

# *Reflections*

## Historical Overview

*Ever wondered why there is a crumbling brick chimney across from the clubhouse, or how “Lazy Acres Road” got its name, or who developed Reflections in the first place? If so, read on:*

### **From “Lazy Acres” to “Reflections”**

In the early 1970’s, the property that eventually became Reflections belonged to Jack Ulmer, the president of S. C. Federal Savings and Loan. Mr. Ulmer, who owned the three lakes and the acreage, named the property “Lazy Acres,” and referred to his vacation home on the property as “the Lodge.” Mr. Ulmer’s children and grandchildren spent summers at Lazy Acres, which was considered quite distant from downtown Columbia at that time. The Rawlinson and Benson families also owned acreage in the area; hence the road names. “The Lodge” was considered as a possible clubhouse for Reflections but could not be converted; only the brick chimney was saved, for sentiment, and to link the property to its history.

In the mid 1970's the Ulmer property was sold to the J. W. Haynes Company and came to the attention of William T. Gregory, the original developer of Palmetto Dunes on Hilton Head Island. After Phipps Land Company bought Palmetto Dunes, Mr. Gregory resigned to develop Reflections. He formed Environmental Resorts, Inc. [ERI] and, with Charles L. Bates, Architect, and Greenwood Land Company (a newly formed subsidiary of Greenwood Mills) as partial investors, bought the property that eventually became Reflections from the J.W. Haynes Company.

In 1977, when the first homes were sold, Reflections consisted of Cassia Court, Ligustrum Lane, and part of Ridge Lake Drive. In addition to these homes, there were tennis courts, a swimming pool, an organic garden, a clubhouse, a children’s playground near the clubhouse, and a riding stable near the Rawlinson Road entrance. The homes and other constructions on the property were designed by Charles Bates, the architect of the Hyatt Hotel on Hilton Head Island. There was a security guard on duty in the guard house at each entrance daily.

At the time, what was later to become Emerald Lake Drive consisted of woodlands where wild ducks nested. Emerald Lake received its name as a result of a contest in which Reflections residents were asked to submit names for the three lakes. The names Otter Lake and Mirror Lake resulted from the same competition.

### **Reflections Owners’ Association formed**

Reflections Owners’ Association (ROA) was created in the spring of 1977, and, from the beginning, every homeowner automatically became a member of the ROA and, thus, subject to the *Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and*

*Restrictions.* The homeowners' (regime) fee was identical for all members of the Association. As the community developed, a Board of Directors and an Architectural Committee were formed, and Architectural Rules, as well as Association Rules, were drawn up as required by the *Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions*. ROA members met in December 1977 to elect the first Board of Directors, thus establishing a tradition of meeting annually in December that exists to this day.

### **Original Reflections Completed**

Several years after the original dwellings were completed, Woodwind Court and Shadow Creek Court were built, and additional homes were constructed along Ridge Lake Drive. Gardenwood Court was the last group of homes developed by developer ERI. These homes, built across the dam near the stable area, were designed by Richard Molten, a Columbia architect who also designed the ERI business office, now a private residence. The 134 principally wooden-sided homes developed by ERI between 1977 and 1986 are sometimes referred to as "Original Reflections" to distinguish them from later developments constructed on property sold by ERI to other developers.

### **Beyond Original Reflections**

In 1986, Reflections annexed Southbury, a twenty-unit patio home community developed by Michael Nemeč. Four years later, TEAM, Inc. (Timothy O'Leary, Dennis O'Leary, and Ernie Ranft), began a seventeen-unit development called Twin Oaks by building two brick homes on Lazy Acres Road across from the tennis courts. The group ultimately dissolved, and the property, including the lots and the two brick houses, was conveyed to O'Leary Brothers Construction Company. Between 1991 and 1993, O'Leary Brothers built and sold fifteen more single family homes in what is now known as Twin Oaks I. The company then embarked on a second development, consisting of the fourteen units of Twin Oaks II.

### **Crises Resolved**

Two important events have marked the history of Reflections: the collapse of the dam between Otter and Mirror Lakes in October 1993 and the lawsuit brought against the Reflections Owners' Association by a group of Twin Oaks homeowners in 1995. In the first case, the crisis was resolved when a group of residents lent money to the Association in order to pay for the rebuilding of the dam. These homeowners were repaid, over a three-year period, by a special assessment added to the normal regime fee. In the second case, as a result of the lawsuit, there is no longer a single regime fee payment for all Reflections homeowners. In order to ensure a more equitable regime fee for all residents, the *Settlement Agreement of 1998* established a system of calculating fees by neighborhood, and, in the case of Original Reflections, by square-footage.

## **Goodbye ERI**

In 2005, Environmental Resorts, Inc. (ERI) divested itself of its remaining property in Reflections. As a result, the ROA now owns all three lakes and the dams associated with the lakes. The ERI business office was sold as a private home, and a tract of land bordering Otter Lake and Lazy Acres Road was also purchased by a private individual. The property adjacent to Twin Oaks was bought by McGuinn Homes, and the fifteen homes of “The Arbors at Twin Oaks” were developed.

**The future of Reflections is up to you!**

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The above historical overview was prepared in 2006 by Elizabeth Joiner with help from Barbara Gregory, Maggie Perry, and Doris McAndrew.