

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 6 1976

DATE ENTERED NOV 21 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC ****** Wilmington Station, Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad;
Wilmington Station and Offices, Pennsylvania Railroad; PB & W Depot.

AND/OR COMMON

Wilmington AMTRAK Station (Preferred)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Front & French Streets

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Wilmington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

One

STATE

Delaware

CODE

10

COUNTY

New Castle

CODE

04

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

National Railroad Passenger Corporation

STREET & NUMBER

955 L'Enfant Plaza SW

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

New Castle County Recorder of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Public Building, Rodney Square

CITY, TOWN

Wilmington

STATE

Delaware

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic American Engineering Record

DATE

1974

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Wilmington terminal buildings of the former Pennsylvania Railroad consist of three structures built during the first decade of the present century. First to be built was the elevated track, erected between 1902 and 1905. The office building was completed in 1905. Construction of the station began immediately after the office building was finished. The complex served as the headquarters for the Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington subsidiary of the Pennsylvania system, and as a terminal. The elevated track between French and King streets stands on an earth-fill embankment revetted with stone walls, about 104 feet wide. Passenger platforms flank the four mainline tracks, on the level of the station's second story. The inner two tracks are for Metroliner service, while the outer tracks handle other trains. According to a date-stone, Ryan and Kelley were the contractors; W. H. Brown was the chief engineer.

A steel truss carries the tracks and platforms across French Street between the station proper and the earth-fill embankment.

The former railroad office building stands four stories high above a ground floor at grade. There is an attic lighted by dormers under the hipped roof. The east and west facades are five bays wide. The west facade is marked by a cornice above the first story; the main entrance is on the ground floor. Above the ground floor is a water table. Above the water table, the north and south elevations are marked by pilasters that divide the upper floors into ten bays of two windows each and two bays of one window each. Metal cornices at the eaves and stone lintels above the windows are found on all sides of the brick building. Around the ground-floor entry on the west is a decorative brown stone lintel.

The main station building is about 160 by 200 feet overall. The main floor, a little above street level, contains the waiting room, cocktail lounge, newsstand, entrances, rest rooms, baggage rooms, and ticket offices. The second floor, where the platforms are located, is divided by the tracks. Staircases from the main waiting room provide access to the three platforms, the middle of which is the new Metroliner platform.

Because the tracks run through the building, the second and third floors are divided into two virtually separate buildings. The larger, south, building contains offices and connects at the second floor to the office building to the south. The north structure contains a small waiting room and the clock tower at the corner of Front and French streets. The two parts are steel-framed, with walls of brick, brownstone and terra cotta.

The north building, facing Front Street, is the more decorated part of the station. It is three stories high with a hipped roof, bracketted cornice and dentils over a plain frieze. The clock tower is decorated with stone and terra-cotta work, which is repeated in plainer forms throughout the station.

The south building is similar, with a hipped roof. A dentil cornice occurs above the street floor, and a modillion cornice at the eave. Roman arches above the top story windows are connected by a belt course. Round medallions occur between the arches.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES : 1902, 1905-1908

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Furness, Evans and Company

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The passenger station, main structure of the complex, was designed by Furness, Evans, and Company. The principal partner in this firm, Frank Furness (1839-1912), designed other stations in a similar style, which he popularized. Until recently, Furness has been best known for his influence on Louis Sullivan, his student. He has lately been widely recognized for such major works as the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Broad Street Station, and the University of Pennsylvania library, in Philadelphia.

Wilmington was not only the headquarters of the Pennsylvania's Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore subsidiary; it was the terminal for many of the trains from the Delaware Railroad, later known as the Delmarva Division. Both lines had their operating headquarters in the office building, which stands vacant but intact to the south of the station. No major changes have occurred in the office building since it was first occupied in the fall of 1905.

The Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore company was merged in 1902 with the Baltimore and Potomac to become the Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington. Thereafter, the PW & B portion was operated as a division of the PB & W, headquartered in Wilmington.

The elevated PB & W main line still carries passenger traffic through the station. This raised line, which extends from Claymont to a point below Wilmington, was erected between 1902 and 1905 in an effort to eliminate grade crossings. Parts of it are masonry-arched viaducts, while other parts are revetted earth fills, and others are steel through-truss bridges.

After the elevated line was built, the twenty-year-old French Street Station was razed and the Furness station was erected on its site. Nearby stood stations of the Baltimore and Ohio and Reading railroads, forming a freight and passenger complex along Christina River. The buildings that are the subject of this nomination form the only remaining intact group from this busy transportation center.

The station has not fared as well as the office building and the viaduct; its fittings have been changed to provide modern ticket counters and restaurant facilities. Yet most of the changes have been superficial; the brass handrails, ornate stone work, tile floors, and glazed brick walls still are in place. A few years ago, the most radical change to be suffered by the station took the form of a "Paint Your Station" project, in which citizens were organized to cover the old stone and brick with bright colors. The bright colors, now faded and dirty, are scheduled for removal.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Guider, Tommy. Delaware: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites. Washington: Department of the Interior, 1975.

Grier, O. A. H. This Was Wilmington. Wilmington: News-Journal Company, 1945.

O'Gorman, James F. The Architecture of Frank Furness. Philadelphia: Museum of Art, 1973.

Burgess, George H., and Miles C. Kennedy. Centennial History of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Philadelphia: The Pennsylvania Railroad, 1949.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3.30

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 8	4 5 2 7 5 1 0	4 3 9 8 5 0 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property is bounded on the north by Front Street and on the south by the Christina River. The station, office, and grounds occupy the space between French and Walnut Streets. The western portion of the elevated platform extends along the south side of Front Street, 104 feet wide, between French and King Streets.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Edward F. Heite, Historic Registrar

ORGANIZATION

Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs

DATE

April 1976

STREET & NUMBER

Hall of Records

TELEPHONE

(302) 678-5314

CITY OR TOWN

Dover

STATE

Delaware 1901

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

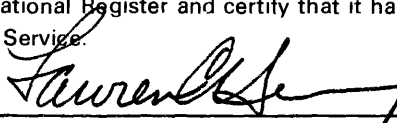
NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE

Director, Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs

DATE

6/28/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Active

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

11/21/96

ATTEST



DATE

11.15.76

ACT. KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET

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The neighborhood around the station on Front Street is an old commercial district, largely abandoned, containing buildings from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. One of the newest is a terminal hotel, diagonally across the French Street intersection from the station. It is a few years newer than the station, and echoes some of its architectural details. On the south and west, parking lots have replaced a busy terminal complex. On the east, an elevated bridge approach blocks access to the site.