., 12 p.m., 1 p.m., 2 p.m., and 3 p.m.

\$20 per person

Limited Advance Tickets available beginning February 1, 2012 at
Conway Visitors Center, 903 3rd Avenue, Conway SC 248-1700

Bryan House Docent-Guided Tours

606 Main Street, Conway

Saturday, March 31, 2012

10:30 am, 12:30 pm, and 2:30 pm

\$5 per person

Limited Advance Tickets available beginning February 1

Activities at the Bryan House



- Registrations for memberships in Historical Society + Friends of Bryan House
- Sale of old *IRQs*
- Sale of historical books
- Sale of herbs
- Genealogical opportunities
- Book signing by local authors
- Sale of food and drinks

Predictions Continued from Page 12

will get a better share of the large amounts that will be spent within the next few years in making better roads throughout this section of the State.

In the meantime the new feeders for the beach resorts are going ahead with as much speed as is possible under the circumstances. These are the new bridge across the Great Pee Dee at Yauhannah, the new bridge over the Waccamaw at Bellamy's Landing, the new bridge across the Little Pee Dee at Potato Bed Ferry.

The coastal section of Horry is on the eve of quite a large development. It will reach every result that the Herald has claimed that it would.

Bridge with Rebecca: A "Bridge with Rebecca" fundraiser held on November 7 was a great success. Playing bridge in the Bryan House is reminiscent of Rebecca Bryan's frequent bridge gatherings with friends in the home. Those who attended enjoyed fellowship with oth-



er groups and playing bridge with their friends. The morning session began at 9:30 with bridge and refreshments and ended with a luncheon. The afternoon gathering ended with tea, sandwiches and cookies.

Appreciation is extended to Crady's, The Freeze, and Friends of the Bryan House for the delicious food. Requests from those present encourage a repeat of this event in the future.



(Left Photo left to right Beth Smith, Sylvia Smith, Nila Hutchioson [high score for the day], and June Brown. Right Photo left to right Jeannie Abbott, Sara Hope Spivey, Ann Long, and Fran Burroughs.)



**CHRISTMAS AT THE BRYAN HOUSE
DOCENT-GUIDED HISTORICAL TOURS**

606 Main Street, Conway SC 29526

Sponsored by

The Horry County Historical Society

December 1—December 20

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays*, Fridays 11am & 1 pm, Sundays 3 pm

*Thursday, December 8 only at 11 am

\$5 per person

Limited tickets available at Conway Visitors Center, 903 3rd Avenue, Conway 248-1700

EXPERIENCE EARLY 20TH CENTURY CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

Early 1900 decorations by Conway Garden Club Council; Display of dolls by Coastal Doll Club; and,

Exhibit of Old-fashioned Toys

Southern Hospitality at Its Best

Christmas Gift Shop Items will be available for Purchase



Shade Garden at the Bryan House by Janice Cutts

In the spring of 2011, the Camellia Garden Club of Conway was thrilled to be asked by the Horry County Historical Society to help with the improvement of the grounds of their headquarters, the W. L. Bryan House.



The club selected an area at the back of the property bordered on two sides by a brick wall. We were especially interested in this area due to the fact that there were tiny sprouts of oakleaf hydrangeas determined to grow, along with several old azaleas. We knew that these plants were original to the yard and wanted to build a garden around them. The goal was to beautify the site while maintaining the historical integrity of the property.

The Camellia Garden Club met at the site, designed a plan, and chose a color theme: white and green – with a little blue – for a cool feel. Once the plan was presented to and approved by the Board of Directors of the Horry County Historical Society, we went to work on “our” shade garden. After bringing in a small load of topsoil, the club members planted thirty-six evergreen giant

liriope plants, two white camellias, five fatsias, four white hydrangeas and two blue hydrangeas. A natural entrance to the shade garden was the gap between the two old azaleas. A bench was added to welcome visitors to sit awhile.

The club members were not only responsible for designing and planting the shade garden, we also accepted responsibility for ongoing maintenance of the site. The hot dry summer definitely kept us busy watering and weeding. Several of the members put the garden on their walking route so they could check it regularly. A few of the docents and hostesses for the Bryan House tours were even seen watering and snipping.



These are before and after photos of the shade garden in the back of the Bryan House. Many thanks to the Camellia Garden Club for these wonderful improvements

This fall the Camellia Garden Club completed their planting of the shade garden by adding twelve white azaleas.

One of the members remarked that it was hard to drive up to the back of the house and not become a little nostalgic when looking at the oakleaf hydrangeas standing so proudly among their beautiful new surroundings. She said you could almost imagine them saying to all of the new plantings, “We are not old. We are historic and they did all of this just to save us.”

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