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# Corridor Discovery

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ABOUT PROGRESS ALONG THE S.C. HERITAGE CORRIDOR

## Official Designation Recognizes Importance of Heritage Corridor

Oct. 3, 1996 was a big day for South Carolina's Heritage Corridor program. After years of effort by SCPRT and other state organizations, Congress finally gave official designation to the 240-mile long corridor that stretches from the Blue Ridge foothills to the Atlantic Ocean.

"Congressional approval tells people across the country that this part of South Carolina played a significant role in the development of our nation," said Gov. David Beasley. "It says South Carolina made a significant contribution to this country's history." State and local officials say national designation is significant because it gives the corridor credibility as an important tourism destination. They also say designation will help with fund-raising efforts.

The Heritage Corridor spans 14 counties and weaves the threads of South Carolina's history, culture and natural attractions into a rich and colorful tapes-

Carolina. "The Corridor will bring capital investment, jobs, visitors and millions of new tourism dollars to undiscovered areas of our state," said Grace Young, director of the SCPRT. The Corridor could attract as many as 700,000 visitors and generate \$83.5 million in new tourism revenue each year when it reaches full development, she said.

The concept of national heritage areas has been growing over the past 10 years. According to the National Coalition for Heritage Areas, these areas have a distinctive sense of place and are unified by large-scale natural resources, and strong cultural or historic themes. Heritage areas are usually "cohesive, dynamic environments where private ownership predominates, and will continue to dominate, but where change can be creatively guided to benefit both people and place." South Carolina's Heritage Corridor project will continue to develop



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— David Beasley  
*Governor of South Carolina*



*Scenic view from the South Carolina Heritage Corridor.*

try. Four Discovery Centers will serve as gateways to regions along the corridor. The corridor also will be a catalyst for economic development in rural South

over the coming decade through public-private partnerships.

The Corridor plan does not involve the taking of any private property.

# Nature-Based Tourism Interest Is Growing

South Carolina's Heritage Corridor is attracting a lot of attention because of all the historic and cultural destinations along the 240-mile long route. But travelers will also get a chance to see and explore some of the state's best natural attractions during their tour, including mountain waterfalls, the ACE Basin, the Savannah River lakes, numerous nature preserves and 24 state parks. Interest in nature-based tourism is growing all across the country and South Carolina has the potential to attract hundreds of thousands of new visitors every year because of its outdoor beauty.

"Nature-based tourism is one of the hottest trends in the tourism industry," said Jim Wescott, director of the Lowcountry and Resort Islands Tourism Commission. According to the 1995 American Traveler Survey, 34 million Americans

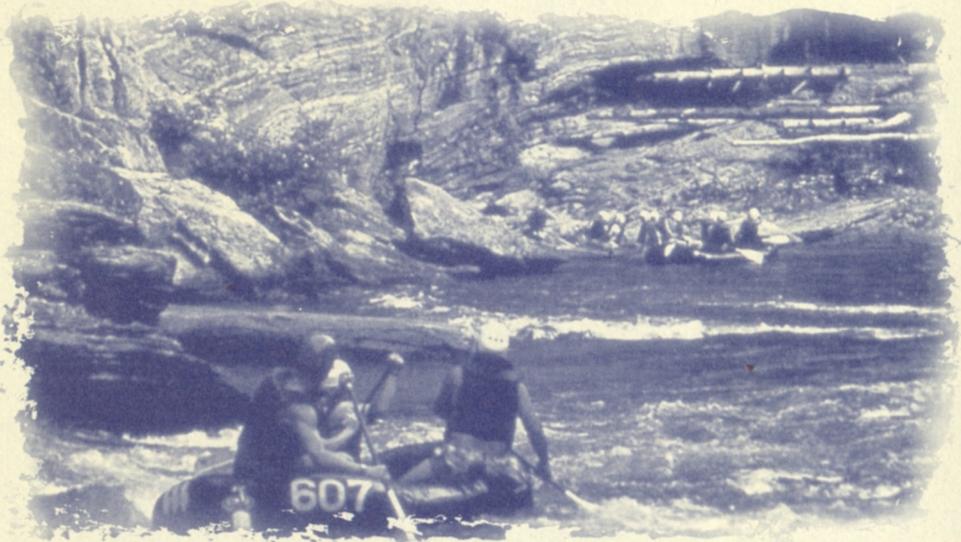
took a nature-based trip on their last vacation or plan to on their next one. Nature-based tourism conserves the environment and provides an economic base for the area's residents.

There are countless opportunities for nature-based tourism development along the Heritage Corridor. Local communities could clear nature trails through private forests, train guides to lead bird-watching tours, or use a nearby river to support a canoe and kayak business. But there is a risk involved. "The trick with nature-based tourism is using your resources for economic benefit without destroying or endangering the resources," says Charlie Sweat, president of the South Carolina Nature-Based Tourism Association. Most experts agree the key to any nature-based tourism development is balance.

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*Lowcountry and Resort Islands  
Tourism Commission Director*



*Paddling the Chattooga River.*

## Historic Sites Threatened

Many historic structures in South Carolina face the threat of destruction every day. A partnership of statewide organizations has compiled a list of the 11 most endangered historic sites in the state. Many of these sites are located in the Heritage Corridor. The following structures were lost, saved, or remain threatened within the Corridor:

- **Lost:** Winnamaker House, South Carolina State University campus, Orangeburg. This Gothic Revival House built by slave artisans burned in May.
- **Saved:** Bedon-Lucas House, Walterboro. Purchased by the Colleton County Historical and Preservation Society, this 1820 Federal-style cottage has applied for a Legacy Trust grant to stabilize the structure and create a house museum, meeting space and offices for the society.
- **Threatened:** Dr. Benjamin E. May's Birthplace, Ninety Six. Interested preservationists

are seeking an agreement with the current owner. The Shamrock Hotel, Blackville, recently faced demolition efforts and continues to deteriorate. The Village of Willington, McCormick County, is a one-block commercial district that survives from the Willington Academy, which produced three South Carolina governors, four Georgia governors, and a U.S. attorney general.

For more information on these historic properties call the Palmetto Trust office at (803) 771-6132.

The 1997 list is being compiled and will be announced early this year. Several sponsoring organizations have committed to assist the listed properties. These organizations include: American Institute of Architects-SC Chapter; Palmetto Trust for Historic Preservation; SC Department of Archives and History; SC Downtown Development Association; and the SC Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism.

## B&B DEVELOPMENT

They're a growing part of South Carolina's lodging industry, and you can find them in rural areas, small towns and big cities. Bed and breakfast inns have an air of Southern charm and hospitality and more people these days are looking for an alternative to big name/big chain hotels. Bed and breakfast inns give visitors a chance to meet area residents and learn first hand about life in that community. Visitors also get great service from innkeepers who will often help tourists find the best places to eat, unique shopping experiences and local points of interest. Bed and breakfast inns help pump needed tourism dollars into many rural areas.

The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism offers assistance to the state's bed and breakfast industry, including technical assistance during start-up, operation and marketing. The Heritage Tourism Development Office offers a complimentary development packet for aspiring innkeepers. The brochures included are *Beginning a Bed and Breakfast in South Carolina*, *Developing a Marketing Plan for a B&B*, and *A Marketing Checklist*. A list of B&Bs for sale is also available. SCPRT assisted with the organization of the South Carolina B&B Association, which now includes 115 members, and helps publish a directory, *Bed and Breakfasts in South Carolina*.

If you know someone who is interested in developing a new B&B, or would like assistance in upgrading an existing one, have them contact Carole Mullis at (803)734-1449.

### SCPRT Creates Heritage Tourism Development Office

The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism has created The Heritage Tourism Development Office. The new division will be responsible for guiding the development of the South Carolina Heritage Corridor and for identifying and developing other corridors in South Carolina. Like South Carolina's first corridor, which traverses 14 counties from Oconee in the Upstate to Charleston along the coast, future corridors will focus on the natural, cultural and historic resources of designated areas that together form the unique chapters of South Carolina's history.

Curt Cottle joined the staff earlier this year as director of the new Heritage Tourism Development Office. He will set the direction for the overall heritage tourism program. Joan Davis, meanwhile, will manage the South Carolina Heritage Corridor and will supervise the four regional coordinators. To support the corridor and the other heritage tourism initiatives in the state, Carole Mullis will continue her role working with economic development opportunities in heritage areas, and Jennifer Stucker Rennicks will monitor and assist with the development of nature-based tourism projects.



Liberty House bed & breakfast, a restored 1902 southern home located in Liberty, SC.

## Opportunities Resource Ideas...

### • SC Nature-Based Tourism Association:

Information on nature-based tourism development.

Tim Todd (864) 233-2690

Charlie Sweat (803) 549-5591

### • SC Sea Grant Extension Program:

Information on coastal grants and resources.

Bob Bacon (803) 727-2075

### • SC Bed and Breakfast Association:

Information on starting or improving a bed and breakfast.

Warren Bowen (803) 328-1913

The Book & The Spindal, Rock Hill

### • SC Professional Paddlesports Association:

Information on canoeing, kayaking, rafting, rentals, tours, and instruction in the state of South Carolina.

Ed Wrightson (803) 796-4505

Adventure Carolina, Columbia

### • National Trust for Historic Preservation:

Information on preservation of historic structures.

(800) 944-6847

World Wide Web site:

<http://www.nthp.org>

### • Palmetto Trust for Historic Preservation:

Statewide preservation organization aimed at saving South Carolina's historic structures.

Kathy Newman (803) 771-6132

### • SC Arts Commission:

Cultural Visions grants for rural community available.

Marion Draine (803) 734-8764

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### January

LowCountry Oyster Festival, Charleston	19
Camellia Walks, Middleton Place, Charleston	21,23,25

### February

Civil War Lantern Tour, Rivers Bridge State Park	1
3rd Annual Historic Bed & Breakfast Tour, Charleston	2
Southeastern Wildlife Exposition, Charleston	14-16
Daffodil Days at Magnolia Plantation, Charleston	14-28
Black Heritage Month Celebration, North Charleston	16
March for Parks: An Earth Day Event, Charles Towne Landing	19-20
Battle of Aiken, Aiken	21-23
A Day in the Life of a Slave, Old Dorchester State Park	22
An Old Fashioned Quilting Bee, Old Santee Canal State Park	22

### March

Handmade, S.C. Artisans Center, Walterboro	8,15,22
Thoroughbred Trials, Aiken	15
Canoeing the Edisto, Colleton State Park	22
Steeplechase and Hunt Meet, Aiken	22
Tour of Old Dorchester, Old Dorchester State Park	22
Native American Day, Oconee Station State Park	22
Waterfall Series Day Hike, Devils Fork State Park	22
Governor's Frog Jump and Egg Striking Contest, Springfield	28-29
African American Storytelling, Redcliffe Plantation State Park	29
Spring Stroll '97, Colleton State Park	29

### April

FlowerTown Festival, Summerville	4-6
20th Annual Cooper River Bridge Run/Walk, Mt. Pleasant	5
Spring at Hampton, Hampton Plantation State Park	5
Handmade, S.C. Artisans Center, Walterboro	5,12,19
Historic Pendleton Spring Jubilee, Pendleton	5-6
Bamberg County Arts Alive, Bamberg	10-12
World Grits Festival, St. George	11-13
LowCountry Cajun Festival, Charleston	13
Aiken BBQ Blast, Aiken	18-19
Spring Clogging Festival, Oconee State Park	18-19
Colleton County Rice Festival, Walterboro	25-27
S.C. Festival of Roses, Orangeburg	25-27
Flora of Savannah Valley, Hickory Knob State Park	26
Blessing of the Fleet & Seafood Festival, Mt. Pleasant	27

Great ways to experience South  
Carolina's Heritage Corridor!

**REGION 1  
IN THE  
SPOTLIGHT**

HIGHLIGHTING  
SC REGIONS ONE  
AT A TIME



**Southern Living  
Designer House  
To Be Region 1  
Discovery Center**

*Southern Living* magazine and the South Carolina Botanical Garden at Clemson University are teaming up to help with a Discovery Center for the Upstate.

*Southern Living* is building a model home in the garden that will be on display for a year. The house will then be converted and used as the Discovery Center and a visitor's center for the garden and the Campbell Geological Museum. The Region 1 Discovery Center will interpret the rich story of the Upstate's cultural, natural, and historic heritage. It will also encourage visitors to explore the South Carolina Botanical Garden.

The South Carolina Botanical Garden is located near the Clemson University campus and encompasses 270 acres of cultivated and natural landscapes. The garden also includes historic sites, nature trails, demonstration gardens, public sculpture programs, and wildlife habitats.

**Heritage Corridor**

**Region 1: Anderson, Oconee, Pickens**

Clemson's Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management conducted a study of tourists in the region. Students gave questionnaires to about 300 visitors at 15 natural, cultural and historic sites and festivals. Demographic, trip and travel decision-making information and the importance of natural, cultural and historic sites were evaluated. The survey will provide information about heritage tourists that will help Region 1 develop programs and market their resources.

The Appalachian Council of Governments is developing a management plan for the Cherokee Foothills Scenic Highway, commonly referred to as S.C. 11. The project started with a survey of landowners near the highway. Their input will be used to draft a plan that will be presented during community meetings in the spring 1997.

The Hagood Mill, an 1840s grist mill in Pickens County, has been restored and is open to the public. In addition, the Pickens County Museum opened after being damaged by fire in 1994. The museum features a new upstairs gallery, a renovated downstairs, an elevator, and new exhibits.

The Anderson County Arts Center and Anderson County Heritage Corridor Board have developed a photography exhibit detailing the resources of the county. The exhibit will travel to communities throughout the county to generate enthusiasm and appreciation for the resources.

**Region 2: Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, McCormick**

The Burt-Stark Mansion will get a facelift and the separate 1830s kitchen building will be restored. Pittsburgh Paints has donated the paint and will feature the mansion on its nationally distributed chart of historic paint colors.

**REGIONAL UPDATE**

The Dorn Mill grist mill is being renovated for use as a museum/tourist attraction. This will preserve a unique example of agricultural architecture and will provide an opportunity to interpret the economic history of the Southeast.

Slade's Lake Recreational Park will add a much needed natural resource to Edgefield County. The park will provide a place where tourists can picnic, fish or take a stroll on the nature trail.

Biddle Hall will be restored and opened as an African American museum and cultural center.

The McGowan-Barksdale House will be opened as a museum and headquarters for the Abbeville Historical Society. Visitors will be invited to tour the rare Gothic-style servant quarters behind the main house and the restored school in the basement of the main house.

**Region 3: Aiken, Bamberg, Barnwell, Orangeburg**

With 36 incorporated towns and four other participating "areas," the communities of Region 3 are continuing to join forces and cluster their historic sites, nature-based attractions and cultural events.

Region 3 and the town of Blackville presented a workshop entitled "Discovering and Preserving Your Local History," in November. The project was funded with a grant from the S.C. Humanities Council.

The Agricultural Heritage Center, site of the Region 3 Discovery Center, has repaired the roofs on the two buildings donated by Clemson University. The first of three groups of Americorp workers has begun renovations and landscaping of the buildings.

The town of Denmark celebrated the grand re-opening of the Dane Theater on Sept. 20. The evening included performances from local choral groups and African American music by Dr. Charles Boyer.

Elloree has opened a weekly farmers' market and Eutawville is working with the Palmetto Conservation Foundation on the conservation and interpretation of Eutaw Springs Battlefield.

We welcome the towns of Barnwell, Norway and Springfield, who have organized their Corridor committees.

**Region 4: Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester**

Region 4 is working to establish community committees, and the committees are compiling local inventories and planning how the Heritage Corridor can benefit their areas.

Sarah Fick has succeeded Daniel Carey as chair of the Charleston County Corridor Committee. Ms. Fick is a local historian and preservationist.

The Charleston Committee has completed a brochure on the African American Trail featuring The Old Slave Market, McLeod Plantation, the Aiken-Rhett House and the Avery Research Center for African-American History and Culture.

Lynn Harris from the University of South Carolina's Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology has completed a water trail for canoes and kayaks that reaches up the Ashley River and allows visitors to view shipwrecks and sites.

The Carolina Porch restaurant, located in St. George, was listed in the September issue of *Southern Living* magazine. Owners Peach and Mike Dilley extend an invitation to visit.



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**Corridor Discovery**

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