

## The History of Rivers Edge

Rivers Edge Golf Club and Plantation is located along the Shallotte River<sup>1</sup> about halfway between Shallotte Point at the mouth of the river and downtown Shallotte, North Carolina.<sup>2</sup> The first European settlement along the river is likely to have been Shallotte Point, established in the early 1700s. A more formal town, called Shallotte, was laid out sometime in the mid-1800s at the mouth of the Shallotte River, consisting of residences, stores, a saw mill and other commercial activities. Parts of the Tripp house and six other structures built in the late 1700s survive there today.<sup>3</sup> The foundation and chimney stones of the Elijah Pigott House at 1600 Village Point Road SW are likely to be from the mid-1800s site.<sup>4</sup>

A ferry crossing the Shallotte River existed as early as the 1730s at the site of the present Town of Shallotte. By 1807 there was a bridge across the river. The area next to the river had long attracted itinerant Methodist preachers and a church was built in the early days of the settlement. Parishioners would come and, with no place to stay overnight, they would camp along the river.

Because of its location on the river, Shallotte became the center of trade for the region. Sailing sloops, barges and later shrimp boats sailed up the river, some sailing past today's Rivers Edge to dock in downtown Shallotte which was the upper limit of sloop navigation. Turpentine, rosin, tar, cotton, rice, peanuts, and seafood were loaded on ships to be sent to Wilmington. The river is still navigable to that point today with favorable tides. During Hurricane Matthew (2016), shrimp boats motored up the river to anchor just past Rivers Edge safely out of reach of the storm. Here is one of them heading back down river the day after the storm.

Later, as roads improved, commercial and military traffic was centered on a road from present day Georgetown, South Carolina, to Wilmington, North Carolina. That road crossed the Shallotte River on the downtown Shallotte bridge. passed through the present day Town of Shallotte and crossed the river



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<sup>1</sup> The Shallotte River was originally named for Queen Charlotte, wife of England's George III. As early as 1801 the spelling became Shallotte reflecting the dialect of those living in the area.

<sup>2</sup> Shallotte, North Carolina, is in Brunswick County, at the midpoint between the metropolitan areas of Wilmington, NC and Myrtle Beach, SC. Brunswick County is the fastest growing county county in North Carolina, and is in the top 100 fastest growing counties in the U.S.

<sup>3</sup> (2011). Wilson, Sarah S. **Shallotte Point community traces roots to 1700s settler.** Starnewsonline.com/news/20110602/, accessed 9/11/2016.

<sup>4</sup> (2010). **Comprehensive Historical/Architectural Site Survey of Brunswick County, North Carolina.** Prepared by Landmark Preservation Associates for the Brunswick County Commissioners.

downtown less than two miles from Rivers Edge. Military supplies and materials and growing commercial traffic passed back and forth along that road.

There is no evidence of the immediate area which is today's Rivers Edge being developed or settled other than as part of the pine forest exploitation. Likely several temporary saw mills operated around the area as a typical part of timbering operations. The area was known for producing wooden shingles that were shipped to many places. The turpentine industry also flourished in the forests in and around Rivers Edge in the 1800s and early 1900s.

John and Theresa Mintz owned much of the land from Shallotte to the southwestern end of today's Rivers Edge. Remnants of their house in what came to be known as River Heights at the northern edge of Rivers Edge exist today, in a part of the area known as River Heights. Copas Shores along the lake at the southern end of Rivers Edge also predates the Rivers Edge Plantation and Golf Course.

In 1982, White Investments, a real estate partnership formed by R.D. White III and R.H. White, bought approximately 355 acres of land along the west side of the Shallotte River from Mary C. Mintz. The property was bounded on the east by the river and the west by Copas Road. In R.D. White III's words, he intended to use the land "to build the best golf course on the east coast of the U.S." In 1996, White formed Thee Rock Golf Links, LLC. The business description of the LLC in the original document filed with the NC Secretary of State's office says: "this is a golf course with lots surrounding for sale." The 355 acres purchased in 1982 were augmented in 1998 by additional land on the west side of Copas Road that was part of the Copas Shores development. A 50-acre lake known then as Mill Pond, now Arnold Palmer Lake, was also part of that purchase. Mill Pond lake was built in the 1950s for recreation by R.D. White, Jr. using a drag line to pull land up into a berm along the southwestern side of the lake.

The 1982 purchase brought the development to its present area just over 500 acres (including the lake). The Master Declaration and Development Plan for Rivers Edge Plantation was filed by R.D. White III with the Brunswick County Register of Deeds in April, 1998. Rivers Edge, still known as Thee Rock, was formally approved by the Town of Shallotte as a planned unit development in 1996. The property owners' association for Thee Rock was incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 1997.

Thee Rock development and the golf course initially were the same corporate entity, renamed in 1997 Rivers Edge Golf Club and Plantation, LLC. R.D. White III's initial plan was to clear a rough lay out of the course and then sell lots to finance the construction of the course. Real estate and finance advisors were convincing that the golf course had to be built in order to sell the lots. Mr. White decided to bring in professional golf course design assistance, and accordingly called the Arnold Palmer's design company. After some persuasion, Erik Larson came up from Florida to look at the golf course site, and subsequently he persuaded Arnold Palmer to take the course on.

In 1998, Rivers Edge Golf Club LLC was formed corporately, separating the golf course from the residential portion of the development. White Investments provided the land that is now the golf course, and other investors bought in to build and run the golf course being designed by the Arnold Palmer Design Company. Additional investment in the residential development of Rivers Edge also began in 1998 with the gradual sale of portions of White Investments to Mark A. Saunders. Rivers Edge

**Investments Inc was formed in 2001 with Mark A. Saunders and R. D. White III the principals in Rivers Edge Investments.**

**As of 2021, there are 498 platted lots. Of these, 206 are improved and 292 are unimproved. There are 105 completed single family, detached homes, 39 townhomes in the Bluffs and 62 townhomes in the Gallery. Completed amenities include River Hall which houses our exercise room, library, meeting/commons room and outdoor and indoor pools; tennis/pickle ball courts; a beach house on Holden Beach; and various decorative ponds, walkways, trails and bridges.**