



Magnolia Springs, at the headwaters of the Magnolia River, is located in the southwest quadrant of Baldwin County, Alabama. From the earliest times, the small community has been accessible by small craft and steam packets. Originally, the Magnolia River was known as River de Lin, or River del Salto.

In 1800, the Spanish granted the tract of land, including what would become Magnolia Springs to Joseph Collins. Collins operated several turpentine stills in the area, and a small settlement surrounded them. During this time, a plantation home was built at the head of the Magnolia River.

When Union soldiers, now 20,000 strong, moved from Navy Cove to Spanish Fort in 1865, they passed near the mills. To prevent its capture, the owners burned the stills. The plantation home was spared. Six years after the war, in 1881, Mrs. Lizzie Breed purchased the land for 50 cents an acre. She and her son opened an Inn in the home named the Breed Hotel. In 1894, a large parcel of land along and back from the river was subdivided into the Lymans Addition of Magnolia Springs creating 52 lots, and several streets.

On July 31st, 1897, Christopher McLennan purchased lot 5 in the new subdivision, and began construction on a frame house. At this same time, several other lots were sold, and several large hotels were built. Two years after the homes completion, McLennan deeded this property to Edwin A. Bemis (the postmaster), but owned it again from 1902 until February 5th, 1909 when he sold it to Winnifred Corrigan. Mrs. Corrigan passed away in the last half of 1909. Her heir, Edward Corrigan sold the property to J.M. Gorman for \$3,000 on December 12th, 1910.

Mr. Gorman, who was unable to pay the Corrigans led to a repossession of the property. The Corrigans then resold the property to William Henry Whittington Harding, and his wife Eliza on November 13th, 1913.

After Mrs. Harding's death, the property was inherited by Mrs. Harding's sister, and her husband, Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Cowen. The two ceased to run it as a hotel as they were very private people. It did however, still serve as the communities major meeting place and Sunday dining place until the late 1940's, or early '50's.

The house remained a private residence and passed through several hands until 1980. Rita and Don McNair purchased the home and restored the structure that had been divided into a duplex. Mrs. McNair was a member of the Hadley family and her roots in the area reach back some four or five generations. She was raised in Magnolia Springs and introduced her husband to it. Because of the McNair's efforts in authentically restoring the house, on May 11, 1983, it was designated an Alabama State Landmark.

On December 13, 1996 David Worthington obtained the home, and turned it into a Bed & Breakfast. On March 14th, 1997 the house once again opened its doors to the public. From December of '96 until March of '97, all of the floors were refinished upstairs and downstairs. Central heat and air, as well as four bathrooms were installed upstairs. About 700' of quarter round was stained and installed to tie in the newly constructed walls with the old. The home was also wired throughout for telecommunications equipment.

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