Welcome Y'all

In McDuffie County, there are no strangers, just friends we haven't met yet.
as Happy Valley in McDuffie County. He was inducted posthumously into the Georgia Music Hall of Fame in 1990. One of his most famous songs, "Statesboro Blues", has been a staple for blues bands for decades and has been covered by artists such as The Allman Brothers Band and Taj Mahal. Many musicians consider McTell an influence, including Bob Dylan, who paid tribute to him with his song "Blind Willie McTell".

From the beginning the festival wasn’t just about the blues, but rather a celebration of roots music. You could hear Americana, Cajun influences, Country and touches of Funk and Soul. The kind of musical event Blind Willie himself would have really enjoyed. Many past performers have been American Music Award winners and Grammy nominees. The laid back vibe of the festival creates a great atmosphere to mix and mingle, get up and dance, or just sit back and sip an ice cold beer while enjoying some fantastic music.

Come for the music but you will get even more. There is a wide variety of food available from local food vendors; the local arts council has a booth with blues/music related art for sale; not to mention lots of camaraderie and people watching.

TIP: You can visit the grave site of McTell on Happy Valley Road adjoining Jones Grove Baptist Church (1062 Happy Valley Rd, Thomson, GA 30824). Pay a visit to the McDuffie Museum housed inside a former bank in downtown and see artifacts like the original tombstone of Blind Willie. Visit the gift shop for a memorable souvenir such as Blind Willies Blues, a DVD documentary about the musician.
Paddler’s Paradise

The beautiful Little River flows through the 15,000-acre Clarks Hill Lake Wildlife Management Area into Clarks Hill Lake and is truly a sanctuary that is great for bird & wildlife watching. Bald eagle nests, river otters, turtles, and many other plants and animals are abundant. This is also a great area to kayak fish—plentiful bream, crappie, catfish, and bass.  >>

This intimate river is also rich in history. It is the site of some of Georgia’s first gold mines. The nearby community of Wrightsboro was settled before the American Revolution and was the southernmost point of Quaker migration. Fishdam Ford was just east of Rocky Creek on Little River and was a primary crossing for Native Americans for centuries. This area was also where William Bartram traveled with the survey team identifying the ceded lands.

Fast Facts


2. The Little River has a negligible current at just about all times unless after extreme heavy rainfall. It can be paddled upstream with very little effort.

3. Distance: 7.8 miles to bridge at Wrightsboro Road. Option: paddle as far up river as you want and turn around to take out at the put-in.

4. Flat water, slow moving, no obstacles or rapids, slight current downstream.

5. Primitive looking and virtually no signs of development, houses, very quiet paddle.

www.galittleriver.com

The water trail is split into three sections, making for easy day trips.

Section one is called Storks Bend, the put-in point for this section is on Hwy 80 at the Woodruff Bridge (note: there is no boat ramp at this access point but it is still possible to put-in here). This section is shady and the banks are thick with huge sycamores, oaks, and towering ancient pines. The canopy is thick, shading the river with a tunnel affect for several miles. Within the first two miles, you may encounter a tree across the river that will need to be negotiated. There are few places to get out of the boat until you reach the Tom Watson Bridge at Hwy 78, 7.6 miles downstream.

Section two is called Smith Mill, the put-in is at the Tom Watson Bridge DNR ramp on Hwy 78. This is a cement ramp with a gravel parking area near on the southern side of the bridge. From this point you can paddle either upstream through section one or downstream. About a half mile down, there is a narrow channel entering the river from the north, you can paddle into it and it opens up into a natural pond of about 4 acres filled with fish and wading birds. Next is Fish Dam Bend, which has multiple islands, splitting the river in two. This area is a great spot to observe bald eagles and osprey in flight, roosting, and catching fish. Take-out point is Holliday Park on the northern bank, about 7.4 miles downstream. There is a large cement ramp located next to the boat dock.

Section three is called Raysville, this section of the trail is all lake paddling. Entering and exiting your kayak along most any bank here is possible. The shorelines and islands along this section have interesting features and are fun to explore. One island has a large nest on it, maybe either an eagle or osprey nest. This section is a leisurely 5.5 mile paddle to Raysville Campground. The ramp there is easily spotted next to a long aluminum dock extending out into the lake. The Hwy 43 Bridge will be to your west when you see the ramp to your south.
Catch of the Day

MPFA Facts

1. Visitors may fish for largemouth bass, channel catfish, bluegills and reedear sunfish. Bring your own bait and tackle.

2. The PFA holds Kids’ Fishing Events (KFEs) during the spring, summer and fall months to encourage youngsters under the age of 16 to enjoy the sport of fishing. Two ponds stocked with channel catfish are reserved for Kids’ Fishing Events.

3. During dove season, a 12-acre dove field is open to the public.

4. A variety of trails await the avid nature lover. Paths such as Blackwater Swamp and Longleaf Pine Trails offer a variety of geographic characteristics for their followers to enjoy.

5. Two archery ranges provide practice in both open ground and regular field conditions.

6. Camping fees are $15 per night for tent sites with electricity and water and $25 per night for 50-amp RV sites.

7. Covered picnic pavilions, tables, and grills are located throughout the area.

The McDuffie Public Fishing Area (MPFA) located in Georgia’s upper coastal plain in Dearing, GA encompasses 570 acres of beautiful land, great fishing and hunting and trails for biking or hiking. Also on site are a warm-water fish hatchery and the McDuffie Environmental Education Center. >>

Open daily from sunrise to sunset, the “State Pond” in Dearing, GA beckons visitors with an array of outdoor recreational opportunities: seven ponds for quality bream, bass and catfish angling; two archery ranges; a 12-acre dove field; several lakes for waterfowl hunting; a variety of nature trails; kids’ fishing events and adventures held spring, summer and fall; and on-site campground. There’s also a warm water fish hatchery and the McDuffie Environmental Education Center.

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Biking Trails

Mountain Biking: McDuffie Public Fishing Area
Archery Trail
- Over 2 miles of multi-use (hiking/walking, mountain biking) single track trail
- Negligible elevation gain, only 65-ft. over the 2 miles
- Go during the week and you're almost guaranteed not to see anyone else on the trails

Mountain Biking: Gravel Mixer at McDuffie Public Fishing Area
- Over 3.5 miles of gravel/sand/dirt roads at the MPFA
- All of it is open to mountain bikes (except when closed and indicated by signage)
- Appropriate also for cyclocross bikes and hybrid bikes with tires over 32c in width!

Hiking Trails

Hiking: Blackwater Swamp Trail
- Head to the main office and park at the end of the lake. Cross the dam and follow signage for the trail.
- Offers a unique boardwalk hike experience with a beautiful bottom-land swamp
- Bring insect repellent in the warmer months or you're likely to make many new buzzy friends!
- Distance: about 1 mile round-trip; easy, appropriate for any skill level

Hiking: Longleaf Pine Trail
- Park at the main office and walk back (away from lake) 300-ft. and you'll see the trail head
- Short 0.8-mile round trip trek through a canopied pine forest
- Easy, appropriate for even small children and senior adults
Happy Camper

If it’s rest you seek, there’s nothing better than time spent at the lake. Come to Raysville Campground and sit by the campfire or glide around the lake. Most

Raysville Campground
6489 Lincolnton Road NE
Thomson, GA 30824
706-595-6759
raysvillecampground.com

- Located on the Little River section of Clarks Hill Lake
- 55 campsites all with 50-AMP electrical hookup
- More than 60% of the campsites are on the water, all campsites are considered “wooded”
- Access to swimming, fishing, picnicking, boat ramp and dock

Raysville Marina
6584 Lincolnton Road NE # A
Thomson, GA 30824
706-595-5582
facebook.com/RaysvilleMarina

“The lake is calling and I must go!”

On the water: Leave the Raysville Campground boat ramp heading north towards the Lincolnton Road bridge. Go under the bridge, turn south and after 3,000 ft., begin heading in northeast direction in open channel. Continue in open water for approximately 2.4 miles and you’ll come to a series of 6 islands. These islands are fantastic for relaxing, a picnic lunch and exploration! Return the same way you came.

Paddle Island Adventure
Put-In & Take Out: Raysville Campground Boat Ramp
GPS: 33.638128, -82.476958
Distance: 8 miles round-trip
Difficulty: Moderate, only due to distance
Time Commitment: 3-6 hours

The boat ramp area or many shoreline campground spots at Raysville Campground offer excellent sunrise photo opportunities.

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Come on over to historic Thomson, Ga, to take in “McTell’s 12-String Strut,” 12 imaginatively painted guitars that grace the downtown area of Thomson. >>

McTell’s 12-String Strut

The project recognizes and honors the legacy of Blind Willie McTell, his music and the fact that such an influential musician was born and lived in McDuffie County. McTell lost his eyesight in his childhood. He went on to become one of the most accomplished twelve string guitar players in his time.

The guitars are painted by local Thomson area artists. The core area for the guitars is the Downtown/ Main St area of Thomson, GA. The Thomson Depot location (shown above) includes an audio box that plays a sample of Blind Willie McTell’s music as well as tell his story. Check the brochure rack behind the guitar for a location map.

McTell’s 12-String Strut locations are subject to change. Visit mctells12stringstrut.com for the most up to date map and any additional guitars that may have been added.

Fast Facts

1. Born William Samuel McTier on May 5, 1898 in the Happy Valley community of McDuffie County.
2. McTell’s influence extended over a wide variety of artists, including the Allman Brothers Band, who covered his “Statesboro Blues.”
3. McTell was born blind in one eye and lost his remaining vision by late childhood.
4. He was inducted into the Blues Foundation’s Blues Hall of Fame in 1981 and the Georgia Music Hall of Fame in 1990.
5. His original gravestone bearing the name Eddie McTier is at McDuffie Museum.
McDuffie County has several unique sites that are ideal for a variety of events. Weddings, receptions, holiday and tea parties, reunions, brunches, baby showers, equestrian events and more can be accommodated in Southern style and grace.

**Ashton Cole Place**
2413 Old Milledgeville Rd. SE,
Thomson, GA 30824
(706) 799-1400

**White Hills Lavender & Herb Farm**
1419 Fort Creek Road,
Dearing, GA 30808
(706) 595-5081

**Wrightsboro Church**
4700 Wrightsboro Rd
Thomson, GA 30824
(706) 595-1781

**The Barn at Sanderlin Horse Farm**
5022 White Oak Rd
Appling, GA 30802
(706) 836-1369

**Vows and Venue**
4500 Whitaker Road
Harlem, GA 30814
(706) 829-2684

**Thomson Depot**
111 Railroad Street
Thomson, GA 30824
(706) 595-1781

“Get Hitched!”

“The highest happiness on earth is marriage.”
~ William Lyon Phelps
Just a short drive from Atlanta and Athens, Thomson, Ga is a great place to make a quick Thrift Store Road Trip! Antique lovers will get a thrill hunting for their next purchase at one of the many thrift stores in the area. Stroll the tree-lined sidewalks of the historic downtown and you will find several places within walking distance. Located on the corner of Journal St and Greenway St, Journal on the Green Antiques & Arts offers over 10,000 square feet of antique treasures and artistry. Around the corner in Knox Shopping Center, Laura Lane’s Home Décor and Gifts is a shopping destination for dressing your home or the go-to place when it comes to picking up a gift for someone special. While you are there, don’t miss getting your paws on some spicy cheese straws locally-made by McDuffie County’s Chinaberry Foods. Take turns dipping into one treasure trove after another; if you like plundering through junk, fumbling through antiques, stumbling through treasures, and having fun, then you will love Aunt Tique and Uncle Junk’s located on First Avenue behind McDuffie Museum. Then scoot over to The Saturday Market – Antiques and Uniques on Augusta Hwy to ramble through quirky, eclectic, vintage, unique, and antique items. And if that’s not enough, a short drive from downtown, Sunset Auctions House hosts twice-a-month auctions that draw crowds from near and far.

After all that shopping, you may need to take a break and refuel, so why not grab a bite at a downtown eatery. Try Fernanda’s Grille and Pizzeria for a New York slice. Sit in the courtyard – an ideal alcove for eating with a view of downtown. Or, grab a hand-patted burger at Hogie Joe’s Sports Grill. If you are in the mood for soul food, no one does it better than Ivery’s Restaurant!

While in downtown, pay a visit to McDuffie Museum housed inside a former bank in downtown. See artifacts like the original tombstone of blues legend, Blind Willie McTell. Visit the gift shop for a memorable souvenir like a DVD documentary about the musician. In the museum's theater, a converted bank vault, watch a 15-minute clip about McDuffie County’s famed Belle Meade Hunt. The museum also showcases the work of renowned folk artist Jake McCord, and houses the old front porch of Mr. McCord’s home. You can also catch a flick at the Thomson Twin Cinema, still showing first-run movies and 3-D shows.

Visiting resale and vintage shops on vacation has become a trend. So much so, that the “thrift store road trip” is the new girlfriend getaway! >>

Wherever I travel I’m always going to be on the lookout for an awesome place to thrift. Think about it. You’re probably going to do some shopping while you’re out of town anyway. Why settle for shopping only at brand name stores or expensive boutiques? Why not explore some of the local thrift stores or consignment shops, too? You’re connecting with people who live in the community. It’s a much truer and authentic shopping experience, and it is an effective way to get to know the locals.
Made in McDuffie

Below is a sampling of locally made products that are sold, shipped, showcased online or in their local storefronts >>

1. Handmade Goat Milk Soap, Just Great Soap, $10, thesecretcatalog.com
2. Crochet Cotton Washcloth, Annette Towes, $8, thesecretcatalog.com
3. Leather Keychain, Geppetto Leathers, $8, www.facebook.com/geppetto.leathers, Also across from Walmart most Thursdays
4. Cheese Straws, Chinaberry Foods, $7.50, chinaberryfoods.com and Laura Lanes Home Decor and Gifts
5. Ceramic Dish and Bowl Set, Charles DeLoach, $35, MAC on Main Art Gallery
6. Artist Smock, STATE, $95, statethelabel.com
7. August Lohr, Double Vase / Ambrosia, $60, MAC on Main Art Gallery

Our products page was curated by Adrienne Antonson, local artist and designer of the fashion label STATE and the mail order print catalog, the Secret Catalog. Adrienne has a way of finding distinctive products that are often overlooked.

Her studio is located in the heart of downtown Thomson. All items are made by hand using local sewers. Sustainable, organic, and recycled fabrics, reclaimed materials, and hand painting techniques are used in all designs.
**Shop Around**

Shop for unique and funky original art, and find chic items for your home.

- Anna Lou Designs
  121 Nassau Pl.
  (706) 361-0766

- April's Bowtique
  110 White Oak St.
  (706) 361-0041

- Classic Jewelry and Loan
  1423 Washington Rd.
  (706) 595-1758

- Faith Hope & Love Christian Gifts &More
  654 Main St., Suite 2
  (706) 690-5176

- Goody's
  312 West Hill St
  (706) 595-8500

- Holley Jewelers
  1259 Washington Rd.
  (706) 595-1245

- Lee Ann Cowart Interiors
  222 Main St.
  (706) 597-8095

- The Luckey Charm
  454 East Hill St.
  (706) 595-8610

- Priss Pots and Tots
  501-A Mt. Pleasant Rd.
  (706) 690-5085

- Peacock Hill Gifts
  1729 Washington Rd.
  (706) 595-6999

**Dine Around**

Sample the signature savories & sweets of Thomson!

- Angie's Steak n' Seafood
  Open Thurs - Sun
  1961 Wrens Hwy
  (706) 595-0040

- Bob's Cafe
  Open Thurs - Sat
  5240 Lincoln Hwy
  (706) 595-6637

- Delicacies Cece's
  125 Main St
  (706) 872-5324

- El Kiosco Mexican
  1068 Washington Rd
  (706) 595-2505

- Fernanda's Pizzeria
  127 Main St
  (706) 595-7753

- Gracie B’s
  218 West Hill St
  (706) 962-8308

- Habaneros Mexican Grill
  1435 Washington Rd
  (706) 986-5292

- Hogie Joe's Sports Grill
  128 Railroad St
  (706) 595-7575

- Ivery's Restaurant
  Lunch only, Closed on Monday
  112 Railroad St
  (706) 595-2666

- Kent's Diner
  329 East Hill St
  (706) 595-2663

- Kimberly's Country Cooking
  654 Main St
  (706) 962-1360

- Neal's BBQ
  Open Thurs - Sat
  664 Augusta Rd
  (706) 595-2594

- Poppa's Finest BBQ
  Open Wed - Sat
  1073 Washington Rd
  (706) 595-8074

- Sweet T's
  Open Mon - Fri, lunch only
  352 Gordon Street
  (706) 595-7753

- Wrap Em Up Crepes & Cafe
  Wed - Sunday
  1419 Washington Rd
  (706) 962-8801

VisitThomsonGa.com
ride tally ho? Basically, tally ho is a fun name for “behind the pack in a truck.”

The nostalgic experience begins after the blessing of the hounds with a Tally Ho Ride – also known as the world’s largest moving tailgate party. Seriously. Follow along as fox hunters, in their scarlet coats and velvet covered helmets drag a scent through the fields, leading the dogs, while the Tally Ho riders eat and drink their way through the fields following the pack in wagons towed by tractors and trucks. The route is pre-planned so the folks in the Tally Ho wagons can have a good show. Feel truly part of a tradition as you join in the revelry, all in fun. It’s a fascinating display of strategy and logistics, culminating with the sounds of the hounds’ music and horses’ hooves and the thrill of the chase through miles and miles of magnificent countryside for an almost overwhelming adrenaline rush!

As the hunt goes deeper in the woods, hear the hounds coming closer and feel the anticipation of something bursting out of the brush into the field where the Tally Ho crew is waiting and watching. A hunt guide explains the entire process as the Tally Ho group watches with bated breath and adds, there is hardly ever a coyote (and even more rarely a fox) cornered by the hounds at the Belle Meade Hunt. Those creatures are smarter than the hounds, for the most part.

As night falls, the hunt ends at a historic Quaker cemetery out in the middle of nowhere – perhaps next year some locale totally different; the Master of Foxhounds performs a roll call of the hounds as they mill around the horses, tails wagging like crazy, the happiest bunch of dogs you’ll ever see. The Tally Ho riders bask in the tradition and mystery of a newly appreciated experience. Finally, once horses are unsaddled and dressed in blankets, hounds are kenneled, and hands are washed, everyone heads into the lodge for supper and a roaring fire (and maybe a nip or two).

For over 50 years, the Belle Meade Hunt has majestically opened fox hunting season in Thomson, Georgia with the world’s largest opening meet. Held annually on the first Saturday in November, the opening meet is a day filled with pomp, circumstance and miles of opportunity to ride across the rolling fields, through pecan orchards and historic countryside of McDuffie County.

If you’re ever lucky enough to be a part of Thomson, Ga’s Belle Meade Hunt, an annual tradition the first Saturday of each November, you may just think you’ve died and gone to heaven. Mark your calendar and plan to ride tally ho with the Belle Meade Hunt, which marks opening day of hunting season. Wondering just what it means to
Yearly Meeting mandated the freeing of all slaves held by Friends; any slave holding Quaker in North Carolina, South Carolina or Georgia would be subject to disownment.

The families who would found Wrightsboro in 1770, and its short-lived sister community Friendsborough in 1776, came from the North Carolina Yearly Meeting groups. A schism in the Meeting, possibly over slavery, caused a group of Friends to leave North Carolina and relocate to Georgia. Colonial Governor James Wright promised them 12,000 acres of land below the Little River. The Quakers were to be used as a buffer between the Creek Indians to the north and Irish and Scottish settlers to the south. To receive a lot within town limits, one had to be a Quaker; several families traveled with the group, including the Watsons, the Wilsons, and the Ansleys who were not Quaker and, therefore, they only received acreage outside of town.

The town included house lots, stores, blacksmith shop, and other businesses vital to frontier life. The Quakers would have met in a modest log structure, probably with two doors, one for women and one for men, which would have more closely resembled a house than a church. Burial for a Quaker was a simple affair with the only expense being a coffin. The Friend would be interred free of charge next to the meeting house. Markers would be a field stone, a very plain tablet stone, or a pillow marker.

During and after the American Revolution, the political climate in Georgia was increasingly uncomfortable for the Quakers. The rise of Thomson as a railroad town, the acceptance of slavery in Georgia, and the resentment harbored against the Quakers for not fighting in the Revolution caused many Quaker families to relocate to the north and west. The Wrightsboro Monthly Meeting was laid down in 1807 and the town was lost to the forest. Wrightsboro survived as a village until the 1920s, but little remains physically of the settlement in modern McDuffie County.

**Quaker History**

The Quaker faith arose in the mid-17th century in England to revive a more primitive form of Christianity. The practitioners were known as the “Seekers” or “the Children of Light”; their official designation is the “Religious Society of Friends.”

Quakers settled originally in the Pennsylvania Colony, but gradually established meeting houses throughout the 13 colonies. Hard working and plain in speech and dress, the Quakers are often misunderstood. The faith requires ethical business practices, opposition to war, and a radical obedience to the teachings of Christ. It was not until 1688 that the first hints of an abolitionist sentiment arose from the Philadelphia Society of Friends. They issued the first statement against slave-holding by Quakers and followed it in 1696 with a formal Prohibition on the importing of slaves by Quaker traders. The prohibition did not extend to Meetings in other colonies. And, it was not until 1776 that the North Carolina

**William Bartram visited the Quaker village of Wrightsboro in 1773**

During and after the American Revolution, the political climate in Georgia was increasingly uncomfortable for the Quakers. The rise of Thomson as a railroad town, the acceptance of slavery in Georgia, and the resentment harbored against the Quakers for not fighting in the Revolution caused many Quaker families to relocate to the north and west. The Wrightsboro Monthly Meeting was laid down in 1807 and the town was lost to the forest. Wrightsboro survived as a village until the 1920s, but little remains physically of the settlement in modern McDuffie County.

**Fast Facts**

1. Current church structure built between 1810 – 1812
2. Was an active church for over 150 years – until 1964
3. The structure is representative of Quaker, Methodist and Baptist church buildings of rural Georgia
4. Still in excellent condition today after over 200 years
5. Interesting cemetery with dozens of 19th century patinaed tombstones
6. The ancestors of Asa G. Candler, the founder of the Coca-Cola company, are buried at the Wrightsboro Methodist Church cemetery
Gold was discovered in 1823 near Thomson, GA, six years before the first American gold rush in 1829.

McDuffie County men like W.T. Fluker, Thomas E. Watson, and Oscar Dent owned or invested in gold mines anticipating a boom that never came. Many of these mines are now beneath the waters of Clark’s Hill Lake.

McDuffie County was created on October 18, 1870, from Columbia and Warren Counties. The county was named for George McDuffie, a native Georgian and distinguished lawyer, statesman, governor, and U.S. senator of South Carolina.

McDuffie County’s roots go back to the 1768 settlement of Wrightsboro, the southernmost point of Quaker migration in North America.

One of Thomson’s most famous sons was Thomas Watson. Watson founded the People’s Party of Georgia, a political party based heavily in the Farmer’s Alliance and promoting a platform of lower tariffs for farm goods, political equality for African-Americans, the 8-hour workday, the direct election of Senators, and the prohibition of child labor.

In 1893, Thomas Watson introduced legislation for rural free delivery. This system allowed many rural areas access to the mail on a regular basis and gave residents increased contact with the outside world, and helped pave the way for the establishment of a modern parcel post system.

William Samuel “Blind Willie” McTell was born in Thomson on May 5, 1898. McTell produced such blues classics as “Statesboro Blues,” later made famous by the Allman Brothers Band. In 1990, McTell was inducted into the Georgia Music Hall of Fame, his award has mysteriously disappeared.

Dearing actually had two names at the same time; the Rail Depot was Dearing and the Post Office was Lombardy.

Thomson, Ga., was once known as Frog Pond, because of a large population of Bullfrogs.

The first Methodist meetings in what would become McDuffie County were held at the Whiteoak settlement in 1792.

The Millen branch of the Thomson Company made shirts for the Army during World War II.

The “People’s Institute” was the first recorded black school in McDuffie County, owned and operated entirely by black citizens; it was located across from Springfield Baptist Church.

Thomson has had telephone service since 1901.

Zebedee Armstrong was an African-American folk artist in McDuffie County who began creating “Doomsday Calendars” in 1972 after he said an angel visited him and told him the end of the world was coming.

William Bartram passed through McDuffie County before the American Revolution. At this time Wrightsboro, a major Quaker city was located in the county.

During the 19th century, Boneville, GA was a destination for wealthy Georgian’s, they came to “take in the waters” of Sweetwater Creek.

Boneville was named for Jones Bones, an Augusta man who was interested in opening a factory there.

The area that is now McDuffie County was originally St. Paul’s Parish. The original settlers of the area were the Creek, Cherokee, a few Shawnee and the relatively obscure Uchee Indians. Some 2,000,000 acres of Indian lands (now Columbia, Elbert, Greene, McDuffie, Warren, Wilkes and other counties) were ceded in 1773.
Experience farming at its finest! White Hills Lavender & Herb Farm is located in Dearing, GA. This small boutique lavender and herb farm offers tours, demos and classes to the public and by appointment for special groups and is truly one of Georgia’s hidden gems.

The farm, while over 30 acres, has 8 acres in cultivation with 14 varieties of lavender which fall into two categories: culinary and aromatherapy. They also grow a variety of herbs such as rosemary, thyme, basil and calamint (a native Georgia mint). Touring of the farm and surrounding land is as educational as it is amazingly beautiful. With endless fields, blue skies, the heavenly aroma of herbs everywhere and a picturesque 1890s farmhouse.

Fast Facts

- Organic lavender and herb farm
- “Farm Fridays” events
- Classes on cultivating herbs

Be on the lookout for non-growing season classes, such as baking with lavender (shortbreads, scones, cupcakes), key herbs for health wellness and nutrition, and spa grade beauty products.

White Hills Farm is located at 1419 Fort Creek Rd., Dearing, GA 30808
Phone: 706-595-5081
Hours:
Open on Fridays from 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

To stay up to date on classes and product offerings, visit them online at: Facebook.com/whitehillsherbs
Learn to paint classes-
for all ages!

One of a kind gifts

Art from the Heart

A fun and unique place to shop for fun and funky art created by local artists and crafters in this local art gallery.>>

The McDuffie Arts Council enhances the quality of life in Thomson, GA through a variety of art classes, art programs, gallery exhibits and special events. The downtown gallery is located on Main Street, across from the Thomson Depot.

Twenty artists are represented in the gallery. Artworks include paintings, pottery, sculpture, woodwork, jewelry, and stained glass. Classes and programs are ongoing, so please check the calendar at MAConMainArtGallery.com.

Fast Facts

MAC on Main Art Gallery is operated by a co-op of local volunteers and artists.

107 Main Street
Thomson, GA 30824

Directly across from the Thomson Depot

Hours:
Thurs- Fri: 11:00 am - 6:00 pm
Sat: 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

MAConMainArtGallery.com
Sample Itineraries:

**Stay For A Day**
- Take a Farm Tour or a workshop at **White Hills Lavender & Herb Farm**
- Lunch at **Sweet T’s**
- Search for all of the “McTell’s 12-String Strut” guitars
- Tour **McDuffie Museum**
- Shop for local art at **MAC on Main Art Gallery & Studio**, “pick” some great finds at **Aunt Tique & Uncle Junk’s**

**Stay For Two**
- Bring your kayak and spend the morning exploring **Georgia’s Little River Water Trail**.
- Refuel at **Hogie Joe’s Sports Grill** in downtown Thomson
- Grab your camera and visit some of the historic sites in the county, such as, the **Wrightsboro Church** built in 1810, the **Thomson Depot** downtown, or the **Rock House** (directions available at the Visit Thomson, Ga office).
- Have dinner at one of our local restaurants listed on page 23, if it is a Friday night, follow dinner with some live music at **Sunset Auction House and Bar**.
- Breakfast at Hotel
- Search for all of the “McTell’s 12-String Strut” guitars
- Lunch at **Ivery’s**
- Visit McDuffie Museum and view the **Blind Willie McTell Documentary** in the “Vault Theatre”
- Pick up some **Chinaberry Foods Spicy Cheese Straws** at **Laura Lanes Home Decor & Gifts**, browse for some souveniers at any of the retail shops listed on page 22.
After a day of exploring, find rest in one of the area’s lodging alternatives. >>

No matter where you wish to lay your head, there are various accommodations that are available. From leading chain hotels with complimentary breakfast and WIFI access to a perfect campsite for your four-person tent which might include hook-ups and picnic shelters, we’ve got it all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotels</th>
<th>Campgrounds</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hampton Inn &amp; Suites</strong> I-20 and US78 1702 Washington Rd Thomson, Ga 800-HAMPTON</td>
<td><strong>Raysville Campground</strong> 6489 Lincolnton Rd Thomson, Ga 706.595.6759</td>
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<td><strong>White Columns Inn</strong> I-20 and US78 1890 Washington Rd Thomson, Ga 706.595.8000</td>
<td><strong>Big Hart Campground</strong> 5258 Washington Rd Thomson, Ga 800.533.3478 800.595.8613</td>
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<td><strong>Comfort Inn</strong> I-20 and US78 1893 Washington Rd Thomson, Ga 706.595.6500</td>
<td><strong>McDuffie Public Fishing Area Campgrounds</strong> 4695 Fish Hatchery Rd. Dearing, Ga 706.595.1684</td>
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<td><strong>Econo Lodge</strong> I-20 and US78 130 North Seymour Dr Thomson, Ga 706.595.7144</td>
<td><strong>Express Suites</strong> I-20 and Route 150 2658 Cobbham Rd Thomson, Ga 706.595.2262</td>
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<td><strong>Rodeway Inn</strong> I-20 and US78 1847 Washington Rd Thomson, Ga 855-849-1513</td>
<td><strong>Knox Terrace</strong> 106 Georgia Ave Thomson, Ga 706.595.1202</td>
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Y'all Come Back

A little bit of the country is good for your soul.
Travel Distances

- Columbia, SC: 103 miles
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- Macon, GA: 121 miles
- Savannah, GA: 167 miles
- Charlotte, NC: 191 miles
- Charleston, SC: 208 miles
- Birmingham, AL: 264 miles
- Montgomery, AL: 273 miles
- Jacksonville, FL: 287 miles

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