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SPOTLIGHT COMMUNITY

HABERSHAM

by Kathy Pettit

Facts About Habersham

Six ways to explore your options, *plus* additional related reading!

In the Tradition of Beautiful Coastal Towns...

There was a time when neighbors knew and genuinely cared for one another. Homes and neighborhoods were designed to encourage relationships, and the simple art of conversation. Nowhere was this seen more than in the coastal communities of the South, where being friendly and helpful was simply what you did.

There are those who long for those days, master designers who recognize the value in neighborhood planning, and builders who appreciate the vision. Now, there is Habersham, a community in Beaufort, South Carolina, which enchants all who find it.

Diane Voge is one who searched until she found Habersham.

“I lived so many places, from Clinton, Iowa, to Memphis, Souix City, Arlington, Virginia, and on, until I moved to Atlanta, where I lived for about 15 years,” she explained. “About five years before I retired, I started looking for a smaller community. I’d travel around, taking long weekends, and towns. Beaufort was on my list, because it met my criteria – charming, a real downtown, good medical facilities, a university or small college, and cultural activities.”



Thoughtful planning is evidenced by the Post Office, built in keeping with the neighborhood. Ditto with the fire station and Information Center, and the cozy downtown now underway.

Ms. Voge was introduced to Habersham when it was little more than a vision for the future, with three homes built. She looked it over, liked what she saw and heard, and decided to trust the vision. She purchased land three years before she retired.

“I just couldn’t believe the birds in the marsh, the natural environment, and the commitment to keep nature a full partner in the process,” she said. Now, she lives in Habersham and is happily watching the vision become a reality.

"I didn't want a seniors-only neighborhood," she explained. "I wanted a nice group of people of all ages, and that's what we've got."

"Because I am retired, I have the whole day to do as I please," she laughed. "I never dreamed I would become such an outdoor person, but here it seems so inviting." Ms. Voge has learned to kayak, and enjoys the sport with friends, out on the tidal marshes. She has tried her hand at crabbing and shrimping, and now is using photography as a way to capture the essence of all that she sees.

"I didn't want a seniors-only neighborhood," she explained. "I wanted a nice group of people of all ages, and that's what we've got." She gets together with a group of about 15-20 Habersham women for Tuesday night suppers and a book club. She goes to town and dines at Plum's, on the waterfront. She enjoys the Italian food at nearby Panini's, and she's adopted a cat, named Periwinkle. There is no doubt that she's embraced all the neighborhood and town have to offer.



Can't beat a classic. Beaufort's early homes had high ceilings and floors to combat mosquitoes and catch breezes. At Habersham, this pleasing, practical tradition continues.

Habersham hosts oyster roasts, Lowcountry shrimp boils, seasonal activities such as Easter egg hunts and other events designed to bring people together.

"At Halloween, we had time for the trick-or-treaters, who were then taken on a hayride, while the adults had a lovely dinner together. The children showed up later, and it was a great experience." She also appreciates the fact that neighbors are forging individual friendships, as new homeowners arrive from New York to California, as well as from Atlanta and Decatur.

"I like the fact that Habersham attracts those who have lived in the south all their lives, as well as those who have been drawn here from everywhere else," she said.

Those new residents are drawn together by the same vision that was used by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company "DPZ" for the original town plan. In fact, a friend of Ms. Voge recently visited and told her that living in Habersham is like living in a novel – a very good novel. The difference is that this is a real town. There's nothing contrived about it, as families of all shapes, sizes, ages, and backgrounds will attest.

This Neighborhood Encourages Friendships

For Gary and Mary DeVall, the move from Wichita Kansas to Habersham came after the couple investigated a number of options. "I was a salesman before I retired, and traveled throughout the United States for more than 30 years," Gary DeVall explained. "Because of all that travel, I had a good overview of living conditions and housing across the country, and I can tell you that, in Habersham, the quality and value of what you get for your money far outweighs any other place I know about, anywhere in the country."

The DeValls also enjoy the bond that has developed among neighbors. “Everyone I have met is more than willing to help you with any situation you might have,” he said. “These are a bunch of friendly, helpful people living out here.”

The community gatherings are a plus, especially when everyone brings a dish and eats together. Both of them enjoy the Habersham pool, and Mrs. DeVall loves walking in the neighborhood, where she feels safe and secure.

The town of Beaufort is another plus for the couple. “We have friends from all over that we met when I was working, and so many of them have visited us since we moved here. They must love Beaufort, because they keep coming back!”

His advice for those contemplating a move? “Buy land now, while you can,” he said. “When we came here, we bought a home site, and then a house. Now, we’re building a townhouse, which is hopefully going to be our last move.”

Even their little dog, Tucker, (a snoodle – poodle/schnauzer mix) seems to approve. “He gets excited just driving out to pick up the mail,” says Mr. DeVall.



*Two essentials are a porch and a view.
With centuries-old live oaks,
pristine marshes and endless water,
Habersham presents a visual feast.*

Where History Meets Nature

There is something about the air in Beaufort. Fresh waters from inland rivers find the ocean at Beaufort, and hundreds of islands dot the marsh landscape. The town boasts an historic district where families protect cherished structures and strolling is a sport.

Hollywood discovered the charms of Beaufort long ago, and filmed *The Big Chill* and *Forest Gump* there, among others. The area has attracted its share of growth, but has managed to blend past and present together in a comfortable co-existence.

*“We have friends from all over that we met when I was working,
and so many of them have visited us since we moved here.
They must love Beaufort, because they keep coming back!”*

Restaurants range from simply casual, to openly elegant, and always, fresh seafood is abundant on tables everywhere. Health care facilities are excellent, perhaps in part because of the nearby presence of the U.S. Naval Hospital.

A private foundation helps provide laptop computers to students, and quality education is a top priority for the community.

Just one hour away are the grand dames of the South, Charleston, South Carolina and Savannah, Georgia. Hilton Head Island is less than an hour away.

Back at Habersham, the sidewalks, lovely streetscapes, and traditional Lowcountry architecture continue to encourage friendships.

The town center is planned for small business and a fitness center is opening. With services and amenities close by, walking has become the preferred mode of travel for many residents of all ages.

Woodland and waterfront parks invite a pause to savor the shade under centuries-old live oak trees, and neighborhood docks are a convenient intersection with the marsh and waterways.



It's all in the details. Planners studied coastal towns and brought back the best of their findings. Setbacks, and the widths for streets and sidewalks have been meticulously designed.

Construction Materials That Reflect The South



When you're not feeling salty, you can submerge yourself in the pool. A fitness center is part of the Habersham plan.

The home designs use indigenous materials which age well and reflect the natural elegance of the Lowcountry. Habersham cottages are unique in design and sited to take advantage of glorious views. They make a perfect second home or year round residence.

Park homes define the park edges and offer expanded views from the front, while the rear yards are designed for create private outdoor living spaces. Village Homes also feature rear courtyards, with back decks.

The Boulevard Homes are dignified and stately, with larger home sites and a sense of importance. And the Marsh Homes create a wonderful backdrop to many marshfront parks. These larger homes harken back to plantations still found throughout the Lowcountry. Their grand facades invite lawn parties, and gatherings among family and friends.

Diane Voge says it is impossible to simply walk her little dog, Calamity. "You walk, and then see someone you know, and stop to chat for a while," she said. "Calamity has never gotten so many dog biscuits."

How To Find Habersham

Directions: From I-95 Southbound, take Exit 33 to US 17 North, continuing onto US 21 South. Once in Beaufort, take a right on SC 170 West toward Hilton Head.

After the first stoplight, and past Cross Creek Shopping Center, turn right at the sign for Robert Smalls Middle School, on W K Alston Dr. At the end of Alston Drive, turn left onto Broad River Blvd. At the flashing yellow light, turn right again onto Joe Frazier Road, then left onto Cherokee Farms Road. Habersham is on the left.

Homesites: \$60,000 to \$600,000

Homes: \$300,000 to \$2,000,000

Price ranges are subject to change.



Dock yourself here. If you want seafood for supper, get familiar with the Habersham docks. Grab some baskets for crab, nets for shrimp, and chicken necks for bait.

Katherine O. Pettit has worked as a writer, magazine editor, printer and public relations consultant. The Columbia resident has published more than 250 articles in magazines and newspapers. Her writing explores a variety of subjects including travel, lifestyles, business and management.

What You Want To Know: Facts About Habersham

- **Developer:** Habersham Land Company
- **Number of acres:** 283
- **Neighborhoods:** 1
- **Number of residences:** 850
- **Number of golf courses:** 50 within one hour
- **Number of pools:** 1
- **Number of tennis courts:** (to be built)
- **Walking/Biking trails:** miles and miles...
- **Equestrian facilities:** N/A
- **New home prices:** \$300,000+
- **Sales Contact:** Michael Asnip (877) 542-2377
- **Annual HOA Dues:** \$630
- **HOA:** Varies by neighborhood
- **Annual HOA Dues:** Varies by neighborhood

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Beaufort, SC

- **HOA Contact and telephone Number:** Jennifer Baum (843) 846-1000
- **Awards:**
 - Best of South Carolina, *CarolinaLiving.com*

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