



Glassboro begins restoration of historic train station



By [Phil Davis/South Jersey Times](#)

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GLASSBORO — As Glassboro looks into restarting the railway that used to run Rowan University students from Vineland and Camden to Glassboro, one stop will be getting a bit of a facelift as a way to preserve the town's history.

After securing a \$1 million grant about four years ago, construction workers have begun restoring the historic Oakwood Avenue train station, which had been a major transportation spot for the town when it was first created back in 1860.

While the grant had been obtained several years ago, the deadline for spending the grant money on the project was 2013, prompting the move forward on the restoration.

According to Gary Swartz, the project superintendent overseeing the construction, the station looks to be completely restored by June. He said that the station will come "as close to original as we can" as they look to keep much of the station's original look.

WU & Associates, the construction team in charge of the project, has started the demolition process of the parts of the structure that cannot be saved. However, Swartz said that they've "really hit the ground running" on the project and will be able to restore power to the station along with replacing the roof and siding in the next few months.

The site will not be an operational part of the line, as the town is currently looking into the possibility of using the restored site as a "welcome station" to preserve some of the town's early history, according to Gloucester County Freeholder Heather Simmons. She added that the borough is looking to add a working train stop at the commuter lot 'A' on Rowan's campus.

The 1,300-square-foot station will be restored to its original state, with the visitor's center, office and meeting room being rebuilt to represent what it was like to buy a ticket and ride the train more than 100 years ago.

For years, the station was owned by a private party that had let the lot sit and deteriorate before selling it back to the town.

As construction workers dragged out debris, carefully stepping around holes in the foundation and hazardous materials left behind, Simmons explained that the process is one that's meant to keep some of the historic veneer of the town without the blight of a dilapidated building.

"This is part of an effort to restore some of the town's most historic buildings," said Simmons.

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Jesus Lopez of WU & Associates removes debris from the Glassboro train station, which restoration began to return the station to its original state, Tuesday, Feb. 5, 2013. (Staff Photo by Tom Scott/South Jersey Times)