

Watley, Preston



Chairmaker

Preston Watley was born in 1932, in Eunice, Louisiana, where he presently lives with his wife Lona. The Watleys have seven children. He owns his own craft shop in Eunice where he makes Cypress benches, cupboards, and chairs with cowhide seats.

Mr. Watley learned to put cowhide on chairs from his father using an old technique. His tools consist of salt, water, cowhide, chair, and a knife. He wets and salts the hide before applying it to the chair. He has been covering chairs for almost fifty years using this method.

Mr. Watley demonstrates his crafts at festivals throughout South Louisiana.