

THANK YOU

In a project the size and scope of Winter Place, the list of people to thank can be nearly impossible...let me try and say thank you to some of the people who have been so instrumental in helping to get Winter Place to the point it is right now. And to think we are only getting started.

Bob Gamble of the Alabama Historical Commission is the very first person I spoke to about Winter Place. I drove by the house and within two hours I was meeting with Bob at his office. It was by chance that I drove by the house and by chance that I drove by Bob's office a few blocks away. I say chance because before that afternoon, I didn't know of either place. Bob facilitated a meeting with Winter and later with Winter's cousin **Bob Thorington**. Bob Gamble stuck with me through thick and thin for the nearly two years of negotiations that followed. I can honestly say that if it were not for Bob Gamble, I would not be the owner of Winter Place. Most days I say that with a smile on my face....

Bob Gamble became the conduit to many helpful people at the AHC; **Brandon Brazil** who was key very early on, **Camille Bowman** who helped me get in touch with the best historic mason in AL (more on him later) and **Melanie Betz** to name just a few. Melanie was instrumental in getting Winter Place on the Alabama Department of Archives & History list of historical sites and most recently Winter Place was listed on the US Department of Interior's National Register of Historic Places. Way to go Melanie!

Carole King of Landmarks Foundation has been a great source of local knowledge and has introduced me to many helpful people here in Montgomery. People like **Mary Ann Neely**, **Bill Josephs** and **Ralph Yaley** to name just a few. Landmarks even invited me to speak at one of their quarterly meetings which was a great honor.

Karl Benkwith was the real estate attorney that led me through the year long closing process to say nothing of contracts, rehabilitation agreements, right to life estate, deeds, abstracts and revision after revision after revision. Karl stayed the course with me, calmed me down more than once and has named his new addition at the lake house after me.... Thank you for all your work Karl.

A big thank you to the entire **Thorington** family for trusting me with Winter Place and making sure Winter will always have it to call home for as long as he likes.

The very first work on Winter Place, aside from myself knocking down a few saplings, was to be tree removal so we could see Winter Place again and have other workers gain access to the house. I talked with a few tree services and selected Vogel Tree Service. **Bobby Vogel** is the **BEST** tradesperson that I have ever worked with. This is my third old house so I've worked with a few, Bobby does great work, always kept me informed, did more than we had agreed to and even tried to teach me how to sharpen my own chain saw! Thanks Bobby you are fantastic! By the way, I have some more a tree work and stump removal....

The before mentioned historic mason is **Charles Thomas** of the Birmingham area. Charles has twice come down on weekends to help me rebuild the pillars and other brick work for the side porch on the South House. Charles taught me how to chisel out the mortar, clean the mortar off of each brick, how to mix up mortar in the wheel-barrel, clean up...are we seeing a pattern here? He claims I'm one of the best apprentices he has ever managed on the job site. I even write him good checks when he is done working me..... Charles is one of the most knowledgeable tradesmen I've ever met and a real pleasure to work for, um, I mean work with.

Joe Hamilton is my point of contact at Central/Long-McGehee electrical service. When a tradesperson comes to Winter Place to make a bid on some work it's very easy for them to get

overwhelmed and scared off. Joe was very patient, he listened to what I wanted to accomplish and he came up with a plan to get things done and done right the first time. **Dale Hamilton** of the City Inspectors Office was great in helping us upgrade the wiring to the South House from the street to new meters, to outside boxes to inside fuseboxes all the way to the light bulb. **Brian Mitchell** from Alabama Power rounded out the electrical team to provide this new service to the house and new lights in the back. None of this was easy, all of these guys worked together to make this very unusual job happen. **Bill** and **Ginny** did a great job doing the work, as did the two guys that buried the power line coming in from the street. **Jeff Hines** of **Hines Construction** and his crew have done a miraculous job removing all roof framing and building new roofs on the connector, the back wing of the north house and the main roof of the north house. They have done what many thought simply could not be done. If we can save the north house it will be because of what Jeff and his crew has been able to accomplish. Amazing! **Bob Ingram** of Mr. Electric did a fine job of restoring power to the first floor of the south house. Bob saw the article in the paper about the house and decided he wanted to be part of the project.

Unfortunately, I can give you a long list of characters I wouldn't recommend. I won't list them here but I won't hesitate to tell you if you ask.

Doran Gillie and his son **Alex** were the first workers to help with the project after I took possession. The very first weekend I owned the house I had a twenty cubic yard dumpster outside the door and we started filling it up. Doran is also a co-worker of mine over at Maxwell. He is a great husband and dad, a great co-worker and all around inspirational guy. He and his family have been around many times and I hope they will continue to visit...and WORK! **Ken Bartczak, Teresa Cruger and Lee Mercer** are other co-workers that have come over and lent a helping hand.

Another co-worker brought an entire boy scout troop to work one day! Over 30 members and parents of Troop 156 came to the house on Saturday of Memorial Day weekend this past May. While the rest of you were out on the lake or enjoying the festivities downtown, Troop 156 cleared fifty years of overgrowth, trees, brush and trash from more than 300 feet of brick wall. **Marcus Puccini II** needed an Eagle Scout Community Service project; Winter Place was lucky enough to be it. Marcus II planned, organized and coordinated the entire workday to include feeding the entire crew. (Marcus I and Mom were big helpers too!) Thanks to all that helped.

Jeff Downes of the mayor's office and **Mayor Bright** have been very encouraging and helpful. **Eileen Knott** of the Jubilee Center has been the best neighbor anyone could ever ask for, her support is inspiring. She does tremendous work at the Jubilee Center, look her up on the web and see how you can help her. **Claire Watson** of the city Planning and Development Department has been very helpful with neighborhood issues. **Tommy Nolan** has been terrific with city historical requirements. **Officer David Wise** of the Montgomery Police Department is a great police officer, neighbor and friend. Thank you for all you and your co-workers do. Unfortunately, I've gotten to know you and much of the police department all TOO well, but we are going to get there! All the neighbors in Cottage Hill have been very supportive, especially **Fred & Dianne Bush**. **Summerville Hill** of **Brown Chambless** architecture firm has been kind enough to get some drawings made and give some great big picture advice. **Regions Bank** has also been a very generous supporter.

I can't say thank you enough, so instead, grab a cool drink and enjoy the band! The band, I almost forgot, the band...Thanks to co-worker **Scott Hayes** and the rest of the **Shouting Stones** for a great night of music. Scott's continued support, encouragement and enthusiasm for Winter Place and the neighborhood at large are much appreciated.