

## HAVE YOU HUGGED A CAUSTON BLUFF TREE TODAY?

It was recently reported by our local newspaper that a number of areas in Savannah are losing their tree canopies due to increased residential and commercial development but I'm happy to report that Causton Bluff's canopy is alive and well and growing larger and 'lusher' by the day.

As you approach Causton Bluff's entrance from the west our canopy is seen on the left horizon as a huge, dark green coverage over our cottages that makes one cooler just looking at it. Likewise, approaching Causton Bluff from the east that same canopy is on the right horizon covering our beautiful homes along the Wilmington River. Thanks to our covenant in effect since 1988 no tree, ailing or healthy, can be trimmed or cut down without permission from our board.

Could trees have a history? Indeed they can! In 1987 an archaeological study revealed tree types that grew here as far back as 1,000 AD. Using the science of palynology – the analysis of pollen and spores found in the soil – their presence is revealed to us.

Today, the trees of Causton Bluff proper have become a mixed hardwood forest which includes live oak, water oak, pignut hickory, magnolia, red bag, and mulberry. Our shrubbery layer consists of American holly, sassafras, saw palmetto, blueberry, wax myrtle, green briar, muscadine and common grape. Crepe myrtle trees were added as our homes were built and were planted as decorative additions to our landscaping. Some complain that that the crepe myrtle is our messiest tree, always shedding something year-round like sticky blooms, sap, gummy leaves and hard seed-like pods littering our sidewalks and streets. This plant was originally known as "The Pride of India" which hints that it may have been imported as opposed to being a part of our flora's history. Overall palynologists found that Causton Bluff's environment has not changed dramatically in past centuries. Chestnut and maple trees were once here but have since disappeared. During the years between 1733 and 1865, the years of the residency of landowner Thomas Causton to the end of the Civil War, a significant change occurred due to over harvesting of lumber needed for ship and home building and land clearing to accommodate plantation gardening. Today the future of our trees looks bright.

Finally, you may not be an animist, one who engages in tree hugging, a practice that goes back to prehistoric times when cave sketches reveal that some believed things in nature had a soul or an element of consciousness. Some animists are known to talk to their plants thinking it may aid their growth process.

Animist or not I think we all would agree with the words of Joyce Kilmer, "I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree," especially if it's a Causton Bluff tree.

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