



THE PONDS

A History of The Ponds

Summerville locals describe The Ponds as a hidden gem, with a history as rich as the land is cherished. The name itself can be traced back to grants in 1682, when the land was first christened The Ponds.

The first owner on record was Andrew Percival, who built a plantation he called Weston Hall. The Donning family of Gloucester County, England, operated the plantation from 1723 until 1765 when they sold it off for parts.

The land became primarily a rice plantation that was operated for more than a century by several families, most notably that of John Schulz, who purchased it in 1818. One of his heirs, Frederick Schulz, ran the estate during the Civil War and made his mark in history by enlisting in the First South Carolina Mounted Militia in 1861. He served in the Charleston area for much of the war and returned home to The Ponds in 1865. The Schulz family eventually sold the plantation in 1891 to Edward Lotz, who became a lumber dealer and “manufacturer of shingles” from the cypress trees on the site. Lotz’s sons went on to be homebuilders in the Summerville area.

In 1911 the land was purchased by its most recent owners, the Simmons family. They farmed the land for decades, raising corn, cotton and sweet potatoes, and kept livestock including sheep and goats. Ralph Simmons Sr. even made his own brand of lump charcoal, which he sold to local grocery stores.

Eventually, The Ponds became a popular place for hunting and fishing, and this is how many of Summerville’s residents still remember it today. The farmhouse that remains on the site today was used as a hunting lodge. And anytime a local wanted to fish, they simply deposited 25¢ in a can at the gate.

Not much has changed – The Ponds’ rich history is still evident today. It’s in the mature live oaks, the well-defined nature trails created by wildlife over the years, and the tranquil feeling you get when you step onto the property. In fact, some say they still see the ghost of Edward Lotz, who according to legend comes nightly to the old farmhouse to make sure all is well. We invite you to make your mark in history at The Ponds.

For more information, contact:

John Morgan, Greenwood Communities and Resorts, 843-851-3939, jmorgan@greenwoodcr.com

Therese Munroe, Greenwood Communities and Resorts, 843-851-3939, tmunroe@greenwoodcr.com

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