The Observer & Eccentric

## The Sea Islands Variety abounds on Georgia's coast

By Iris Sanderson Jones special writer

Thursday, May 14, 1981

TTLE ST. Simons Island, Ga. – All of the Sea Islands must have looked like this once – marsh grass under a Georgia blue sky, oprer prests high in the trees and a baby alligator resting his chinon the bank. Little St. Simons Island is only one of the Sea Islands of Georgia, which offer a surprising variety of life styles for tourists along this 100-mile inland waterway between Savannah and the northern bor-der of Florida.

THE SEA ISLANDS have been under five flags — Spanish, French, British, United States and Con-federate. There are no traces of the Spanish mis-sions built here are not races of the Spanish mis-sions built here in the 18th century, but you can still visit the remains of a British fort called Fort Frederica on SL Simons Island.

Frederica on St. Simons Island. Frederica is one of the many forts built by the British when they settled Georgía as a buffer against Spanish domination in America. St. Simons is also the site of Christ Church, built in 1820 on the site where John and Charles Wesley, founders of

Methodism in the New World, preached to Indians

Methodism in the New World, preached to Indians and colonists. The Lighthouse and Museum of Coastal History, where you can see plantation lide on display, is also on Little SI. Simons, not far from the site of the Battle of Bloody Marsh, which ended the Spanish-English struggle for Georgia.

English struggie for Georgia. THE RESIDENTIAL, shopping and small-motel environment of St. Simons Island is in sharp con-trast to the slick tourist environment of Sea Island, home of an elegant resort called The Cloister. The cotton plantation which once dominated this island can be seen now only in small touches. Ma-jestic live oaks lead to the Sea Island Coll Course. The crumbing ruins of an old slave hospital still slands near the clubhouse; the walls are made of "tabby." a material composed of oyster shells, lime and sand. The Cloister resort itself is a sprawling Spanish-style building with red-tiled roofs, where guests spread across patios, bars and olf-fashioned dining rooms. The brachhouse across the road has swim-ing and boating facilities. A variety of tennis, bik-

rooms. The brachhouse across the road has swim-ming and boating facilities. A variety of tennis, bik-ing, skeet shooting and other facilities are spread around the island. Rates range from \$50 to \$160 double per night, depending on room, location and season.

Jones contributing travel editor

have a comfortable mattress on an elegant old four-poster bed and a big breakfast served every morning on antique furniture in your room. Rates are from 353 for a single, 370 for a double, 3125 for a suite, including breakfast. An older, better-known historic-bed-and-break-fast place is The 1780, where the locals love to hang out after work. The old, dark, low-ceilinged lobby leads you to a gournet dining room and to the old, restored hotel bedrooms. For a list of historic-bed-and-breakfast places in Savannah, contact the Savannah Visitors Center, 301 W. Broad St., Savannah, Ga. 31402.

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Naturalist John Sakas plays with the animals on the porch of his lodge on Little St. Simons Island.



## JEKYLL ISLAND, the third of what is known as the Golden Isles, is totally different from either Sea or St. Simons islands. Jekyll has the centuries-old remains of an Eng-lish house and a Prench cernetry, but it is fanous as the site of the Jekyll Island Clab. Here the mil-lionaires of America built a private social retreat, Asides on a trip to Savannah The unexpected sidelights of a trip are often as eresting as the attractions you went to visit in travel log Iris

eresting a

The unexpected solelights for a trip are orient as interesting as the attractions you went to visit in the first place. Two such sidelights for me were meeting authors Diana and Bill Gleaner and discovering the histor-ici nas of savanab. Diana and Bill have enough sense of humor to forgive me for patting them in the same sentence with restored historic sites. The Gleaners were living in Bufalo, NY, were the area creater with existence historic sites. The Gleaners were living in Bufalo, NY, were and pattern of the sense sentence with restored historic sites. The Gleaners were living in Bufalo, NY, were the area creater life. Diann had been a writer and photographer for years. Bill became a first-class professional photographer, and they spent a year in lawait deciding what to do with their combined alonets and where to settle. After weeks and months of pouring over may and gathering information about warm southern cities, they chose Charlotte, NC. Diana remembers titus she chose place. Bill and Diana individually and as a team have de a successful life there as writers and photogra-phers. One of their books is called 'Sea Islands of Weilds Such (Seat Woods Press, Past & McMillan Publishers, Inc., 820 East Bild, Charlotte, NC. 20203, also available in bookstores). It enjoyed the book, the authors and the success story of two people who learned to live their own kind of life theough travel. Anoreal hose rest tors, are the bistoric inns of somewhat longer history, are the bistoric inns of memory and the bistory.

kind of life through travel. ANOTHER EXCITING success story, with a somewhal longer history, are the historic inns of Savanan, G. a. The nevest is the Ballastone In at 14 E. Oglethorpe. A wrought-iron stai rasse leads up to the doorway of the elegant four-sory building, which has been recently converted to what Savan-nah folks call "historic bed and breakfast." These are the appropriate accommodations for people who like genteel old-fashioned living among streets shaded by live oak trees and colored with old Southern history.

old Sc d Southern history. The Ballastone has been restored so that you can







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