The Historic Dr. Plunkett House

204 S. Bragg Street, Warrenton
Warren County

The Dr. Plunkett House is an early Federal-style tripartite house on an acre lot in historic Warrenton just minutes from Kerr Lake and Lake Gaston! Favored by Roanoke River planters of northeastern NC and heavily influenced by Virginia architecture, the tripartite form was embraced by Warren County tastemakers during the boom years of the early 19th century. Records indicate that John LaTaste, possibly an educator from Virginia, purchased the property in 1817 and likely built the house in 1818. The house showcases an interesting array of woodwork that is both unique and refined.

Archival photos show the house as having sustained few changes, even after a fire across the street in the 1960s which resulted in the installation of aluminum siding over the original beaded clapboards (still visible on the north side). The two-story, front-gabled main block with side-gabled wings rests on a slightly raised stone foundation, with a partially finished basement accessed from an exterior entrance. Three impressive cut-stone chimneys heat the interior. The ¾-width front porch is supported by simple Tuscan columns, which appear to have replaced more stylized posts now in storage.

The interior features early woodwork including a broad transverse entrance hall, large six-panel doors, tall 9-over-9 windows, and flat-panel wainscot with molded chair extending down the hall. Underneath the winder stair leading to the south wing is an arched opening supported by symmetrically molded engaged pilasters featuring Adamesque pointed arch corbeling above a reeded soffit. The left (north) end of the hall has a plainer wide arch. The main parlor is the largest room in the house with Federal-style woodwork including tall ceilings, large six-panel doors, mitered three-part molded door and window surrounds, and flat-panel wainscot with molded chair rail. The impressive mantel hints of late Georgian-style mixed with Federal ornament.

By comparison, the two side wings are more simplistic with a mix of Federal and Greek Revival-style woodwork. The stairway is supported and lined with wide beaded boards. The second floor exhibits early woodwork such as board-and-batten doors with HL hinges, three-part molded, mitered door and window surrounds, and molded chair rails. The main bedroom features a tall mantel and full bathroom. A partially finished attic over the south wing is accessed from the hall, and unfinished attic space over the north wing from the front bedroom. Behind each side wing on the first floor are various additions from the Greek Revival and Victorian periods including the dining room, bedroom, kitchen, bathrooms, and closets. An early outbuilding was attached to the rear north wing. Another early outbuilding remains in the yard along remnants of a cast iron fence.

The house will require rehabilitation to address deferred maintenance and would benefit from updated systems, bathrooms, and a new kitchen. Though the roof was replaced with a metal roof in recent years, damage from past leaks require repair. Artificial siding will need to be removed and necessary repairs made to the original molded clapboard siding.

For more information or to make an appointment to see the Dr. Plunkett House, contact:
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**Directions:** From Raleigh, take US-401 N/Louisburg Road. In 5.5 miles keep right to continue on US-401 N/Louisburg Road. Keep right in 7.1 miles to continue onto US-401. In 2.5 miles keep right again to stay on US-401. In 21.5 miles turn right onto US-401 N. Turn right onto Plummer Street in 18.1 miles. In 305 feet turn left at the first cross street onto S. Bragg Street. The property will be on the right in 449 feet.

**Area Information:** The picturesque Town of Warrenton is located between Kerr Lake and Lake Gaston and only an hour from Raleigh. Its well-preserved small town character has been rediscovered and enjoys a thriving community life. Formed in 1779, Warren County is located along Interstate 85 and is known as a “gateway of the Carolinas.” It retains an impressive collection of intact plantation houses and a variety of architecture harkening to its heyday as a center of agricultural enterprise, academies, home to leading political figures, and sulfur springs resorts that drew famous names to the area first by wagon then by train. Dozens of properties are listed in the National Register of Historic Places including much of historic Warrenton, the county seat and a designated Main Street town. The house is located only a block from Town Hall and County Courthouse, and within short walking distance of the quaint yet bustling downtown with shops, services, eateries, and a small-town hardware store that will be quite useful. Only one hour to Research Triangle Park and 1.5 hours to Richmond, VA. Visit [www.warrenton.nc.gov](http://www.warrenton.nc.gov) or [www.warrencountync.com](http://www.warrencountync.com) for more information.

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