

After

Franklin Street Train Station, Reading, PA



Before



Greetings & News

I'm so excited to share Historical Restorations' recently completed project with you – the Franklin Street Train Station in Reading, Pennsylvania.

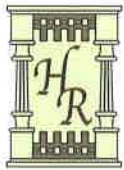
Empty, abandoned, and nearly demolished, Historic Restorations helped breathe life back into this train station with quite a few challenging custom millwork contributions that we were honored to complete. Recreating its original details was immensely satisfying because the station was on the "Pennsylvania At-Risk" list of threatened historic buildings in 1999. Fortunately, the Berks Area Regional Transportation Authority's vision of the station's restoration and their dedication to the preservation of its original architecture saved this historical treasure and we applaud them...loudly!



To close, I invite you to "like" Historic Restorations' Facebook page for your chance to win an Amazon Kindle® pre-loaded with our ebook *Preservation Primer #1!* To enter, please visit [Facebook.com/HistoricRestorations](https://www.facebook.com/HistoricRestorations), "like" our page, then click on the banner at the top for your chance to win! The contest is running for a limited time.

All the Best,

Danielle



Historic Restorations

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Franklin Street Train Station



"Historic Restorations helped us address challenges, plain and simple..."
 - Bob Rimby of Berks Area Regional Transit Authority



After



Before



After



Before

The Franklin Street Train Station in Reading, PA was originally built in the 1920's as a station along the Reading Railroad shipping and passenger "Main Line" between Pottsville/Shamokin and Philadelphia. The station served both rail and bus service. In 1972 Hurricane Agnes ravaged the building, but transportation services still used the building until 1981.

From 1981 until 2011 the building sat abandoned. Vandals, several fires, and animals damaged the building. The exterior stone walls were covered in graffiti, windows were broken or missing, wood rot was extensive throughout, plaster was damaged from the leaking roof, and the original train station benches were long gone.

In 2005 the Berks Area Regional Transit Authority (BARTA) purchased the station from the City with the hope that passenger train service could be restored to the station, and in 2011 they began the massive undertaking of restoring the building to its original glory and use it as a bus terminal for their public busing system.

Using photos from the original dedication of the station in 1930, BARTA worked with their architect to choose treatments that would return the station's interior to its original state. Once Historic Restorations began work, our research, knowledge, suggestions, and mock-ups continued the development of the historically accurate restorations.

Bob Rimby, the BARTA Project Manager who oversaw the project, noted that the biggest challenges they faced in the project were the depth of the damage and a fixed grant budget. "Historic Restorations helped us address those challenges, plain and simple. They saved things I didn't think could be saved which helped us stay within budget by eliminating the amount of new construction" says Rimby.

But that wasn't the only benefit BARTA experienced with Historic Restorations' work. Bob notes, "When they couldn't save something, Historic Restorations recreated those architectural features so accurately that people come in here and think they are original."



Before



After

Online Exclusive!
 For more dramatic before & after pictures of this station please visit www.historic-restorations.com/portfolio/franklin-street-train-station



Franklin Street Train Station Continued...



It's All In The Details

For detailed information on the construction process and joinery used during this restoration, please visit www.historic-restorations.com/portfolio/franklin-street-train-station

THE RESTORATION PROCESS

COFFERED CEILING

One of the biggest architectural woodwork features on this project is the coffered ceiling we recreated to match original details. Thirty feet above eye-level the original coffered ceiling had already been completely removed. The challenge was to design historically accurate and proportionately enlarge the profile so that it could be appreciated from 30' below.

RAILWAY STATION BENCHES

Other major architectural woodwork features that were fabricated for the project were traditional railway station benches 10' to 30' in length. Historic Restorations' team of artisans reproduced the benches entirely from scratch based on the research of historic photographs. The benches were crafted using a very utilitarian, economical, and green approach – as would traditionally have been done in millwork shops – and used the scrap African Mahogany left over from the doors to create the bench ends. They determined the traditional joinery techniques that would be best for the benches and how the pieces drawn would fit together. To honor the inherent beauty of the African Mahogany, they applied the same finish as the doors – the Vintage Burgundy opaque stain with a hand-rubbed clear coat stain.

LUNCHEON CABINET

An existing 20' long cabinet that served as a lunch counter in the diner was restored into a museum piece, complete with new compartments, shelving, and locking glass sliding doors. This cabinet was the most difficult restoration due to extensive water damage and wood rot. The team fashioned a White Oak countertop for the cabinet and used butterfly dovetails tying the laminate seam together as an accent. New moldings were crafted as replicas of the original moldings on the countertop. Black walnut was chosen for the splines to accent the White Oak top and the bottom of the cabinet was polished with a hand-rubbed, clear-coat, satin finish.

INTERIOR & EXTERIOR DOORS

Historic Restorations fabricated 28 solid wood doors using rail and style construction with traditional mortise and tenon joinery. For solidity to endure the wear of a transportation hub, the doors are crafted of African Mahogany finished using Vintage Burgundy opaque stain with a hand-rubbed clear coat. Each interior door had two to four windows with a wagon-wheel muntin design, preserving the original architectural style.

Events

CALL TO ARMS!

Emergency Militia in PA during the Gettysburg Campaign
July 16, All Day | LOCATION: Pennypacker Mills Museum

TRADITIONAL & GREEN ROOFING WORKSHOP

The Central PA Preservation Society's Evening of Learning
July 24 from 5-7 pm | LOCATION: Historic Restorations

SUSQ. TRAIL WOODWORKERS GUILD MTG.

July 25 from 7-9 pm | LOCATION: Agricultural & Industrial Museum

For more details and other events please visit
www.historic-restorations.com/resources/events-calendar

BUDGET AND TIMELINE MINDED

By salvaging wood from the building, Historic Restorations kept costs lower for the fixed grant budget. Using our experience, skilled craftsmen, and dedication to preservation we were able to salvage 40% of the original materials. Many professionals would have looked at the condition of the building and considered it heavily-damaged scrap.

Historic Restorations also meet scheduling objectives by maximizing efficiency. For example, we took the time to install scaffolding that covered the entire inside of the building. With this scaffolding in place, we were able to install the coffered ceiling in just over a week. Also saving time, the cornice design woodwork was fabricated, primed, and painted in our millwork shop before it was installed.