

Walking Around South Carolina 2008 Walk Catawba Valley Virtual Tour

A virtual tour is a way to add interest and motivation to your walking program. It is especially helpful, if you walk on a treadmill or a tract where the scenery seldom changes. As you log your miles on your treadmill, etc., check and see if there is a mile that corresponds. When you get to a corresponding mile, take a moment and read about the location in South Carolina.

The sites were chosen from the book, Reader's Digest's Off the Beaten Path: A Guide to More than 1,000 Scenic & Interesting Places Still Uncrowded and Inviting. A map of South Carolina is located in the packet. We will start you off as we did last year with a historic mill.

Stop 1/Mile 0 - Hagood Mill – Pickens, SC

Nestled among oaks and mountain laurel, this 1825 gristmill is still very photogenic. Benjamin Hagood built the mill along with a tannery and general store, but only the mill remains. The two-story clapboard structure was active for over 100 years until the 1930s. A descendant of Mr. Hagood donated the mill to Pickens County in 1972. The huge wheel is still turned by water from a mountain stream on special occasions. Hagood Mill is open for public tours and demonstrations on the third Saturday of every month from 9:00 AM until 4:00 PM, as well as by appointment. Grounds are accessible for hikes, picnics and sightseeing during daylight hours. Open year round. Call (864) 898-2936 for more information.

Stop 2/Mile 25 - Pleasant Ridge Park – near the town of Landrum, SC

A lake with supervised swimming is a popular feature of this 300-acre park in the scenic foothills of the Blue Ridge. The lake is great for pedal and row boating; however, it is not a choice spot for fishing. Wildlife includes deer, raccoons, bobcats, hawks and redheaded woodpeckers. While black pines, rhododendrons, azaleas, and mountain laurel are expected sites in this park, the abandoned stills along the nature trail may be more surprising. The park also provides a playground, a softball field, game courts, picnic shelters, cabins and campsites. Open year round.

Stop 3/Mile 125 - Museum of York County – Rock Hill, SC

Over 30,000 people visit this museum of natural history, technology and the arts yearly. Located in northwest Rock Hill, MYCO has hands on projects and changing exhibits. A major attraction is the Stans African hall where both displays of African wildlife and a collection of tools, weapons, ceramics and musical instruments crafted skillfully by African natives. With over 200 full-mounted African animals, it is the world's largest collection, by species. The Hall of the Western Hemisphere displays wildlife of North American, including the rare wood bison. Native American culture is reflected in stone tools, pottery, baskets,

and ornaments. The museum also includes Hall of Electrical Energy, Hall of Yesteryear, and the Settlemyre Planetarium. Grounds include a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile natural trail, picnic area and gift shop. Hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. Admission is \$5.00, less for seniors and children.

Stop 4/Mile 150 - Landsford Canal State Park – Catawba, SC

Working with picks and shovels, Irish labors worked three years to create a two-mile stretch of navigable water. It was created to bring cotton from the backcountry to markets in Charleston. Ironically, the railroads put it out of business after only fifteen years (1820-1835). The remarkably well-preserved 200-section of locks built of cut stone is the only remaining example in South Carolina of the engineering techniques and fine masonry work needed for the early-day canals. The arched bridge at the end of the locks contains particularly impressive stonework. A peaceful, shady section along the Catawba River contains tables and fireplaces. Out in the river is one of the largest known stands of rocky spider lilies. These lilies manage to hang tight despite the swift water. Blooming in late May and early June, they create a blanket of white on the river. Hikers can enjoy the $1\frac{3}{4}$ mile towpath and natural trail. Open daily except Christmas from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Admission is \$2.00, less for children.

Stop 5/Mile 200 - Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge – McBee, SC

Located between the cities of McBee and Patrick, Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge is of particular interest for its long history. Fifty-five million years ago the Atlantic Ocean endless pounding of the shores created the dunes that stand there today. More recently in the struggle to thrive, settlers cut the forest and overworked the land. Once the soil was depleted, the farmers left. In 1939, the Federal Government purchased the 46,000 acres and created a wildlife refuge. Today, the restored park contains forests of pines, hickories and persimmons. It is home to 42 species of mammals and 190 species of birds. Hiking trails, a 11-mile drive, observation towers and platforms, and a photo blind provide extensive access to the park's wildlife. Picnicking can be done at the Lake Bee Recreation Area. Seasonal fishing is permitted in designated lakes and creeks. Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge is free of charge, and is open year-round one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset.

Stop 6/Mile 250 - Florence Air and Missile Museum – Florence, SC

Located on a World War II training Base, the Florence Air and Missile Museum is dedicated to the Air Force and Air Corps personnel who fought and died in the line of service. From the dawn of flight, the successes and failures that have made modern aviation and the space program possible are on display. The inside area of the museum includes collections of aircraft, engines, weapons, uniforms, insignia and equipment. Photographs of Amelia Earhart and other women of early aviation are displayed. The space program area includes a Gemini training capsule, instruments, launch computers and a space suit worn by Alan Shepard. Outside, more aircraft, missiles, rockets and tanks are on display.

Open year round seven days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission is \$5.00, less for children.

Stop 7/Mile 400 - Cape Romain Natural Wildlife Refuge – Awendaw, SC

Cape Romain Natural Wildlife Refuge is a 20-mile stretch of coast, barrier reef, salt marshes, and open water. Except for the changes caused by the forces of nature, this area is virtually the same as it was when the Sewee Indians hunted and fished here. Most of the area is inaccessible by land, making it a favorite of pirates who frequented it. The refuge is home to endangered species of pelicans and loggerhead turtles. The visitor center at Moores Landing lists 262 species of birds, plus 76 that are considered rare. The best time to see these birds is during the spring and fall immigrations as well as winter. Other wildlife includes deer, otters, and southern fox squirrels. Keep a watchful eye for alligators, copperheads and cottonmouths. Named for an early settler, Bull Island has a two-mile trail. The island also has a fine beach and a designated area for fishing. So bring your fishing gear and a picnic lunch. Although the refuge is open year round, March through July is the time to visit. The Center is located 1/4 mile north of the refuge office. Hours are Tuesday - Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Phone (843) 928-3368.

Stop 8/Mile 475 - The Francis Beidler Forest in Four Holes Swamp – Harleyville, SC

The Francis Beidler Forest in Four Holes Swamp is the world's largest virgin cypress-tupelo swamp forest. The National Audubon Society owns the 12,500-acre nature preserve with 1,800 acres of ancient trees, some dating back 1,000 years. Named for Francis Beidler, a remarkable lumberman and conservationist, the swamp boasts ancient groves of bald cypresses more than 600 years old and taller than a 10-story building. Alligators, cottonmouths and fish-eating spiders hide among virgin stands of loblolly pines and tupelo gum trees. Being a flooded forest, the vast majority of the swamp is inaccessible. The Four Holes Swamp begins as a small stream in Calhoun County and flows 62 miles through four counties before it reaches the Edisto River and the Atlantic Ocean. Walkers can experience a sample on the 1½ mile boardwalk with 31 informational signs. Experience canoeists can venture into the swamp for a half-day trip with a naturalist guide. The visitor center has photographs, exhibits and a slide show to help visitors understand the swamp system and view the birds, reptiles and mammals that live there. The park is open Tuesday through Sunday year-round. Admission is \$7.00 for adults, \$6.00 for Audubon members and less for children.

Stop 9/Mile 500 - Santee National Wildlife Refuge – Summerton, SC

Established in 1941, this 15,095-acre park is a refuge for a vast array of birds, mammals, fish and reptiles. Over 293 different bird species have been observed. On the banks of Lake Marion, Santee National Wildlife Refuge is ideal for hiking, biking and fishing. Visitors have a good chance of seeing alligators, deer and wild turkeys. The visitor center is located on a cove called Scott's Lake and includes an aquarium, a diorama, and other displays. Located near the visitor's

center is the Santee Indian Mound that dates back more than 3,500 years. Santee refuge includes four units, each with its own unique characteristics. The Pine Island and the Cuddo Units provide the greatest diversity of habitats. Across from Scott's Lake is the site of Fort Watson. General Francis Marion, also known as "The Swamp Fox" recaptured the fort from the British in 1781. The visitor center is open Tuesday through Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Cuddo Unit is not open in March. The wildlife drive is closed every Saturday, September through December.

Stop 10/Mile 550 - Sumter County Historical Society Museum – Sumter, SC

Located on Washington Street in Sumter, this museum contains structures ranging in time from a log house built in the mid-1700s to a 1920s garage. Relocated from a creek side location about 50 miles away, the James family owned the log house for some 130 years. Carriages are on display in the 1920s garage including a classic surrey with fringe on top. The original carriage house includes a railroad dispatcher's office and a turn-of-the-century kitchen. The centerpiece is the late 1840s home built by Williams-Brice. In 1916, the house was extensively renovated. Handsomely furnished with period pieces, the home includes old wedding gowns on mannequins, many portraits, toys, dolls and other household articles from the days before electricity. Designed by landscape architect, Robert E. Marvin, the grounds are beautiful year round. Hours are 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Phone 803-775-0908 for more information.

Stop 11/Mile 600 - Historic Camden Revolutionary War Park – Camden, SC

Camden was once the headquarters of the British General, Lord Cornwallis. A strategic location, it became the focal point of British activity and two Revolutionary War battles. Today, the park that stands on the site that includes original and restored buildings to create the aura of the 1770s. A short self-guiding tour includes the Drakeford House, which houses the museum. Visitors can drive or walk the longer loop that has several notable points of interest, such as the Kershaw-Cornwallis House, 1777 powder magazine and two British outer defense redoubts. A small farmyard may interest children who can pet the domesticated animals. A hiking trail leads to an unspoiled natural scenery reminiscent of the era when settlers first arrived in the area. The grounds are open daily except for major holidays from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The house is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on Sunday from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Guided tour fee is \$5.00, less for seniors and children. Outside the park, other homes of historic and architectural interest may be found in Camden, the oldest existing inland town in South Carolina.

Stop 12/Mile 675 - Orangeburg National Fish Hatchery - Orangeburg, SC

Established in 1911, Orangeburg National Fish Hatchery has over 14,000 visitors annually. Fishermen, young and old, will enjoy the Orangeburg National Fish Hatchery. Recreational fishing is available on the 100-acre lake. Bluegills, bass, catfish and sunfish are some of the species that are propagated here. The aquarium at the visitor center gives one a close look at these fish. The site also

includes a nature trail and picnic pavilion. The hatchery is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. There is no charge to fish the hatchery.

Stop 13/Mile 725 - Rivers Bridge State Park – Ehrhardt, SC

Rivers Bridge State Park was created to honor the soldiers who died in vain while defending the South. In February 1865, a force of Confederate cavalry, artillery, and infantry fought to stop Sherman on his devastating march to Savannah. Outnumbered and outflanked, the Confederates were only able to delay the Union forces two days before they went on to burn McPhersonville and Columbia. It was the only major resistance the Union army encountered on its march from Georgia to South Carolina. Years later the bodies of the Confederate soldiers who died there were brought and reburied. A monument was erected in their honor. A small museum recalls the details of the battle. Ranger-guided tours and special programs educate visitors about military life during the Civil War and the battle. The park also has campsites, picnic areas, playground and a swimming pool. The mile-long nature trail features pines draped with Spanish moss. In the spring, hikers are treated to the sight of blooming azaleas, wisteria, and dogwoods. Fishing is permitted. The park is open year round from Thursday through Monday. Hours are 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Stop 14/Mile 750 - Hampton Plantation State Park – Hampton, SC

The 15-room Greek Revival mansion at Hampton Plantation State Park is all that remains visually true to the plantation era. In the early 1700's until 1860, fields and fields of cotton and rice surrounded the mansion. Today, most of the area is a wilderness of loblolly pine and other native trees. Built in the mid-1700s, the house was eventually left to Archibald Rutledge, a Hampton descendant. North Carolina's first poet laureate, Rutledge restored the home, beginning in 1937. He chronicled this undertaking in his book *Home by the River*. He eventually sold the place to the state of South Carolina and remained there as a tenant until his death in 1973. The home has been left unfurnished to showcase the design. To help show architectural and structural details of the past, areas of some walls have been removed. The grounds are open year round. Admission to the grounds is free from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Home tours are \$4.00 and begin on the hour from noon to 3:00 p.m. The home is open Tuesday through Sunday in the summer and Thursday to Sunday in the winter.

Stop 15/Mile 825 - Aiken State Park – Windsor, SC

Aiken State Park was named in honor of William Aiken, Sr. who has the president of Charleston-Hamburg Railroad. In the 1830's, it was the longest line in the world and a considerable engineering accomplishment. The 1,067-acre park has three fishing ponds with bass and catfish. Hikers can enjoy the three-mile long jungle nature trail. Markers along the trail identify trees such as red maples, water oak, persimmon, sweet bay, and sweet gum. Wildflowers flourish here and are particularly lovely in the spring. More than 160 different species of birds have been observed. Set along the calm, winding South Edisto River, the

park includes areas for swimming, camping and picnicking as well as a playground, softball field, and game areas. Open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., longer during daylight savings time. Admission is \$2.00, less for children.

Stop 16/Mile 925 - Parsons Mountain Lake Recreation – Abbeville, SC

A quiet lake is the centerpiece of this wooded recreational area. Fisherman can fish for crappie, bass, and catfish. The picnic area leads to a supervised swimming area of the lake. The park also provides hiking, riding and tent or trailer camping. The trail to the 80-foot fire tower passes by a series of pits dug by gold miners in the mid-1800s. From the top of the tower is a panoramic view of mixed pine and hardwood forests. The forests are home to a variety of birds, deer and small mammals. Hours vary depending on the season. Park is closed in the winter. Admission is \$3.00 per vehicle per day.

Stop 17/Mile 1,000 - Rose Hill State Park – Union, SC

The Federal style, stucco mansion is the center of this 44-acre park. Governor William Henry Gist owned this *Gone with the Wind* style home. Known as the Secession Governor, he was elected in 1858 and used his residence as his office. The house contains several of the fine furnishings that belonged to Governor Gist, including his wardrobe and four-poster bed. The bed has three hinged steps with a chamber pot concealed in one of them. The park contains picnic tables and a pleasant short nature trail down to the Tyger River. Wild turkeys and deer may be seen. The park is open year round from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The mansion is open in the afternoon daily. Admission to the grounds is free. House tours are \$4.00 for adults, less for children.

If you want to walk back to Hagood Mill (Stop 1) to get your imaginary car, you will get another 75 miles for a total of **1,075 miles**. Thank you for taking this virtual tour of South Carolina with us. I hope that you found the stops interesting – maybe a place for your next vacation or weekend excursion; however, I suggest that you take your car and do your walking after you get there.