

On September 26, 1947, in a transaction handled by her nephew, Col. James F. Corn, Clyde J. Hardwick deeded the Johnston Woods property to Broad Street Church in memory of her late father, John T. Johnston, who had owned the property at the time of his death. It was inherited by Miss Clyde as she was the only living child and "sole heir-at-law."

Miss Clyde has been described by those who knew her as "a very kind person and exceedingly generous, but in a quiet sort of way." She and her husband, C. L. Hardwick, gave much to their home church and to the Methodist institutions of higher learning and all of it was done in a quiet, unpretentious manner.

With access to the property being an obstacle, the church secured an easement from the Bachman Home Board on September 9, 1955. The church celebrated with a Church Barbeque on November 22, 1955. The barbeque appears to have been the first church-wide event to be held on the Johnston property. The road to the property was not very wide - about 12 feet. The night of the barbeque two cars could not meet or pass each other without one getting stuck. Because of this "one way" situation, they worked out a procedure whereby no one started the drive into the property or out of the property unless he was carrying "the stick." The stick was passed from the driver entering to the driver waiting to leave, or vice-versa, just as the passing of the flag had been used on one-way highway projects before the days of walkie-talkies.

On March 13, 1956, the Administrative Board approved the construction of the first "permanent" building to be placed by the church on the Johnston property.

At the May 19, 1974 meeting of the Administrative Board, the Rev. Richard Looney reported that the Broad Street Church had signed an agreement with Hiwassee Land Company to share in the cost of building the new access road on the north side of the property.

In 1977, a pavilion was constructed overlooking a two acre lake. The Pavilion was dedicated to the memory of William F. Johnson, II on September 18, 1977. A mobile home to house a caretaker was purchased and moved to the vicinity of the new shelter. The first Johnston Woods caretaker was Charlie Smith, who lived in the trailer and watched over "The Woods" until a permanent caretaker's home was built (1981). A bathhouse, complete with indoor plumbing, was completed in October, 1977. These new facilities encouraged more users in the summer of 1978.

In 1986, the "R. B. Hurt Retreat Center" consisting of two floors with large fireplaces on both the main and ground floors was completed. The main floor has a lobby, a large meeting room, a library-lounge for small group meetings, restrooms, office, kitchen complex with a cafeteria-style serving line, an overhanging deck and a dining area to seat just over 100 people. Housing units consisting of four separate buildings provide sleeping quarters for 48 overnight guests. Additional sleeping facilities for 12 are located in the downstairs section of the Retreat Center.