
SOUTH WING

The south wing of the building is named for Linda and Jeff Stone, both initiates of the Auburn University Circle.

This wing also contains the William R. Johnston President/CEO Office, a work area, and three additional offices. The administrative officers of the Society are housed in the south wing. The exposed brick is original, and the wooden sliding panels still in use testify to the original appearance and purpose of the spaces.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Many original interior details remain, including original wainscoting, the ticket master's window, and some baggage areas where the original brick and sliding wooden doors are visible. While the entire interior experienced some modest remodeling to make it a functional office space, unique details make this an interesting place to work and a symbol of the history of the community. OΔK is proud to have its National Headquarters at the train station and is pleased to maintain the building as a piece of local history.

Exposed bricks throughout the building are the original bricks, and each is two courses thick. The building was originally insulated between the brick courses with popped popcorn, which is now long gone. Insulation was added upstairs to make the building more comfortable in cold weather. The windows over the front door contain original glass, and the building date of 1883 is also visible.

FLAGPOLE

The Epsilon Circle at the University of Richmond sponsored the flagpole outside the building. The property extends up the hill by the main parking lot and down the hill to the street below.

We invite visitors to sign the guestbook and take pictures inside or outside the building.

Revised September 2022



OMICRON DELTA KAPPA
The National Leadership Honor Society



A HISTORY OF
OMICRON DELTA KAPPA
National Headquarters

HISTORY OF OMICRON DELTA KAPPA NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

The train station was built in 1883 by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad for the branch line to Lexington, Virginia. However, this particular station was initially supposed to be delivered to Lexington, Kentucky. It is one of the relatively few brick-constructed train stations.

Financial difficulties prevented the line from continuing to the originally planned terminus in Roanoke/Salem. Therefore, the train ran on a one-way route, meaning it could not turn around in Lexington after passengers disembarked. Consequently, the train ran “backward” when returning to Glasgow.

The building was designed by E. Francis Baldwin of Baltimore, who designed many such buildings as B&O’s principal architect. Baldwin’s designs incorporate Queen Anne and Gothic Revival styles, with such hallmarks as steep gabled roofs and towers, large wooden supporting brackets, oriel windows, and colored glass accents. Many of his passenger station designs had a similar floor plan, but no two drawings were exactly alike.

Baldwin’s designs consistently used paint schemes that he specified, including the standard colors used here at OΔK’s National Headquarters, brown and red. The bricks used in this building were manufactured at the brickworks in Buena Vista, located a few miles away, and the timber was also from local sources.

In 1913, the B&O made \$8,000 in improvements to the building, including a 35-foot addition at the north end, rearranging the rooms within the station, and adding a new covered freight platform at the south end (now the “rear” of the building). Period photographs show the before and after views of the building.

For many years after this and before the interstate system was further developed, the primary transportation mode for students at Washington and Lee University and Virginia Military Institute was the train that stopped at the Lexington terminus. In the late 1940s, train service had dropped off to two to three freight deliveries per week, and passenger service had been discontinued.

Eventually, the destination was abandoned, and the track and building fell into disrepair. In 1969, Hurricane Camille caused extensive flooding, and the railroad trestle across the Maury River was washed away. The piers can still be seen in the river. However, the railroad still owned the right of way through both campuses, which eventually became an issue with campus expansion, particularly at W&L.

The W&L president at that time was Dr. Robert Huntley (who first arrived on campus, via the train, as a W&L undergraduate). He called on the president of the Chesapeake & Ohio (C&O) Railroad, which had taken over the B&O. Equipped with a petition from the City of Lexington, he asked the railroad to discontinue its official right of way. A deal was reached in which the building and the right of way were transferred at a “bargain” sale with the handshake agreement that the building would be maintained and used in perpetuity and not torn down.

The original location of this building was on the campus of Washington and Lee University, where the Lenfest Center and its Wilson Auditorium are now located. In 2004, the station was moved from its original location across the street to this property to make room for an extension to Lenfest. (A photo of the move is available.)

A company in Charlotte, North Carolina, was hired to relocate the building. The original windows were removed, and the entire structure was lifted from its foundation (which had been over a basement area). It was transported to the new site and placed on a concrete pad. The windows were replaced, and only one window was damaged in the move. The building was almost entirely unscathed from the move. The station’s original

“front” is now the building’s rear. The freight platform built in 1913 was not moved. A small rear deck and steps provide the rear exit from the current center library and conference area. Bleachers were set up at the edge of the new property, and Lexington residents brought picnics and spent the day observing the event, which was said to be “the most exciting thing that had happened since the Presbyterian Church caught on fire.” The cost to relocate the building was more than \$600,000.

Washington and Lee University’s president at the time, Dr. Kenneth Ruscio, was on the national board of Omicron Delta Kappa and served as its national president from 2002-06. The organization learned that its offices on the campus of Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky, would have to be vacated, and the germ of an idea was born. Since the Society was founded at Washington and Lee University on December 3, 1914, and with the approach of its centennial on December 3, 2014, it seemed fitting that OΔK should seek new offices and establish its headquarters at this location.

With the support of Dr. Ruscio, the station was purchased on favorable terms from the university, and OΔK headquarters relocated here on August 3, 2010. Omicron Delta Kappa secured the funds to complete the station’s purchase by the summer of 2014.

NAMING OF THE NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

In recognition of the tremendous generosity of the Rich Johnson family, the entire facility is formally named the Joyce E. and Richard S. Johnson Center for Leadership and Omicron Delta Kappa Society and Educational Foundation, Inc. National Headquarters.

NORTH WING

In Summer 2022, the north wing of the building became the primary entrance, and the reception area is known as the Clemson University Circle Welcome Center. The Membership Services Coordinator and the Financial Services Manager are housed in the north wing. The wing also includes the restrooms and a small kitchen. The north wing is named for Dean Jim Foy, long-time dean of men and students at Auburn University. The naming of the north wing was funded by the members of the Omega Circle at Auburn University. Renovations of this area included the removal of the original freight and baggage doors to allow for a double pane insulated window on the back of the reception office and entry doors on the front.

LATTURE LIBRARY

The central area of the building is the home of the Latture Library, including a collection of leadership books, archival files, and works written by members of the Society. It also serves as a conference and meeting area and features a painting of the original 15 founders. The room also includes a reproduction of a painting of one of the founders, Rupert Nelson Latture, and a portrait of Louise and Bill Latture. This area also contains other mementos, photographs, and paintings.

Facing the “back” doors, turning toward the left-hand corridor, one will notice the original ticket master’s office, and the sliding window with original glass can be seen in period photos.

When one steps out onto the back deck, one might notice many more architectural embellishments on this side of the building. This side of the building was the original front, and the tracks ran down its side, where passengers embarked. Due to the placement of the building when it was moved from across the street, the platform was removed, and the original rear of the building is now the front entrance.