

# The Most Unusual of Corner Offices

*Digging into the essence of coastal living at The Ford.*



Henry and Clara Ford completed The Main House, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, in 1938.



The Pete Dye design offers a parkland-style front nine and a links-style back nine.

RICHMOND HILL, GEORGIA: In the early 1920s, Henry and Clara Ford began looking for a place to establish their winter home. Feeling crowded by the rapidly growing population in Florida, they purchased a large parcel of land in Coastal Georgia, about 30 minutes south of Savannah.

Today, The Ford Field & River Club is a private community with all of the expected amenities, including a Pete Dye golf course; large equestrian facilities; a full-service private marina with club-owned watercraft for daily outings; and fitness facilities with pickleball courts, an indoor squash court, and a heated lap pool.

What is unexpected is a day with the club's naturalist, Brittany Dodge, whose outgoing and endearing personality encourages you to get dirt under your fingernails. Her office is located in a building referred to as the Oyster House, Henry Ford's "man cave." Above the front door hangs a cryptic sign that reads AIG-ROEG. It's said the sign was created by Ford

as an inside joke, a tongue-in-cheek memorial to repeated questions from friends who asked him why he was moving to "backward Georgia." Almost 100 years later, the sign remains as a quiet testament to Henry Ford's legacy.

Inside Brittany's office—that is off the grid with no phone or Internet service—is an eclectic collection of fossils, interpretive artifacts, and supplies utilized for preservation and rehabilitation of the surrounding forest and marshland. "Luckily, we have excellent cell phone service," smiled Brittany.

"Our lifestyle has disconnected us from our natural surroundings," said Brittany. "I strive to educate and entertain our member families on the magical surroundings in which we live. From nighttime gator spotting to frog watch outings, I hope to stoke interest in biology and herpetology. Every reptile plays an important part to a balanced ecosystem." ■



The Equestrian Center features a 22-stall barn and turnouts in grassy paddocks shaded by 100-year-old Live Oaks.

*For more on The Ford Field & River Club, please call (912) 756-2742.*