

Historic Landmark #29



D.L. Nutt-Watkins House
319 E. Bridge St.

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The Nutt House, also known as “D.L. Nutt Home” was built in 1879 in its existing location. The house remains one of the best examples of a High-Style, Greek revival home. The charm of the structure has been maintained by its inhabitants for the last 120 years. The home was designed and built by a man whose last name was Evans. He also built the Hannaford House on Lambert Street. The house, described both as a High Style Victorian or Plantation-style home with Greek Revival details, still retains its original detail. The historic, architectural and cultural significance of the house is evidenced by the fact that the house is in its original location and has been largely maintained in its original state. The fact that the house was constructed by a skilled local craftsman demonstrates the uniqueness of the house’s design.

The house was built for David Lee Nutt who was a very successful business owner in Granbury’s early history. Nutt was an early Hood County entrepreneur who was also involved in the development of several of Granbury’s most important institutions including churches, schools and a bridge built over the Brazos River in 1878. The Nutt family is arguably the most significant family in Granbury and Hood County’s history. Additionally, the woman who restored the home in 1967 was Mary Lou Watkins Nutt, who is widely regarded as the founder of the preservation movement in Granbury. David Lee Nutt was involved in the early settlement of Granbury, even though he was one of the youngest of all the Nutt brothers. In fact, he was involved in defending the territory in significant Indian raids and won the heart of Sudie Garland, daughter of Captain Peter Garland who led local campaigns to defend the area from Indian raids.

By all accounts, D.L. Nutt was a very industrious entrepreneur who worked very hard in the business he shared with his brothers. After building the house, D.L and Sudie opened their home to the “drummers” or travelling salesmen who were showcased their wares for the Nutt’s mercantile store. In fact, it was Sudie who finally persuaded her husband to add a wing on to the house to accommodate these individuals, thereby opening Granbury’s first hotel – The Nutt House. A narrative of the family provided to the Texas Historical Commission describes the friendly nature of D.L. and Sudie, “As host and hostess, Mr. Nutt and his amiable wife are without peers as entertainers, and all who stop beneath their roof are made to feel at home.” The Nutts closed the hotel in 1900 and dismantled the wing addition and porches were added to the home. Mary Lou Watkins who was the granddaughter of D.L. and Sudie purchased the house in the mid-1960s and began an extensive restoration.

The home is a fantastic example of a High-Style Victorian with Greek revival influence, which was somewhat rare for this part of the country in 1879. The Nutts added a wing onto the house when Ms. Nutt decided to profit from the drummers who came home with Mr. Nutt. The Nutts entertained their guests for a few years and the “Nutt House” hotel wing was removed in 1900 and converted to expansive porches.

When Mary Lou Watkins began renovations on the home in the 1960s, she eliminated the expansive front porch and restored much of the interior. She obtained a Recorded Texas Historical Landmark in 1967. The current owner, Mr. Stuart Brown, also completed an extensive restoration on much of the outside of the home by re-leveling the foundation and restoring porch balusters and columns. Additionally, Mr. Brown added another bathroom upstairs to one of the bedrooms, thereby extending the upstairs footprint. The house includes most of the original woodwork and windows as well as much of the interior floors. Ms.

Watkins replaced the staircase with a staircase obtained from a historic home in Dallas. The interior of the home also maintains much of its original moldings and millwork.

While all the information on the architect and builder of the home has not been obtained, we do know that Mr. Evans also designed and constructed the Hannaford House, another fine home in Granbury. The home was constructed from cypress lumber hauled from east Texas by an oxcart.

The Nutt House is most assuredly a familiar visual feature of the city. Because it was built on site 120 years ago, the home has seen Granbury through many eras. The house is one of the largest and most magnificent of all the historic homes in Granbury. The home is included in Granbury's tour of homes and is a very popular stop when it is included on the Candlelight Tour of Homes.

**The D.L. Nutt-Watkins House was designated
a local landmark November 17, 2009.**