

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Wildwood Plantation House (c.1850) is a one-and-a-half story frame Greek Revival plantation house located in a pastoral setting with a live oak garden. Despite some largely late nineteenth century alterations, the house still retains its essential appearance and Greek Revival styling.

Wildwood is symmetrical with five bays and a full width undercut gallery. Across the gallery are six molded boxed columns under a plain cornice. Two sets of French doors with original shutters flank the oversized central doorway with its transom and side lights. Another Greek Revival feature is the shoulder molded surrounds which encompass the principal openings. The house is surmounted by a steeply pitched roof featuring an outside chimney located against each gable end wall.

Wildwood retains its original central hall plan with two larger rooms to either side. In the French tradition, across the rear were three smaller spaces of equal size, with the center one an outside porch containing a stairway leading to the upstairs rooms. Later as part of an 1893 updating, a full width gallery was added to the rear elevation. The old center porch was enclosed as a dining area, and decorative paneled wainscoting was installed. In addition, decorative moldings were installed to highlight baseboards, windows and door surrounds throughout the house, including the front gallery. Finally, a cove molded false gallery fashioned of beaded board was added to the front.

One original trabeated mantel remains, while the other was lost and a late Victorian mantel was substituted as part of a 1975 renovation/restoration project. At this time the 1893 back gallery was enclosed (mostly in glass) to provide more interior living space.

Despite the previously mentioned alterations, the Greek Revival galleried cottage style of the house remains readily evident. It is still a five bay, classical, galleried cottage with shoulder moldings and a central hall. The false gallery and extra moldings were added in 1893 at the very end of the Greek Revival carryover period in Louisiana and can be said to have enhanced Wildwood's Greek Revival style. For example, the false gallery lends the appearance of an entablature.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Wildwood is of local significance in the area of architecture as an important example of the Greek Revival style within the context of East Feliciana Parish. East Feliciana is well known as a center of Greek Revival architecture. But almost all major examples are relatively grand two story piles with two story galleries or porticos. The humbler galleried cottage, which was presumably once more common, is almost unknown in the parish today. Wildwood is important in this regard as one of only four known remaining examples. In addition, the false gallery attachment at Wildwood is of local note because, with its cove molded shape, it is undoubtedly the most graceful and best crafted example in East Feliciana Parish. (Usually a false gallery is an ungainly appendage rather than a graceful complement to a gallery.)

Major Bibliographical References

East Feliciana Parish Conveyance Records, East Feliciana Parish Courthouse.

False gallery inscription with the date 1893 and the name G. D. Dawson, Jackson, Louisiana.