

The Fuller House is a two-and-a-half story wood frame Queen Anne Revival residence with mainly Colonial Revival details. It is located a block or so from the Minden CBD in an early twentieth century neighborhood. With the exception of historic modifications to the gallery and the selective, sensitive installation of vinyl siding, the house is pristinely preserved from its c.1905 construction.

Due to its height, size and location on a slight rise, the Fuller House has a commanding presence. With its exuberant, elaborate silhouette, it is first and foremost a Queen Anne Revival house. Its complex roofline features a tripped roof with a gabled projection on each side elevation, a large front dormer with a balcony, and two prominent chimneys with decorative brickwork. The composition culminates in a large round turret three stories in height with a rounded cone roof crowned by a finial. The turret, easily the house's strongest visual element, is attached at the corner. Projecting wall planes include the turret, polygonal bays beneath the side gabled projections, a projecting gable peak on the principal side elevation, and a squared off projection on the second story of the facade beneath the previously mentioned large dormer. Also the Palladian window in the peak of the principal side gable is inscribed within a prominent arch. The Queen Anne fondness for surfaces of varying textures can be found on the turret, with its fairly narrow gauge clapboarding and wide band of beveled boards between the second and third stories. Finally, the Queen Anne taste is reflected in the multi-pane top window sashes on the third story of the turret, the front projection and dormer, and the Palladian window of the principal side gable. The glazing bars form a pattern suggestive of tracery.

Instead of the Eastlake detailing one would expect to be dominant in an earlier Queen Anne house, the Fuller House's ornament is almost entirely Colonial Revival. Exterior Colonial Revival elements include the wraparound gallery with its simple Tuscan columns; the previously mentioned Palladian window; and denticular molding under the eaves of the main block, defining the second and third stories of the turret, and accenting the dormer.

Other exterior elements worthy of note are brackets underneath the projecting gable peak of the principal side elevation and mostly one over one windows.

The interior of the Fuller House is virtually unchanged, including the retention of some of the light fixtures. The first floor floorplan is particularly interesting. A roughly five-and-a-half foot central hall opens into a wide hall (about nine-and-a-half feet) extending off to one side at the mid-point (see plan). Poised dramatically at the center of the composition is the staircase, which employs three flights and two landings to ascend to the second floor. Opening into the wide cross hall is the front parlor where the turret is located. The room opens into the hall via a columnar screen. The overall effect of the foregoing is that of a Queen Anne living hall. The remainder of the floorplan is fairly straightforward and can be seen in the attached drawing. Another element of interest is a utilitarian staircase toward the rear (see plan).

The interior is elaborately and extensively detailed. Decorative elements include an Eastlake grille defining the rear continuation of the central hall; the previously mentioned columnar screen with its paneled base, slender Ionic columns and tiny denticular band; paneling on the staircase and a paneled wainscot in the halls and south parlor; and door frames with cornerblocks featuring an incised geometric pattern. With but one exception, the mantels are of the columnar Colonial Revival type. The one in the turreted parlor has a wreath/swag/garland design in its entablature, and its handsome green glazed tiles are ornamented with wreaths, what appear to be torches, and other designs. The columnar mantel in the dining room has a cabinet overmantel and its original green hearth tiles. The most unusual mantel is in the north front parlor. With its sinuous outline and boldly projecting curved side members, it has an overall Rococo feel. The detailing includes such popular classical motifs as the torch and lamp of knowledge. The upstairs mantels, of course, are plainer (all in a low-key Colonial Revival style). They all retain their original hearth tiles, with one featuring the laurel wreath motif.

Much of the Fuller House's interior character is derived from the decorative wood used extensively in the principal spaces (wainscot, staircase, doors and door surrounds, etc.). It is of

varnished pine carefully cut to produce striking patterns in the surface grain, including burl panels and "curly pine" effects.

Other interior features worthy of note are all of the original doors with their multiple horizontal panels, window seats (for example, defining the shape of the turret), and some of the original light fixtures (including one in the north front parlor with a laurel wreath design).

Exterior alterations to the Fuller House are as follows:

(1) Changes to the gallery which occurred fairly early (over 50 years ago). An early photo shows that the gallery originally projected on the side (as it terminated) and to mark the front entrance. It was also capped with a balustrade. It is generally believed that the present look of the gallery is the result of a fire. Now the gallery projects only to follow the contours of the turret and the top balustrade is gone. One suspects that it was at this time that the entrance steps were moved from the front (lining up with the door) to their present location beneath the turret.

(2) At some point a widow's walk was removed and two rear chimneys were shortened.

(3) Within the last few years, the current owners installed vinyl siding on certain areas. The first floor under the wraparound gallery and the entire turret were purposely left untouched. Also, the siding was installed very sensitively, taking care to not impact decorative elements, window frames, etc. The eaves, for example, usually a tell-tale sign of siding, were left with their original beaded board.

Assessment of Integrity:

Obviously the most noteworthy of the above changes in terms of the house's architectural character are those on the gallery. With the exception of the re-orientation of the front steps, the gallery looks correct. Admittedly, the original gallery, with its projections and rooftop balustrade, added to the Fuller House's elaborateness; however, the overwhelming majority of the home's original features survive intact. When viewed within this overall context, the gallery changes are relatively minimal.

In terms of the vinyl siding, it should be noted that it was a step taken reluctantly by the present owners and hence great care was taken, as explained above.

Contributing Element:

Behind the house is a two story frame dependency which appears to be roughly contemporaneous with the main house. One presumes it was a carriage house with servant quarters above.

Significant dates	c.1905
Architect/Builder	Unknown
Criterion C	

The Fuller House is locally significant as a superior example of the Queen Anne Revival style within the context of the several parish region of North Louisiana. It achieves this distinction because of its complex massing, culminating in a turret. The house is also important for its well-detailed and well-preserved interiors.

Although settlement in North Louisiana began in earnest in the 1830s, the greatest population growth occurred in the late nineteenth century with the coming of railroads. New towns were created and explosive growth in various industries was made possible (most notably, timber production). In terms of the built environment, only a small percentage of the region's buildings (probably less than 10%) date from before the 1890s. Among these are hundreds of Queen Anne influenced houses in towns of varying sizes, including two major metropolitan centers. However, like much of the rest of the state, most examples tend to be fairly modest. A one story cottage with a two or three bay gallery across half the front and perhaps a projecting polygonal bay under a gable is the norm.

The Fuller House is a landmark within this patrimony to even the most casual observer because of its scale and superior architectural styling. It is one of very few two/two-and-a-half story examples in the region (probably 20 to 25). More importantly, its complex massing, the hallmark of the Queen Anne style, is quite superior, especially when viewed against the norm. As noted in Part 7, there are projections in all sorts of directions, culminating in a very prominent three story turret. It is one of only 10-12 houses in all of North Louisiana to feature a turret, and generally speaking, a turret is the ultimate in Queen Anne massing, distinguishing the grand examples from lesser ones. The Fuller House is also noteworthy for its pristine, extensively detailed interiors, as described in Part 7. While staff members of the Division of Historic Preservation certainly have not been in every Queen Anne house in the region, they have visited the best examples in their forty-plus years of experience and can safely conclude that the Fuller House has few peers in this regard.

Historical Note:

The house takes its historic name from Thomas W. Fuller, who purchased the property in 1919. It is believed to have been built for Mrs. Willie S. Harrell, who acquired the lot in June 1905. Mr. Fuller died in 1920, but his widow lived in the house until her death in 1949. The house then became rental property, but has been occupied by Fuller descendants since the late 1960s, first by a daughter, Mrs. Russell White, and now by a granddaughter who uses it basically as a weekend home.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Historic photos of Fuller House, National Register file, Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation.

Conveyance records, copies in National Register file, Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation.