



Free Library of Philadelphia



Philadelphia Art Museum



Grey Tower Castle (Arcadia U.)

What do these three buildings have in common?

They're all in Philadelphia and they were all designed by Architect Horace Trumbauer.

These buildings and many others of his design are icons in our lives. And yet, even the work of a great artist like Horace Trumbauer is not immune to Demolition.



Another Philadelphia Trumbauer gem, Whitemarsh Hall, the mansion of Edward T. Stotesbury in Wyndmoor, Pa. was demolished in 1980.

In the face of total demolition, wouldn't it be great to save his work? Someone did!

Coming next week:

More details about saving an important example of Horace Trumbauer's work.

The story is about a vestibule in a mansion designed by Horace Trumbauer, which was not only saved, but carefully deconstructed and laboriously reconstructed in an addition that was intentionally designed and constructed to receive this great work.

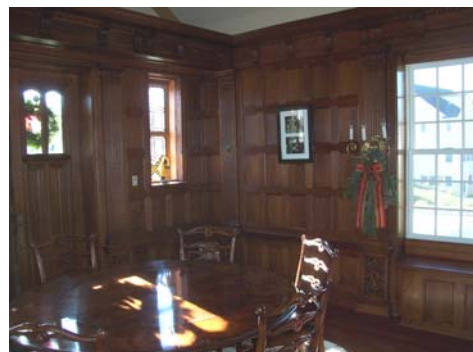
We will tell you the story of how this entire original Trumbauer room went safely from

this



to

this ...



... and the people who made it happen.

Architectural Artifacts Saved and Alive Again



Free Library of Philadelphia



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Saving the work of a great Architect

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The Grand Kuhn house, tragically torn down in 2001

Some of it was saved and restored and now takes its place again because of the care and stewardship of a few good men.

Dr. James Bonner, who lived in the endangered Grand Kuhn house as a child, was determined to save the Centre Hall. He commissioned architectural specialist John Dorety to carefully and meticulously deconstruct the entire room. The Room measures 18 x 21 and is completely paneled from floor to ceiling with millwork complexly arranged in many layers of trim and molding.

John took on the laborious task of carefully separating each layer and panel from the walls, taking note of the design patterns and the craftsmanship details. What John didn't know as he deconstructed each piece was that the room was going to be wholly resurrected in a new location. Fortunately, he has been deconstructing and reconstructing architectural artifacts of all descriptions since 1984. The piece was moved, cataloged, stripped, refinished and carefully sequestered, using sophisticated museum handling standards.

Dr Bonner decided to build a “New to Look Old” 1780 farmhouse and began the complex thought processes which would result in the best way to incorporate the Grand Kuhn Center Hall into the floor plan of its next destiny. The focus became finding the best way to work to integrate the historic room into the art and flow of the new house. It was decided to create an addition specifically designed to house Trumbauer’s work entirely. The Central Hall became the Library in the new house.

In order to create both logistically and aesthetically the optimal shell design to showcase this famous work, John began to lay out all of the original pieces in sequence. The addition had to be planned just right. John took great pains to monitor every detail, with careful attention to the symmetry for the columns, panels and mantle. The placement of the windows, doors and chimney and the shell itself were designed specifically and with the minutest accuracy to receive Horace Trumbauer’s work.

The Trumbauer room was carefully transported to the site and once again, laid out and put in place, custom –fitted, piece by piece. There are over 1500 pieces of trim and paneling. Some of the trim pieces in the Egg and Dart trim pattern are 1” x 1 ¼”. There was no room for error and there was every need for enormous skill and devastating patience. The installation took about 8 weeks.



Before



After

The entire sequence from discovery to final completion took about a year and 9 months

This is the same process that was replicated over and over by Mr. DuPont and his team in the rooms at Winterthur. Multiple rooms of the mansion were remodeled and tailored to enfold the meticulous reconstruction of antique rooms from around the world.



John Dorety on site, at the “layout” board

Teamwork and collaboration get a multi-phased, complex project like this done. John Dorety was an able leader in the restoration and reconstruction process. John has vast amounts of experience disassembling, handling and repairing architectural antiques. He does so with the curiosity and awe which help him to understand both the piece and the artist who created it. Who better to bring Trumbauer’s artistry to life again?

Thank you, Dr Bonner for your stewardship. Thanks to you, Horace Trumbauer’s work not only survives but is back in service!

Written by

Jona Harvey of Architectural Salvage Network

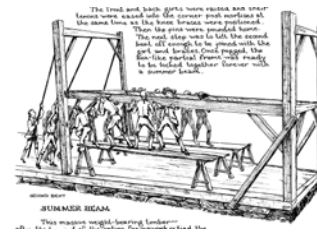
Preservation Artistry by

John Dorety of John Dorety Antiques



Demolished in 1980

Trumbauer Building, Whitmarsh Hall-in Wynnewood, Pa



Architectural Salvage Demolition vs. Deconstruction Making Room in the Inn

I work with preserving Architectural Salvage all over America. I assist clients in finding someone to carefully deconstruct an historic building that can't survive anymore, to save whatever they can, rather than leaving it to the bulldozer and the landfill. I also help clients to find antique salvage to use for their new building projects. Unfortunately, these two worlds are temporarily way out of touch.

The salvageable items often don't make it from site to project. They sit in warehouses if they're lucky or they decompose in the field, while the client who intently wants to use architectural salvage often can't find the items or buildings they need for their project. That's what is so heartbreaking.

Often an owner is struggling to save whatever they can of an endangered building, sometimes the entire building itself, even when it means bearing the added time and expense of careful deconstruction. They are hoping to find someone who values the building or pieces as much as they.

At the same time, there are clients who start conceptualizing their new building project or restoration right from the beginning with dreams of using original, authentic salvaged materials; making a space that "works" while employing real antique building materials. It combines all of the advantages of the new with all the charm of the old. This is such an obviously wonderful concept that it now has its own term and its own magazine, "New Old House"

Okay, so what's causing the heartbreak, where's the problem?

Imagine the disappointment of "the deconstruction client" when they discover that the architectural salvage yards can't take on their treasures, can't take on another item, or another vintage building, that there is no room in the inn and no client waiting in the wings to transport their treasures to a new life and a new project.

Imagine the disappointment of "the project client" who has clipped magazine photos about re-using authentic salvage for years, read multiple books, done hundreds of napkin sketches and paid for lovely, professional drawings... imagine their disappointment when they discover that, although they are charmed by so many of the wonderful treasures they see in the architectural salvage yards, they can find very few which really fit.

What happens to the architectural salvage? It sits and waits. This beautiful, unique nostalgic, piece of craftsmanship and art... simply sits and waits. Or it faces demolition.

This is where our Yankee ingenuity comes in. Let's get this salvage moving into projects. Let's change the way we look at our historic house additions and "New to Look Old" building projects. Let's *start* by falling in love with some of the architectural antiques and buildings which are so abundantly available and then help the evolving design to contain and embrace the look they create. Then we can fall more in love than ever with the emerging design and let it send us back out to the salvage yards to find the pieces which fulfill the design thrust. Back and forth, staying fluid. If we begin to integrate the process of "designing and finding", we might just get absolutely everything we want. And the architectural salvage might just avoid demolition, flow out of warehouses and find itself inspiring us for yet another 200 years.

Jona Harvey
New PTN Member

Architectural Salvage Network: A Locating Service

Jona Harvey

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www.archantiquesservices.com

Architectural Salvage Network brings you personal access to an active National Network of available Antique Buildings, Antique Building Materials, Architectural Antiques, Reproduction Period Products, Artists and Services. No matter where you're located, any period. The Matchmaker.



A Floor Joist System from an 18th century deconstruction /demolition. Difficulty placing it. It was eventually sawn for floor boards.