



NEVADA PRESERVATION FOUNDATION

# Keep Up on Home & History 2017

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## The HTC Goes Pink!

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Save the [Pink House](#)! This was the mission of local residents Dan and Lois Wray, who walked by the old, neglected house daily and thought that someone should save this Northern Nevada historic building. It wasn't long before Lois realized that someone could be her!

Located 25 miles east of Tahoe and an hour south of Reno, Genoa was settled in 1851 with the establishment of the first permanent trading post in the state. The small town is now a local, historic tourist destination and boasts charming 19th- and early 20th-century architecture, much of which is home to local shops, bars and restaurants.

### Using the Historic Tax Credit (HTC)

The newest addition to this list is Genoa's Pink House. Built in 1855 in the Gothic Revival style, the house is on the National Register of Historic Places. After purchasing the property in 2014, the Wray's sought to rehabilitate and restore the house back to its original mid-19th-century character. The couple worked with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in order to use the federal [historic tax credit \(HTC\)](#) to alleviate some of the funding needed for such a restoration. Just this past month, the Pink House announced that they had received the Historic Preservation Certification by the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS).



The HTC is a NPS program designed to promote the restoration of historic properties. The program gives a 20% income tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic, income-producing buildings that follow the Secretary of the Interior’s (SOI) standards for rehabilitation. It does require that the architectural history of the building be well-researched, and that the restoration process be completely documented as well. Luckily, Lois was pristine with her paperwork and photographs during the process, and was actually able to apply for the HTC after the project was completed. While it’s recommended to apply and work with SHPO before actually beginning construction, the Historic Preservation Certificate is a testament to the Wray’s superb restoration efforts.

## Pink House Preservation

After purchasing the property, the Wrays engaged Jack Hall Construction to supervise the project. Interfacing with the SHPO and Michelle Schmitter, a Historic Preservation Specialist, work on the house began in August 2014 and was completed in October 2015. With the exception of some materials that needed to be milled out of state, all work done on the house was by local craftsmen.

“The objectives of restoring The Pink House were to honor the original integrity of the house, be good stewards of our community and provide an opportunity for people to learn about the rich history of the area,” said Lois Wray. She went on to say that had they not undertaken the restoration, The Pink House would likely not be standing in five years.

In preserving and restoring the property, maintaining the original integrity and character of the house was the utmost priority. Any features that were replaced due to previous damage were replaced in kind. Great care was taken to preserve the original footprint and features of the house. While some modernization did occur (electrical, plumbing, heating and air, wifi!), the house has been restored to look as it did 160 years ago.

Perhaps the most beloved feature of the restoration was uncovering and restoring the original roof pattern of the home. The original roof had been covered up at some point with a traditional wooden shake roof, but it was in pretty bad condition when the Wrays took over. The original roof, with its unique pattern, was uncovered under the wooden shake roof and restored back to pristine condition. There was enough evidence from what was left of the original roof, including photographs of the old house, to reconstruct the original design.

## The Candy Dance

Early in the 20th century, the Pink House was home to Genoa resident Lillian Virgin Finnegan, who was the founder of the still-popular Candy Dance festival. The Candy Dance was suggested by Lillian as way to help raise money to purchase street lights for the small town. The event was an evening dance and dinner which couples could purchase tickets to in order to raise money. Lillian and her aunt Jane Raycraft Campbell made and distributed delicious candy samples to pass out at the dance as an incentive for a good showing from the town.

The candy did indeed bring the community residents out and Genoa was able to make enough to purchase street lights for the town. After purchasing the streetlights, Genoa’s residents realized that they would also need to pay for the electricity to run the streetlights, so the Candy Dance became an annual event to raise the funds needed for the upcoming year’s electric bill. The candy dance has since grown to a two-day festival and is still an annual event held every fall in Genoa.

## The Pink House Now



The Pink House is now a Cheese and Charcuterie shop with a small restaurant featuring a seasonal menu to take advantage of local produce. It is also a venue for special events.

The house is decorated how it would have looked during the Gothic Revival era. Most of the antiques and artwork came from shops in Genoa and Gardnerville and the tables are made from wood reclaimed from the damaged back of the house. Some of the wallpaper is a reproduction by Bradbury and Bradbury, and the upholstery, window treatments, carpeting and wood floors are similar to what you would have seen in a prominent house back in the day.

The Pink House is more than just a shop. The Wray’s are committed to sharing the restoration efforts and the history of The Pink House, and encourage people to stop in, take a look and soak in the local history!

ADD COMMENT