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MONTEBRIER – HISTORIC 1866 COTTAGE STYLE HOME AND ESTATE LOT

LOCATION: Brierfield, Bibb County between Montevallo and Maplesville

SIZE: 3 Bed 2 Bath home with approximately 3,660 sq./ft. heated and cooled. 12 Acre +/- Estate Lot on Mahan Creek

SPECIAL FEATURES: Placed upon the National Registry of Historic Places in 1976, this home was constructed after the end of the Civil War in 1866. It is one of the few remaining cottage architecture style structures in Alabama. Nestled in between horseshoe-shaped Mahan Creek, the Estate rests on 12 acres +/- to be verified by purchaser. The home was completely refurbished in 1965 to its original exterior state. Last year a new roof was added and the outside of the home was repainted. A façade easement was granted by the state of Alabama in 1981 where by an analysis of the exterior paint was conducted to ensure the validity of the original color scheme. The attic is climate controlled and has an alarm system, formally utilized to house a gun collection that was purchased by Cabella's last year.

In the 1920's as a response to Prohibition, the home operated as a speakeasy. A book case in the great room opens, revealing a Wurlitzer Theatre Organ with original pipes testifying to the roaring 20's. All flooring throughout the home dates back to the 1860's showcasing heart pine with the exception of the great room which boasts the original maple floors used for the speakeasy.

The current owners are lifelong antique collectors and many unique fixtures, furniture, and historic local appurtenances will remain with the home. Such items include large stained glass windows, oak side boards with leaded glass, locomotive fixtures, etc. For a complete list of items that remain with the house, as well as those being sold at auction, please contact the agent.

AGENT: Pete Hall 334-312-7099

PRICE: \$495,000

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4163 CARMICHAEL ROAD □ MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36106 □ (334) 270-8400 □
(800) 864-1281













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Montebrier - General Information

1. Approximate square footage

- a. Main Floor 3120sqft
- b. Balcony 540sqft
- c. Porches 1500sqft
- d. Basement 432sqft
- e. Attic Storage 600sqft
- f. Carport 500sqft
- g. Carport Storage 180sqft

2. Heating and Air Conditioning

- a. Living room, Dining Room, Library and AC to Balcony – Elec. Heat pump, 2.5 ton
- b. Den, Kitchen, Office- LP Gas Furnace, Electric AC
- c. Main Floor Bedrooms, Two Baths, Dressing room and Rear Hall- Ground water heat pump with Electric supplemental heat
- d. Supplemental LPGas heat in rear hall, rear bedroom and basement
- e. Four working fireplaces all with dampers and chimney liners, completely restored; kitchen has wood burning heater, basement has one chimney inlet where wood-burning furnaces can be vented.
- f. Five-foot thermostatically controlled attic fan

3. Plumbing—Montebrier water is supplied by the City of Wilton; a six-inch water main along Highway 139 supplies house and grounds. At gate is a fireplug, which supplies 1000 gallons per minute at approximately 80psi pressure. Brierfield Fire department is rated an ISO Class 6. The house is supplied with a 1 and ½ in supply line into basement. (Schedule 40, 200psi plastic). House plumbed with copper; drains are cast iron and some three-inch plastic. All bath, kitchen, etc. supply hot and cold pass through a manifold system which are all visible and easily accessed from basement. The hot water system is an 80-gallon, quick recovery electric. There is also a permanently installed LP- gas backup hot water system. This system can be activated manually with one valve. On the grounds there are 20 outside hose bibs for watering lawns, plants and shrubs. All are underground and protected from freezing. All are supplied by 1-inch schedule 40, 200psi, plastic pipe. Also on the immediate ground of Montebrier is a usable dug well covered by a rock well house. At the edge of the creek on the property is a large, flowing spring that has in recent years been tested by the State and approved as safe drinking water.

4. **Electrical**— Montebrier has two, two hundred-amp distribution panels, one in the basement and one on the main floor. The electrical system is all copper wire, 12/2 with ground. The house is equipped with a General Electric low voltage switching system. There are three master switch stations on the main floor: one at the front entrance, one in the kitchen, one in the master bedroom. A fourth is located on the balcony. Each master station allows lights to be cut on and off in every room and outside the house.

The house is equipped with a new auto switch propane generator.

The house has four dusk-to dawn lights in the yards that can be operated manually or automatically. North yard is lighted by 1500-watt quartz light for recreational activities. West and south side of house are lighted with quartz floods manually operated.

5. **Security system** — the north or back entrance to the property is gated and locked. The nearest neighbors on this side must pass through barbed wire fences and heavy underbrush, trees and vegetation. East and west are protected by water. The south side is protected by gate and serves as the main entrance to the house. Steep highway fills, bridges and creeks provide added security on this side. The main gate is electronically operated by both wired and remote controls. All outside doors are hard wired to a monitored security system. All French doors and windows are monitored by infrared detectors. There are six infrared stations in the house.

Fire detection system includes hard-wired smoke detectors in the living room and dining room, down stairs bedrooms, hall, and the balcony. A rate-of-rise detector is located in the kitchen. The attic is equipped with four rate-of-rise detectors and one smoke detector. The basement is equipped with one rate-of-rise detector, one smoke detector and one CO2 (LP Gas) detector. Note: All of these detectors are hard wire; none are battery operated. There is also a manual fire alarm pull station in the rear hall on the main floor.

Located within the main house and carport are two, two and one half gallon water extinguishers and three five pound ABC's.

NOTE: Since the granting of the façade easement by the state of Alabama in 1981, an analysis of the exterior color scheme of the original house was conducted. Roger Moss, noted paint expert, validated the colors now in use and the house was painted in 1984 and repainted in 2015. To the best of present knowledge the façade of Montebrier is restored to its original appearance with the single exception of the small rock enclosure of the north rear porch which was done in 1967.



Montebrier History

The land on which Montebrier rests was first acquired from the U.S. Patent office in 1824 by James Mahan, brother of Major John Mahan (Rev. War).

In 1862 the land was bought from James Mahan by the Bibb County Iron Company. C.C. Huckabee was a partner in the company that constructed and operated the Bibb Iron Works. Their main product was pig iron; the pigs were then puddled at the rolling mill and the iron transformed into cut nails and other domestic products. The rolling mill was located across Mahan Creek from where Montebrier was to be built at a later date.

In 1863 the furnace mill and land were purchased by the Confederate States of America for \$600,000 in confederate money. Bibb Iron was considered the best iron in the Confederate States for producing ordnance.

After the War, a conglomerate of investors called the “Cane Break Company” purchased the remains of the furnace, mill and property. General Josiah Gorgas, former Confederate Ordnance Bureau Chief, was put in charge of the project of rebuilding and brining to life the ironworks. He succeeded in hiring John William Mallett, a renowned scientist, educator and former Superintendent of Confederate Ordnance Laboratories in Macon, Georgia, and a personal friend. As an additional incentive, Gorgas built Mallett a fine home in Brierfield, one later to be known as Montebrier.

The house was begun in 1866 and completed in 1867. It is considered today as one of Alabama’s best examples of post- Civil War cottage architecture. Frequent visitors to the Mallett home were Confederate Generals Joseph E. Johnston and William J. Hardee. In 1868, seeing the eminent demise of the Brierfield Ironworks, Mallett left Brierfield to assume a professorship in chemistry at the University of Virginia. General Gorgas, himself in deep depression and financial ruin, left Brierfield in 1869 to accept an appointment to the position of Vice Chancellor of the University of the South (Sewanee) in Tennessee, later to become president of the University of Alabama. Gorgas’s wife Amelia and the children did not join him at Sewanee until 1870; it is thought from her correspondence they may have spent a year or more living in Montebrier. The oldest son, William Crawford Gorgas (Willie), became Army Surgeon General. During the Spanish American War, he received international acclaim for controlling yellow river fever in Cuba and later ridding the Panama Canal of the dread disease. From

letters written by “Willie” Gorgas in the 1920’s he states that his “... time in Brierfield, walking and playing in Mahan Creek, was the best time of his life.”

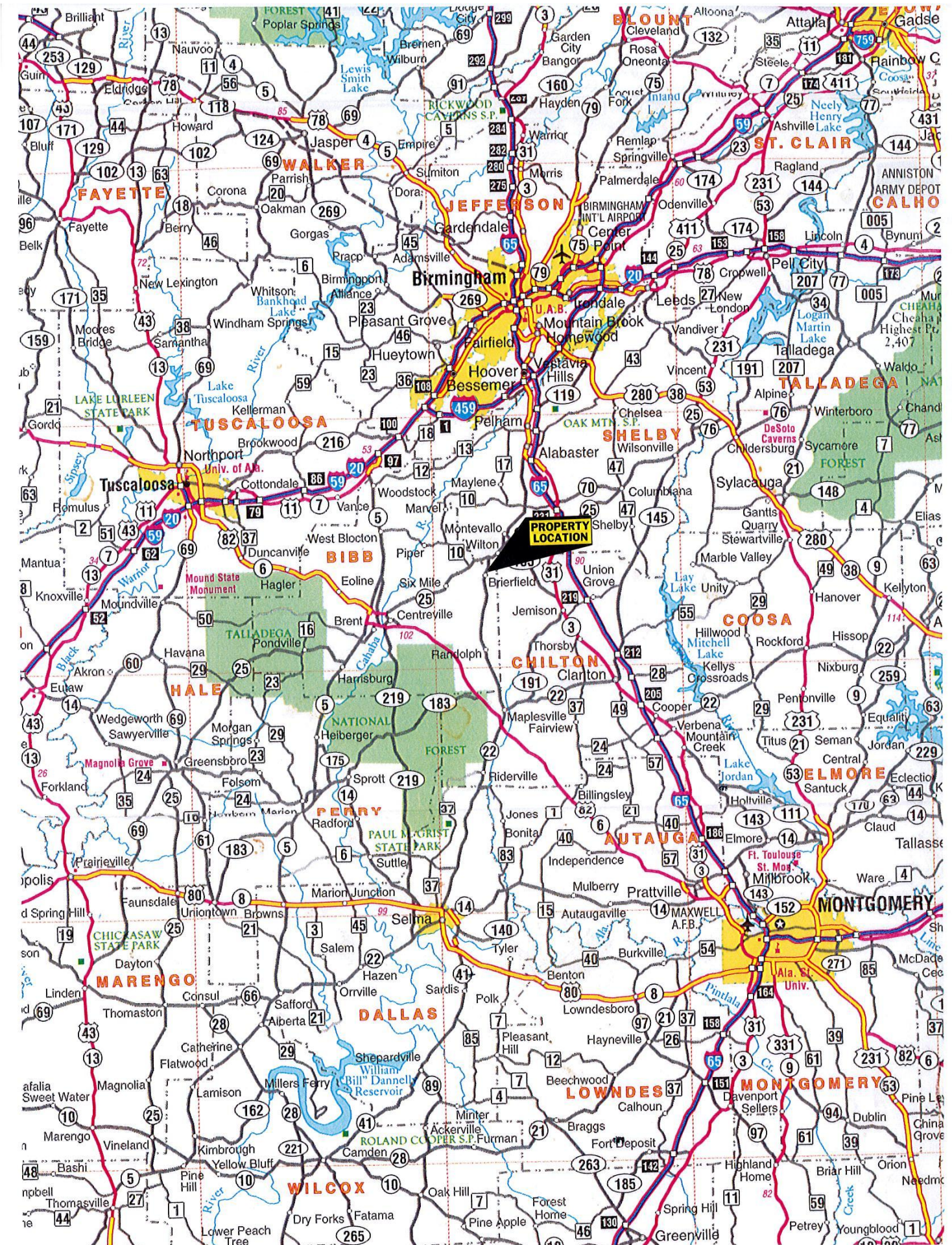
After purchasing the Brierfield Rolling Mill in 1880, S.C. Huckabee, former partner in the original Bibb Iron Works, returned to Brierfield with his daughter Hannah and her husband Robert L. McCalley, and took residence in Montebrier. The McCalley’s owned the home until 1911. Over the next 18 years the property had a series of owners and renters including the families of W.E. Godwin, George N. Cooper, D.L. McElroy, and Robert A. Frederick.

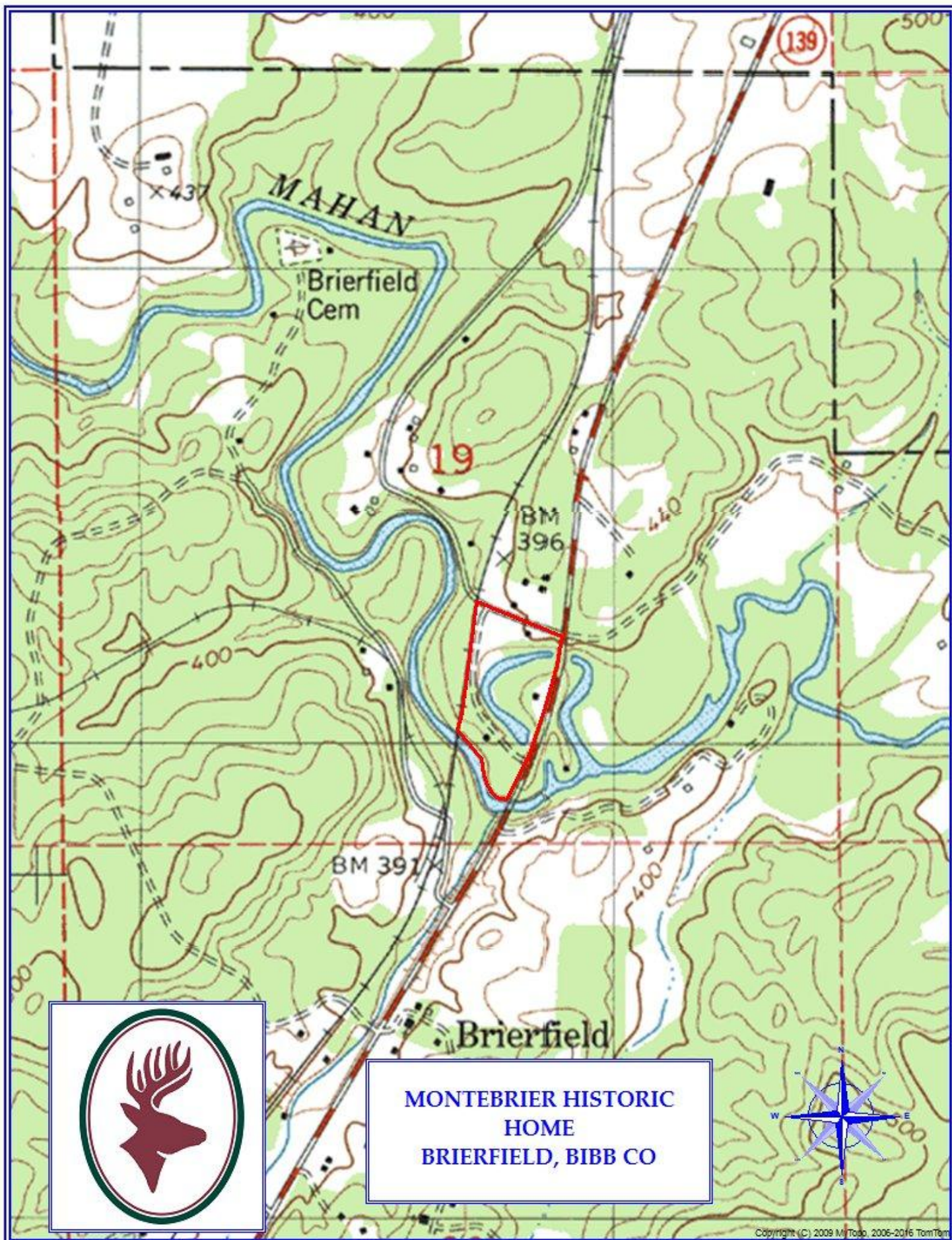
In 1928 V.P. Yount, building contractor working at Alabama College (University of Montevallo), purchased the Mallet home. Yount had a dream that came to reality when he modified and renovated the Mallett home into “Montebrier Country Club”. Montebrier briefly became the social and entertainment center of central Alabama attracting memberships from Selma, Birmingham and other surrounding areas. It is said that to be accepted a one hundred dollar membership fee was required plus monthly dues of 10 dollars. Special trains brought prospective Montebrier members to the opening Gala and Dance on September 13, 1929. The Club’s glory days were short-lived due to the stock market crash of October 1929 and the resulting great depression. Though the “Club” closed, locals continued to rent Montebrier from Merchants and Planters Bank. It became a sometimes speakeasy, hosting frequent poker and dice games, or a dance hall with square dancing and competition ballroom dancing in its 47-square foot center room.

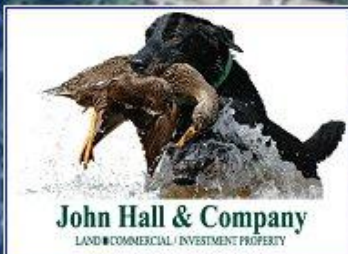
Although the Country Club died, the name Montebrier and the memory of the grand old house persisted. In 1930 an Alabama College professor, John Steelman, purchased Montebrier. With wife Jean and daughter Doris, the Steelman’s made Montebrier their home. Impressed with Professor Steelman’s handling of a labor dispute, Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins (FDR’s first term), recruited Steelman to Washington to serve the US Conciliation Service where he became director in 1937; he later became President Harry Truman’s Chief White House Advisor with the title Assistant to the President. Mrs. Steelman elected not to join her husband in Washington, and the two later divorced.

Steelman’s former wife, Jean Mitchell, later married Mr. William Pittman, Dean of Massey Business College in Birmingham. Mr. Pittman, known fondly by many in Montevallo and Brierfield as “Mr.”, loved Montebrier. The Pittmans used the old home, then partially closed and mostly empty, as a summer home and weekend retreat from their primary Birmingham residence. Upon Mr. Pittman’s death, Mrs. Pittman sold Montebrier to a single woman, Ruby Lee Latham, in 1958. Mrs. Latham only visited the house once or twice and her intentions for it are unknown. It stood open and abandoned to the elements during these years.

In 1964, while in dental school, Mike and Linda Mahan contacted Mrs. Latham, purchased the house and fifteen acres, and began Montebrier’s present restoration. In 1976 Montebrier was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Mahans have reared two daughters, Miki and Stann, in Montebrier; its walls and the surrounding Mahan Creek are now enjoyed by grandsons Michael, Jacob and Jesse. Linda retired from the University of Montevallo (Alabama College) as Vice President Emeritus for Student Affairs and Professor of Education Emeritus in 1997. Mike practices dentistry across the highway from Montebrier on Mahan Creek.







**MONTEBRIER
12 ACRES +/- IN BIBB CO
HOME PLUS AMENITIES**



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