

2007

Joggling Boards

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Publication Info

Published in *The South Carolina Encyclopedia*, ed. Walter B. Edgar, 2007, pages 501-501.

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Joggling boards. Simple in design, a joggling board consists of one plank, or seat, supported by stands at each end. The plank length varies, sometimes extending as long as sixteen feet. Variations include joggling boards that have stands with curved bottoms resembling the rockers on a rocking chair. This allows the user to "joggle" both up and down and sway from side to side. Made with just about any type of wood, fir and cypress are two of the more common varieties. Lauded for their ability to ease arthritic pain and other forms of bodily discomfort, joggling boards have also remained popular with romantic couples, mothers trying to soothe a fitful infant, and children intent on enjoying hours of play.

The joggling board is a tradition with a long history in South Carolina. While the origin of the joggling board has fallen into the murkiness of local legend, they were quite common on the coast by the 1880s. One of the more enduring creation stories involves the Kinloch and Huger families of Acton Plantation in Sumter County. In 1803, after the family patriarch was widowed, a sister moved to the plantation to care for the household. She suffered from severe rheumatism and the "first" joggling board was designed and built for her relief. The popularity of the joggling board spread quickly and, while they have generally been concentrated along the coast, they were also used in other parts of the state. Like the rocking chair, the joggling board has long been a fixture on porches in Pawleys Island, Georgetown, Charleston, and throughout the lowcountry.

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