

HISTORY OF DEERLAKE VILLAGE

The Siniard Farm, Camp Carolina, Carefree Carolina, and Deerlake Village are the succession of names which for years have identified the area now home to residents of the present Deerlake Village. Why the current name, Deerlake? During construction of the Quail Run Condos in the mid 1980s, the developers caught sight of a deer swimming across the lake. As a result, Deerlake Village became the name still in use today.

This property had been bought by Mr. Gaston Siniard (father of Columbus Milford "C. M.") because he needed a place to live after he had sold his old property in Cove Creek in Pisgah National Forest to Mr. George Vanderbilt. The date, 1867, was found painted on the chimney of a log cabin on the property - which is the assumed year of purchase. This cabin has since been relocated to present-day Camp Carolina.

Due to the area's mountain landscape, cool summers and recreation opportunities as well as historic access by railroad, camping first took place at this site in 1916. Camp Keystone for Girls rented the property from C. M. Siniard, using W. W. I surplus tents for camper accommodations. However, Camp Keystone only operated three years on the Siniard Farm because two of the girls contracted typhoid fever in 1919. Camp Keystone was then moved to its present location on Cashiers Valley Road.

Professor D. Meade Bernard and Dr. Joseph "Jerry" McConnell, along with five other original stockholders leased the Siniard Farm for the 1924 camp season. A \$2,000 down payment was made with the understanding that the rental fee for the first year would be \$800. If they decided to buy, the down payment and rental fee would apply to the purchase price. The land, over 300 acres, was purchased on November 18, 1924, for \$20,000. Bernard and McConnell had discontinued their affiliation with Camp Sapphire at the close of the 1923 session and decided to start a new camp to be called Camp Carolina. Camp Sapphire was bought later by Ecusta and used as the recreational grounds for its employees (the current Straus Park development).

It is worthwhile to know more of the two founders of Camp Carolina. Professor Bernard graduated from Washington and Lee with a L.L.B. degree. While teaching in Jacksonville, Florida, he served as Camp Sapphire's representative in Florida and was Assistant Director of Camp Sapphire from 1917 through 1923. Professor Bernard continued his career as head of the Math Department at Lee High School in Jacksonville, Florida. He ultimately retired from teaching as the result of a stroke in 1938, but continued as the Camp Director until his death in 1945. Dr. McConnell, Dean of Faculty and Professor of History at Davidson College, was Camp Sapphire's representative in North and South Carolina. He was also an Assistant Director of Camp Sapphire.

The original property consisted of a small lake, an apple orchard, the Siniard home (later used as the camp infirmary and office and where the Eagle Run Condos now stand), farmland which became the golf course (now the Meadows all the way to the lake), and a log cabin. Two liquor stills were also found on the property when the camp opened in 1924, but they were removed shortly thereafter.

The development of Camp Carolina was lauded this way in Henry W. Wack's More About Summer Camps, p. 80, "Camp Carolina is physically the peer of the best camps in America and Europe. The camp is an illustration of the deliberate camp purpose - it did not just grow. The entire physical layout was conceived and planned by expert campers, builders and an engineer."

Mr. Roy Morrow was the architect and designer of Camp Carolina and did an excellent job in planning its layout. (Morrow family members still live in Brevard.) Thirty-two new cabins had been built by 1925, in addition to a dining hall and gym. Lodges were added later. The barn on the John and Mary Maxwell property (where Arby's and Enmark are today) was used for the stables; horseback riding was introduced in 1931. A lodge to serve as a game room was built at the dam during the 1930s. This was one of the few buildings not moved to the present Camp Carolina. The chimney still remains along the trail near the lake.

Professor Bernard planted the beautiful maples and white pines still seen on the property—the white pines delineated the remaining Siniard farm from Camp Carolina. The first caretaker, Joe H. Garren and son, Marvin, kept the grounds in excellent condition. Mr. Garren had served as groundskeeper for Camp Sapphire; he was lured to work at Camp Carolina with the promise of a place to live on the campgrounds. Anne Garren Flynn, granddaughter of Joe Garren, still lives on the family property, bought in 1930 by her father, Marvin. This property adjoins Deerlake Village and is situated off Deerlake Road behind the Enmark station.

College professors, athletic directors and coaches, counselors, and high school principals and teachers from throughout the South made up the outstanding staff that Professor Bernard assembled each year—this was the secret of the success of Camp Carolina. College students supported their work as assistants. The camp was known for its strong sports, crafts, and outdoors programs. Bud Pritchett, a current resident of Deerlake, spent his summers at Camp Carolina where his father, Norton G. Pritchett, who was athletic director at Davidson College and later at the University of Virginia, was Chief of Counselors. Bud attended camp here both as a camper and as a counselor.

After Dr. Bernard's death in 1945, his son, Dick, served as the camp director until 1952. However, Dick found his teaching duties at Yale too demanding to continue as director. In 1960, Nath Thompson, Sr. was hired as full-time Director and Manager. After Professor Bernard's wife's death, Mr. and Mrs. Joe McConnell (Dr. McConnell's son and Professor Bernard's daughter, Elizabeth—children of the original owners) bought out all of the stockholders and became the sole owners in 1952. Joe McConnell was prominent in the corporate world and President of RCA, later at Palmolive-Peat; he also served on various government boards.

Jerry Stone, a current homeowner in Deerlake, served as head counselor and program director (1965-1967) and head of the canoe program (1972). Jerry and Nath Thompson, full-time Camp Director from 1960, eventually bought Camp Carolina in 1981 and continued to operate the camp in 1982 on the old site. During this season, they began looking for suitable property, farther from town, for a new camp. When the Meece property across the ridge from Camp Carolina became available, they bought 224 acres for \$500,000. With a background in college administration, camp work, and involvement in the coal mining industry in West Virginia, Jerry used his knowledge of moving buildings on skids to move 51 of the 56 buildings to the new site located on Lamb's Creek Road. The process was done in a manner that maintained the area aesthetics. During the moving only two trees were cut down, sediment ponds were installed to control drainage and denuded areas were reseeded.

In August 1981, Joe McConnell decided to sell the camp. The land was sold to NC-GA, Inc., a corporation wholly owned by Brevard Federal Savings and Loan Association for \$998,000. It was then sold to Carefree Carolina Corporation, which started developing the property with condominiums. The property was annexed to Brevard in 1982. Reportedly, at this time Carefree Carolina paid \$250,000 to the City of Brevard toward costs of city utilities installations. At this time, Deerlake Road was improved and extended as far as the lake. After extensive legal

proceedings related to the bankruptcy of Carefree Carolina, the property was returned to NC-GA, Inc. on the steps of the courthouse; and in 1984 it was sold to Consolidated Ventures of Greenville, South Carolina. In 1985, the City of Brevard accepted for ownership, maintenance, and operation, dedication of public improvements from the developers of private property in accordance with provisions of Brevard City Code (waterlines, fire hydrants, sewer lines, manholes, street culverts, curb and gutters, sidewalks, rights of way, and all applicable appurtenances, equipment and facilities). In 1988, Greenwood Development Corporation purchased Deerlake Village from Consolidated Ventures.

Carefree Carolina began building the Eagle Run condominiums in 1983; the major investor was from Florida. Phil and Leta Reynolds bought the model in the fall of 1984. In 1984, Consolidated Ventures of Greenville, South Carolina, bought Carefree Carolina. The owners, Bill Bashor and his brother, were contractors and built the Quail Run condominiums as well as five cottages. Blair Willard, the second owner of a Quail Run condo, bought in 1985. Dimps Realty became the listing agent with Mary Alice Baker as on-site broker. As each condominium unit reached 75 per cent ownership, it, according to law, formed its own association with governing bodies according to its covenants. The Bashor Brothers knowing of Greenwood, contacted them. Greenwood Development Corporation purchased Deerlake Village in 1988.

Greenwood began building in the cottage area in 1988. They also developed the road system beyond the lake. Buyers of mountain lots were allowed to select their own builder. During this time, Greenwood was represented by Bob Sharp who was in charge of construction, although he was in Brevard only part-time. Greenwood contracted with different builders during the cottages' construction period. Dimps Realty continued to market the lots in the cottage and mountain areas, and later in the Meadows as well as the Lakeside and Creekside sites.

It was during this time that the residents formed the Deerlake Club, basically a social organization. A constitution and by-laws were written, and officers were elected. Membership was extended to everyone who paid a small fee, and Ellen Biggs was the first president. To promote a sense of community, the first directories included only names and phone numbers, not addresses. Club members acted as the "eyes and ears" of Greenwood, informing Greenwood if builders were not taking the right precautions. The Clubhouse, with a deck, was built in 1989-90 (it was enlarged in 1996 with the enclosure of the deck area). Members took care of amenities, assuming responsibility for administering and looking after the pool and tennis court. The DEERLAKE DIARY was started. Residents remember this as a time of lots of fun and fellowship.

There were about 30 houses built by 1990, and the first Annual Meeting of Deerlake Village Homeowners Association, Inc. was held in December of that year. The assessment fee was \$285 per lot. By the time there were about 40 houses, Alan Buckreus was approached by Greenwood to serve as a resident director of DVCA (Deerlake Village Community Association). Buckreus and Bill Stapleton were the two resident members of the first Board along with Greenwood representatives, Joy Steverson, Bob Sharp and Julian J. Nexsen, Jr. This five-member Board was in existence until the development was turned over to DVCA, as we know it today.

In 1992, Sue Boxill moved into her newly-built house, but she found that mail could not be delivered because there was no street name. The post office accepted her suggested name of White Squirrel Lane and mail delivery to her home began.

In 1997, when 75 percent of the cottage and mountain lots were sold, Greenwood turned over management to the residents of Deerlake Village Community Association, DVCA. The first

elected Board of Directors consisted of Alan Buckreus, President; Pete Bickett, Vice President; Karla Atkinson, Secretary, Bob Morris, Treasurer and Al Hosmer, Building and Grounds. For four months prior to DVCA taking control, Bob Morris had worked setting up the accounting system with capital reserve allocations for the clubhouse, swimming pool, and for major landscaping. The assessment was \$360. People were asked to pay early so a bank account could be opened. Greenwood paid the assessment fee on the 144 lots they owned but had not sold. At the end of the first year, all bills had been paid with \$14,000 left over. Deerlake Club merged into the DVCA at this time.

In 1999, the Board, with Richard Murphy, President, developed an agreement with Greenwood and the City of Brevard to install a traffic light at the intersection of Deerlake Road and US 64. Since the State did not consider this a priority project, Greenwood Development contributed \$24,000, the City \$16,000, and DVCA \$4,000. The traffic light was installed by the State in 2001.

Marketing of lots in the Meadows began in 1995, although done in three different phases. Alan Lait, representing Greenwood, was in charge of construction and was on site full time. Later, in 2000, the Board, with Bud Pritchett as President, developed with Greenwood the Meadows Annexation Agreement. This was approved by the membership in 2001, and the Board was increased from five to seven members. In 2002, Greenwood deeded the common area bordering the drainage ditch and Lambo Creek behind the homes on Cambridge Drive to the individual property owners whose property bordered this area.

In 2003, the Board, with Karol Kahrs as President, developed an exit agreement with Greenwood Development Corp. The assessment was raised from \$450 to \$500 to cover increases in the Reserve accounts. This exit agreement is comprised of: 1) annexation of the final 16 building lots (Lakeside and Creekside) into the Association; 2) creating a Conservation Easement for 38+ acres which includes the lake and dam, land west of the lake and other smaller areas. The grantee is Carolina Mountain Conservancy, Hendersonville, NC; 3) deeding the remainder of the common area to DVCA; and 4) other considerations. The conservancy agreement was finalized and recorded at the Brevard N.C. Courthouse on November 8, 2004. The exit agreement, signed June 23, 2003, will be finalized with the sale of all 16 properties or 3 years plus 4 months, whichever occurs first. The conservancy will be turned over to DVCA at that time, and DVCA will replace Greenwood Development Corporation as the grantor.

In 2003, with complete ownership and management responsibility soon to be with DVCA, the Board proceeded to expand and restructure existing committees as needed with members representing all areas of Deerlake Village. New committees, as needed, were formed. Committees were assigned the responsibility of developing goals for maintaining assets and amenities and for projecting future needs. In 2004, the Board, with the help of the committees, began developing a long-range plan for tying together finances, needs, and talents of Deerlake Village. This long-range plan is to be based on surveys sent to the voting and non-voting community members. This long-range plan is to be ultimately approved by the voting members of DVCA.

The DEERLAKE DIARY, published monthly, has been and is a good source of community information and continues to be a unifying force in the community. Marilyn Short started the newsletter; Bob Reaume, Ruth Behrens, and Bud and Norma Ackerman later edited it. Lil Clark is the current editor.

Deerlake Village, once a farm, then a boys' summer camp, and now home to 200-plus homeowners continues to be a place of natural beauty. It has gone through growing pains along the way, but the future certainly looks bright. It is the charge of the present residents to insure that this very special place be managed sustainably for future generations to enjoy. Along with the natural beauty, the residents are what make Deerlake Village special. A continued effort to involve everyone in social and recreational activities, as well as in policy making, will enhance and perpetuate the good will found here.

Marietta Lacyk
November, 2004

DEERLAKE VILLAGE TIMELINE

1867	Purchased by Mr. Gaston Siniard
1916-1919	Camp Keystone for Girls
1924	Purchased by D. Meade Bernard and Joseph McConnell and group of 5. Started Camp Carolina
1952	Mr. and Mrs. Joe McConnell became sole owners
1960	Nath Thompson, Sr. hired as full-time Director and Manager
1981	Camp Carolina land sold to NC-GA, Inc.
1982	Last year for operation of Camp Carolina on property, buildings moved to present Camp Carolina on Lamb's Creek Road
1982	NC-GA Inc. sold property to Carefree Carolina
1982	Property annexed by Brevard
1983	Building of Eagle Run Condos started
1984	NC-GA, Inc. reclaimed property and sold it to Consolidated Ventures Building started of Quail Run Condos and 5 cottages
1985	City of Brevard accepted public improvements from developers
1988	Consolidated Ventures sold to Greenwood Development Corp. Building continued in cottage area and on mountain lots
1989-90	Clubhouse built
1990	First annual meeting of Deerlake Village Homeowners Assoc.
1995	Marketing of lots in Meadows began
1996	Clubhouse deck enclosed
1996	Greenwood turned over management to residents (DVCA)
2001	Meadows annexed
2002	Common area behind Meadows deeded to homeowners by Greenwood
2003	Exit agreement approved by DVCA and Greenwood
2005	Conservancy agreement amended, finalized., and recorded
2005	Exit agreement with Greenwood finalized.
2006	Park Project completed
2006	DVCA Covenants and Bylaws accepted by homeowners

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