

History



Course designer Jerry Lemons discusses future development plans with owners Hannah and Dwight O'Neal.

converted into a nursery business.

In 1992 the second generation of the O'Neal family assumed ownership of the farm. Dwight and Hannah O'Neal continued the nursery business, but also began thinking about the future. An aerial topography survey of the farm was conducted which resulted in the O'Neals ultimately acquiring an additional 200+ acres adjacent to the family farm. In a fortuitous turn of events, the State of Tennessee had conducted a feasibility study aimed at building a golf course at the nearby Rock Island State Park. Though the course was never built at the state park, the study indicated that the area would benefit from and support a public course. The O'Neals teamed with course designer Jerry Lemons and soon the plans emerged for the Collins River Golf Course. Recognizing the potential for housing development, the O'Neals then decided to open a portion of the property for development. The resulting fifty-four sites went on the market in 2006, with additional phases of development planned for the future.

The O'Neal family have been sustaining themselves from this land for almost half a century, following the traditions laid down by those first settlers of the 1700s. Now, they are sharing this special place with people who want to come and forge a new chapter in a history that dates back to the days when Native Americans, wild animals and white settlers all competed for their place on this special land we call The Reserve at Collins River.

In America's post-Revolutionary War era, newly independent citizens began pressing westward to the frontier in search of their own dreams and to carve their legacy on the landscape of the newly minted nation. Tennessee, at the time being considered the frontier, experienced an influx of these hardy pioneers. In what is present day Warren County, Tennessee, some of those early settlers came to rest on the banks of a gently flowing river . . . the same waterway that someday would be called the Collins River. Evidence of those early settlers can still be seen today in the form of an ancient cemetery with headstones dating back to the latter 1700s.

For ensuing generations the fertile land along the banks of the Collins was farmed and hunted, providing sustenance for the families who called its gentle curves and nurturing currents home.

Two hundred years after the first white men set eyes on the Collins River, the land that lay along its banks as they skirted Harrison-Ferry mountain came into the hands of the O'Neal Family. Like the generations that preceded them, the O'Neals were people of the land and the land provided them with their livelihood. Initially the O'Neals grew crops and operated a dairy, however, as the demand for nursery stock evolved in the mid 1960s the farm was gradually

