Brunswick Georgia Rally
Vintage Bird's Annual Meeting

October 26 to 31, 2020
Costal GA RV Resort
287 South Port Parkway
Brunswick, GA 31523   912 264-3869

St Simon's Light House & Museum

Lady Jane Shrimpin Excursion

Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation

Tentative Schedule

Monday: Get settled in, a Meet and Greet in pavilion late afternoon, bring heavy Hors d'oeuvres and drinks.

Tuesday: Coffee and donuts in the pavilion. Late morning optional cost outing on the Lady Jane Shrimpin Excursion which will be cruising in protected waters. Cost per person is $40 including a meal on board. The crew will drop its nets and bring in a harvest from the sea. The ships naturalist will be on board to explain the catch and we are free to get our hands wet and help throw the critters back into the sea. Limited seating available please get your reservation checks in early to secure a seat. You are welcome to bring your own drinks on board. A dry land outing is planned for those not lucky enough to get a seat on the Shrimpin Excursion. Potluck Supper in the Pavilion.

Wednesday: Coffee & donuts in the pavilion. St Simon Island Lighthouse and Museum tour followed by lunch in town (on your own) and the WWII Home Front Museum in the afternoon.

Thursday: Coffee and breakfast in the pavilion followed by the Business Meeting. Rest of the day you are free to explore. Potluck Supper featuring Chief Shane's World-Famous Brisket.

Friday: Coffee and breakfast in the pavilion. We will be leaving in the AM to tour Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation State Historic Site. This was a rice plantation from the 1800 until 1915 when it became a dairy farm. The site has been in the same family until 1973 when it was left to the State of Georgia. The Museum has many of the family's furnishings and possessions on display. In the evening "Bring Whatever You Have Leftover Potluck" in the pavilion. Thanks right, what ever you want to get rid of! Sorry ladies, you cannot dispose of your husbands here!

Saturday: Fond Fare Wells! Safe Travels

Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation Historic Site

Welcome to Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation State Historic Site. This property, then known as the "Broadface Tract", was purchased in 1806 by William Brailsford. Brailsford changed the name to Broadfield and grew rice in the marshlands.

Brailsford and his wife Maria Heyward came to this location from Charleston, South Carolina, center of the southern rice industry. Maria's brother, Nathaniel Heyward was the largest rice planter of the day. He owned 15 plantations and over 2,500 slaves.

The lands here along the Altamaha River were especially well suited for rice cultivation. Victoria Reeves Gunn, in her history of Hofwyl-Broadfield writes, "the fields produced such a fine quality of grain that according to government record, the superior 'Broadfield Rice' on the Charleston market took its name from the Brailsford Plantation."

The plantation remained in the same family until the death of the last surviving heir, Ophelia Dent, in 1973. It passed through five generations of the Brailsford, Troup and Dent families. In the 1850's George C. Dent affixed the name Hofwyl (pronounced hofwill), after the Swiss agricultural school he attended. Ophelia Dent left the property to the State of Georgia as a memorial to her family and the workers who lived and died here.

William Brailsford constructed the original plantation house on this site in 1807. The present structure, about a 1/4 mile walk from this location was begun around 1851 and finished prior to the Civil War. It is furnished with family antiques and heirlooms dating to the 1790's. All furnishings are original to the house and the families which owned it. There are no "period pieces."

Hofwyl House is an unpretentious two-story farm house design common along the rice coast. In the 18th and 19th centuries planters fled the the malaria infested marshes during the summertime for more ornate homes in more healthful locations. Regularly scheduled guided tours are available. There are also seven plantation outbuildings open to the public.

Visitors will also see impressive examples of the Live Oak, Georgia's state tree. The Ophelia Live Oak, located next to Hofwyl House, is estimated to be up to 800 years old. The site is also home to state champion Bay Magnolia and Hercules Club trees. A mile long loop trail traverses the edge of the marsh. There are several overlooks and an observation deck from which visitors can see where "Carolina Gold" rice was once grown.

The Visitor Center, located directly in front of you, features a museum of exhibits, a short film and gift shop. Please pay admission before touring the site. We hope you enjoy your visit to the last surviving rice plantation along the Georgia coast. Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation is operated by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Parks and Historic Sites Division.

Ladies Parlor, interior of Hofwyl House

Photography credits: (top) "Autumn Breeze", courtesy John E. Adams, Fernandina beach, Florida. (bottom) courtesy Bruce Whitmore, Friends of Hofwyl Plantation.