

RURAL HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE  
CASE STUDY

*Preservation/Restoration of Historic Rural Structures*

WALLACE STATION



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LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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## PROJECT LOCATION

3854 Old Frankfort Pike  
Versailles, Kentucky 40383

Located just east of Midway Road on the north side of Old Frankfort Pike approximately two miles south of Midway, Kentucky

This site stands within a National Register historic district.

## PROJECT TYPE

Two-story commercial building with a restaurant on the first floor, and an apartment on the second floor, which serves currently as office space and storage for the restaurant

## GOAL OF THE PROJECT

To restore the Wallace Station building to its original state and come up with a business plan that would benefit the community and be financially lucrative

## BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SITE

In 1884 a seven-mile railroad line between Versailles, Kentucky and Midway, Kentucky was chartered to the Versailles and Midway Railway Company (Penn, 2003). In 1889, the Southern Railway System acquired the company and extended the rails nine and one-half miles to Georgetown, Kentucky (Penn, 2003). Wallace Station was established in 1886 when Charles McCullough moved the post office from Nugent's Crossroads (Penn & Sames III, 2010). The station was a passenger and freight stop for the Georgetown, Midway, and Versailles Railroad, which ran from 1884 to 1940 (Penn & Sames III, 2010).

The post office and railroad station was named Wallace Station after Caleb Wallace, judge of the appellate court who settled in Woodford County, Kentucky in 1785 and owned a large estate on Old Frankfort Pike, near Wallace Station (Larry Taylor, personal communication). A phosphate plant developed in the immediate area and phosphate that was mined was transported out of Wallace Station via railroad (Penn, 2003). The phosphate business diminished over time as it became unprofitable, and with the closing of the Midway distillery in 1939, business on the Versailles-Georgetown railroad dwindled, and in 1940 the rail line was abandoned and dismantled one year later (Penn, 2003). The post office also closed sometime before 1940 and Wallace Station became a country store and service station (Larry Taylor). The store was a true rural mercantile system that sold feed, grain, seed, parts, machinery, fencing, medicine, and other farming necessities. They also carried dry goods including fabric, shoes, hats and gloves, groceries, meats, and produce (Amos, 1993).

Wallace Station was run as a country store by the McKinnivan family until current building owner and owner of an adjacent farm, Larry Taylor, purchased it around 2001 (Larry Taylor). Mr. Taylor closed the building in 2001 for renovation, and it was opened approximately one and one-half years later. Wallace Station currently operates as a

successful restaurant, which is managed by Chris and Ouita Michel. The restaurant will be featured on the Food Network's television show, *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives* in the near future.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS BEFORE THE PROJECT STARTED

When Mr. Taylor acquired Wallace Station it was in "fair condition." The roof over the front porch had considerable damage, and was in danger of falling. The front doors were marred beyond repair. Inside the building, the floors were sagging and severely worn, utilities were in disrepair, and several light fixtures were broken and/or missing. The tongue and groove style ceiling and walls were in good shape, however, along with the original counter tops. The original metal roof, which had been replaced with shingles in the later part of the 20th century, was in good condition as well.

## WORK DONE TO ACCOMPLISH THE PROJECT

For approximately one and one-half years Mr. Taylor commissioned contractors to restore Wallace Station. Before Mr. Taylor purchased the property he got in contact with the Environmental Protection Agency (E.P.A.) to have the gasoline pumps and tanks removed. After receiving clearance from the E.P.A. that the site and soil were safe, the contractors began working on the building.

The roof over the front porch was removed completely and it was decided that, without it, more natural light was able to get in the building, so it was not rebuilt. The concrete porch was re-poured along with the concrete stairway going into the side of the building. Mr. Taylor had two custom Mahogany doors made from a specialist in Versailles, Kentucky and had distressed glass from Germany imported to go in the doors and windows. The exterior vinyl siding was replaced with HardiPlank siding, a material made from compressed concrete fibers, in order to look like the batten board siding that would have originally been on the building.

The hardwood flooring was replaced inside Wallace Station on both the first and second floors. The walls and ceiling, which were in good condition, were sanded and repainted. Light fixtures that were damaged or missing were replaced with ones that Mr. Taylor was able to find in surrounding states. The original counter was salvaged. The stairway to the second floor was originally inside the building. To create more space for the kitchen, the stairway was removed and rebuilt just behind the building along with a new back deck to provide additional seating and an outdoor atmosphere. The upstairs was made into a two bedroom apartment equipped with a kitchen and bathroom. An additional bathroom was added downstairs, and the outhouse, behind Wallace Station, was removed. Lastly, utilities were all redone, including plumbing, electricity, and new heating and air-conditioning units. Current furniture and appliances were provided by Mr. and Mrs. Michel. Although Mr. Taylor is done with the major restoration he still makes sure his property is kept up with: he is scheduled to have the blacktop driveway and parking lot refinished in the coming month.

## DESCRIPTION OF COMPLETED PROJECT

Just along the side of the tree lined Old Frankfort Pike in northwestern Woodford County, Kentucky, sits Wallace Station. The building has a white exterior with green trim on the windows and shutters. One green bollard on either side of the front porch and entrance protect the building from getting hit by vehicles. Through the two mahogany doors, which make up the front entrance, is the restaurant. Pictures and awards hang on the tongue and groove walls. On the left, a glass deli case and a wooden countertop separate the kitchen and preparation area from the eating area. Two rows of wooden booths and tables make up the interior eating space. Around back, a large wooden

deck filled with picnic tables overlooks the tree-lined back yard, in which stands an old, white tobacco barn. The deck is shaded by several mature, deciduous trees, creating a pleasant out-door atmosphere.

A staircase outside the back of the building provides the only access to the second floor. This space consists of two large rooms, one including a full kitchen and bathroom. The same material that is found downstairs makes up the walls, ceiling, and floors, upstairs. When this space was renovated, it was designed to be used for residential purposes. It is currently being used as office and storage space for the restaurant below.

## HOW TAX CREDITS HELPED THE PROJECT

Mr. Taylor was reluctant to disclose financial information about Wallace Station, but did say that renovations cost somewhere between \$100,000-200,000. Mr. Taylor did not apply to receive Federal and State tax credits available for the rehabilitation of qualifying historic structures. Had he done so, Mr. Taylor could have received a tax credit from the Federal government equal to 20% of the costs attributed to the project, or \$20,000-40,000. The state offers up to a 20% tax credit for qualifying historic restorations based on the number of people who have applied for the year. Mr. Taylor could have received a tax credit from the State government up to another \$20,000-40,000. Mr. Taylor plans to restore the tobacco barn behind Wallace Station, for use such as a reception area for weddings, or musical events associated with Wallace Station. If the building qualifies, tax credits for the renovation of the barn could be a tremendous help in the addition of another piece to this already successful project.

### SOURCES:

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