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# Southern Charm



**By Susan Hylton World Staff Writer**  
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***Tim Lannom has taken on the challenge of restoring the Brady Mansion to its glory days.***

***Echoing the grandeur of the 1920s, above, a grand staircase welcomes visitors. Below left, the Brady Mansion boasts an impressive view of downtown Tulsa from a bedroom terrace door.***



Community World staff photos by Susan Hylton

## Brady Mansion treasure to new owner

Since 1982, Tim Lannom has bought 27 homes in need of a little TLC. He's fixed them up, lived in them awhile and sold them all.

But even he admits that his latest undertaking is a mammoth project. In fact, when he gets done with the restoration of the Brady Mansion, which he recently moved into and bought for a hundred grand, he thinks he'll just stay put on 620 N. Denver Ave.

"This is the final frontier for me because when I get through with this, I'm going to be too worn out to do any more houses," he said.

There were seven families living in the old home when it was purchased by Lannom. In 1942, the Brady family turned their home over to the government, and it was converted into apartments to house soldiers during World War II.

The Bradys sold the home after the war, and the rooms have been rented out all these years. It is Lannom's goal to restore the home as a single-family dwelling.

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Tate Brady, who died in 1925, built the home in 1922. It is built in the style of the Robert E. Lee home which is located on a hill overlooking Washington, D.C.

Many of the home's unique features were covered up or destroyed so the government could house its boys. Walls were erected to make several rooms out of the once huge master bedrooms.

But Lannom made a nice discovery when he was down in the basement and noticed some peculiar inclines. He traced down their origins, knocked some holes in the walls and found two hidden staircases and secret panels.

"When we found the old staircases that had been undisturbed for 50 years we felt like archaeologists going through an Egyptian tomb," he said.

An extra staircase was put in during the conversion to be used for tenants so no one would have to cross through anybody's bedroom as they went to the third floor.

The two secret panels are featured atop the first flight of stairs, one of which is now sealed with silicone and is thought to have been a servant's passageway. The other panel is simply a hidden storage space.

Each floor of the home has 3,268 square feet and there is a very large basement as well. The first floor staircase remains with its wood spindles, albeit the mahogany railing, like much of the wood trim in the home, has been painted. Lannom plans on putting a stripping crew to work to restore the once-lovely woodwork.

The walls and ceilings once featured hand-painted canvas murals of famous confederates, but the new walls covered right over them which destroyed them, Lannom said.

"Those are gone forever, unfortunately. I would like to try to get some artists in here to paint on the walls the way it was," Lannom said.

Tate Brady's father was a confederate soldier, and according to news reports, Robert E. Lee's birthday was celebrated at the mansion with dozens of tables of bridge going and tea served by the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

Lannom said he will take down the lowered ceilings that were put in which cover up much higher ceilings that feature plaster molding 2-feet thick and gold leaf, much to his delight.

Carpet and linoleum cover some of the wood flooring slated for refinishing, but the marble floors in the kitchens and bathrooms are cracked and in bad shape.

In many of the bedrooms, there are the all-too-telling shades of the 70s: shag carpeting, gold kitchen countertops and wood paneling. All of the home's fireplaces remain, however, and are featured in every bedroom.

Lannom plans on having a ballroom again. It once graced the entire southern length of the home, but is now two rooms. It is hard to imagine the top hats and canes that must have once filled the room or the coziness of a nearby tea room where unattractive cabinets cover up what was once a multi-windowed room.

The floors have indeed settled in the home, with the occasional slanting and soft spots, but Lannom says that most of the stonework that has moved at all can be easily fixed.

"It's basically a real sound house," he said.

The exterior of the home is what is called Carthage Stone. The pillars in front of the home are in granite, and limestone makes up the stairs and borders the windows.

The home once was situated on an acreage, but even the back yard today is cut off by the expressway. From the terrace of a bedroom, one has a picturesque view of downtown.

Lannom says it may take him five years to finish the home and he knows it will be very expensive. Jim Lovell, president of the Brady Heights Neighborhood Association, said the group is working with Lannom in asking preservation groups for financial assistance in restoring the historic home.

Although the neighborhood is considered historic, and named on behalf of Tate Brady himself, the mansion is not on the register of historic places. Lannom would like to see what he can do to have that changed.

"It's probably the most significant historic house in Tulsa. Tate Brady was one of the main incorporaters of Tulsa," Lannom said.

Tate Brady came to Tulsa in 1890 to open a mercantile store selling hides, furs and wild game. He was active in the community as a town alderman and president of the school board. He was one of the democratic politicians who supported the idea of Oklahoma being two states, Oklahoma and Sequoyah, and was the state's first national democratic committeeman.

He built the Brady Hotel at Archer and Main Streets in 1900, which featured baths and was often the site of state business including discussions about the state constitution. The hotel was destroyed by fire in 1935 leaving an eight-story shell of a building that was later destroyed.

Lannom bought his first home in Brady Heights and has come full circle since that time with the Brady Mansion being located in the same historic neighborhood. He also bought homes in Broken Arrow and Utica Square where he had a house with all the creature comforts, including a swimming pool he left behind to come to Brady Heights.

It was nostalgia that lured him.

"I've always loved this old house," he said. "I've admired it since I was a kid. The massive columns in front of it. It just radiates the old roaring '20s."

[By Susan Hylton World Staff Writer](#)

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