

Summer 2020

KING OF PRUSSIA NEWS

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the Community



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**KING OF PRUSSIA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

*Preserving Upper Merion's Past
To Enlighten Its Future*



Photo courtesy of National Park Service

Volunteers from the King of Prussia Chamber of Commerce at Valley Forge led a campaign with the King of Prussia Historical Society to assist in finding a new location and in providing funds for the restoration of the Inn. The "A Home for the Inn" campaign was established to raise the necessary funds to move the building. The original schedule was too ambitious, but there was success in finding a new location, a half mile east of its original location. There was also a commitment to restore and care for the Inn after its move.

Meanwhile, the Federal Highway Administration agreed to cover eighty percent of the 1.6 million dollar costs for the move. PENNDOT's Engineering District 6-0 assembled a team of consultants to evaluate the structure and the feasibility of moving the five hundred and eighty ton building.



Photo courtesy of Jean Grimes

Finally, on Sunday, August 20, 2000, the King of Prussia Inn was ready for its move to a new site. A crowd gathered at dawn to watch the slow meticulous move. At about 9:00 am, the venerable old building began to move. Traveling only a few feet an hour, the Inn made its way up Route 202 and passed safely over the culvert, to Gulph Road. Here, it made a right turn. Contractors were soaping the tires so they could slide along the curbing and were manually turning the jacks. From there, the Inn proceeded about a half mile to the entrance of the Abram's Run Apartments. Here it was brought to its new site. It took three days to complete this stupendous and successful effort in engineering and historic preservation!

With the successful move and thanks to the efforts of Pennsylvania's transportation and historic preservation communities working together, the Inn's history and archeology, and the Inn itself, were all preserved, and an important link was saved for future generations.

The above text comes from the book, **Upper Merion Township The First 300 Years**. Visit kophistory.org for more information on the King of Prussia Inn's history and relocation.

20TH ANNIVERSARY RELOCATION OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA INN AUGUST 20, 2000

In 1997, the King of Prussia Inn is (literally) at a crossroads. PENNDOT is about to undertake a \$300 million highway expansion project to widen US 202 and the Inn is in the way. Protected by the National Register of Historic Places in 1960, the building's relocation becomes necessary.

The PA Highway Department was willing to part with the Inn for a nominal fee, but the purchaser had to move the building to a new location. It would obviously cost a considerable sum of money, and then there was the issue of finding a new site for the Inn. Beyond the financial aspect of a move and the securing of a new site, funds would be needed for its renovation and long-term care. Some members of the engineering community had their doubts that the enormous stone structure could be moved at all without destroying it. All of these concerns were eventually addressed through a partnership of federal and state agencies and a non-profit organization.



Photo courtesy of PECO

The route from the original location to the new one had to be cleared of utility lines and other overhead obstacles. A small culvert where a stream passes beneath Route 202 had to be braced and prepared for the weight of the massive building passing over it. A plan for conducting the move with an absolute minimum disruption of traffic had to be prepared. The Inn had to be braced and bracketed with lumber and metal plates and steel cables. Enormous I-beams had to be inserted beneath the structure, and state-of-the-art, rubber tired, computer controlled, self propelled jacks had to be fitted beneath the I-beams holding the structure.



The King of Prussia Inn in 2012, at its new home on Bill Smith Boulevard, restored and serving as headquarters for the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce.

Photo Courtesy of J. Michael Morrison

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