

The Seminary Ridge Museum, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania



The Seminary Ridge Museum is the result of the painstaking multi-year design and rehabilitation of Schmucker Hall - the 1832 National Register Historic Landmark located on the campus of the Lutheran Theological Seminary of Gettysburg – where the sighting of Confederate troops advancing on the small Pennsylvania town occurred from the building's cupola in 1863.

The Architect's adaptive reuse approach to this historic, but neglected 23,000 square foot six-level structure - into a multi-interpretive museum was guided by a perspective of stewardship concurrent with a responsibility to ensure preservation through viable and active usage. Highlighting "voices of history", the interpretive center invites the public to actively engage in stories related to the 183-year-old building, site, and regional history, as portrayed through exhibits and artifacts – the building being the most significant artifact.

Formerly known as "Schmucker Hall", located on the historic Seminary Ridge in Gettysburg, the building survives largely intact since its construction in 1832. Prior to this most recent rehabilitation, the building had become an inactive depository, structurally overloaded with historical and genealogical content, equipped with inadequate environmental systems, and devoid of handicapped accessibility and life safety components.

The Architect's design preserved, repaired and restored the building's most significant character-defining architectural details of the exterior as well as within the interior – maintaining historical integrity while incorporating modern improvements. The rehabilitation of Schmucker Hall sensitively incorporates the needs of a modern museum/exhibition facility,

addressing critical issues of visitor capacity, user flow and support spaces - which directly relate to ensuring long term stability for the building.

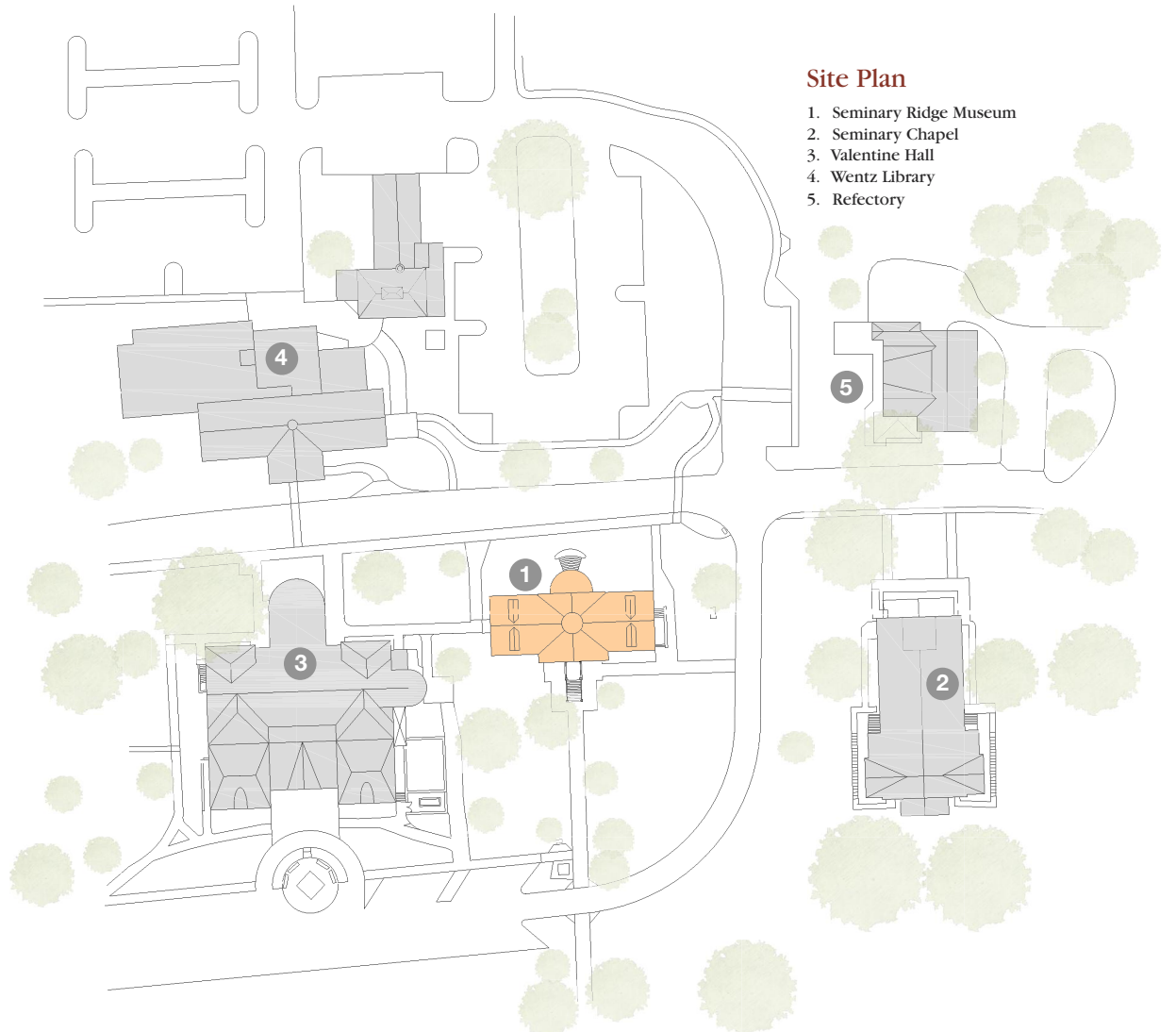
The exterior preservation focused on repairs and restoration of the building facade components including windows, doors, dormers and cupola - along with a visual transformation back to the original historic paint colors from the existing pervasive white. Other exterior modifications included a new ADA-compliant entrance and terrace delicately inserted underneath the repaired/reconstructed historic east porch/entry stair, and the reconstruction of the "missing" Peace Portico, originally added to the west facade in 1914 to celebrate post-Civil War reconciliation.

Existing interior historical components (wood doors, windows, transoms, trim, and fireplace surrounds) have been retained, repaired and re-installed in original locations. The ticketing/customer service counter in the new orientation area is constructed of locally sourced "Gettysburg Granite" and nineteenth century wood planks salvaged from within the building. The interior rehabilitation included the installation of an elevator to accommodate visitor groups, exhibit needs, and accessibility; new life safety systems; new restrooms; and installation of a new geothermal heating/cooling system to serve the entire building - which has been certified by the United States Green Building Council as LEED Silver.

The Seminary Ridge Museum (Rehabilitation of Schmucker Hall) exemplifies "**Good Design = Good Business**" via the preservation of historic fabric and sensitive/creative insertion of contemporary facility requirements – that provided for a viable new building occupancy that has attracted tens of thousands of (paying) visitors. The Architect and Owner's vision has provided new life for a crumbling, underutilized and compromised structure in conjunction with a new financially sustainable use for a building with national historical significance.



View of Seminary Ridge Museum Looking Southwest



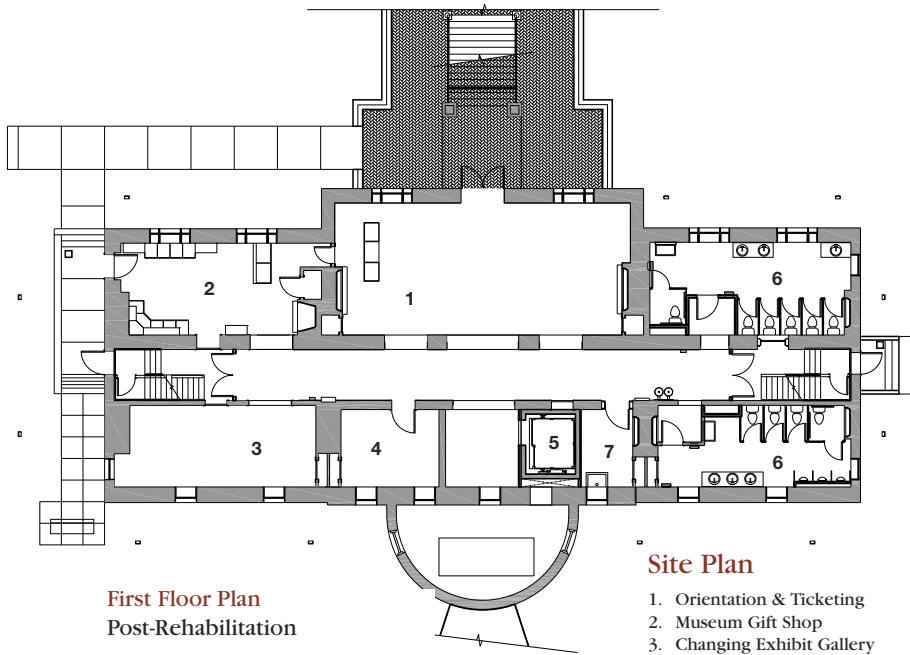
Exterior View of Restoration

Historic Photos (left to right): West Facade, Early 20th Century; View of Seminary Grounds Looking Southwest, Photo by Matthew Brady, July 15, 1863 ; West Facade, Early 20th Century; North and West Facades, circa 1960.



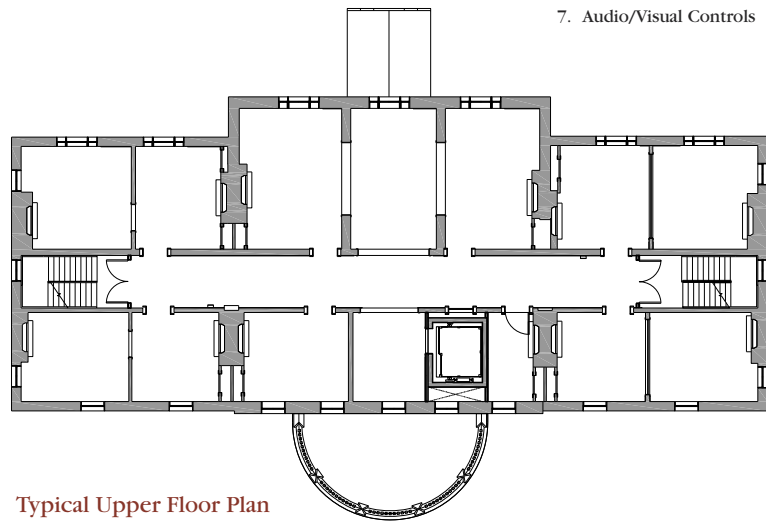


Before & After Repair/Restoration



Site Plan

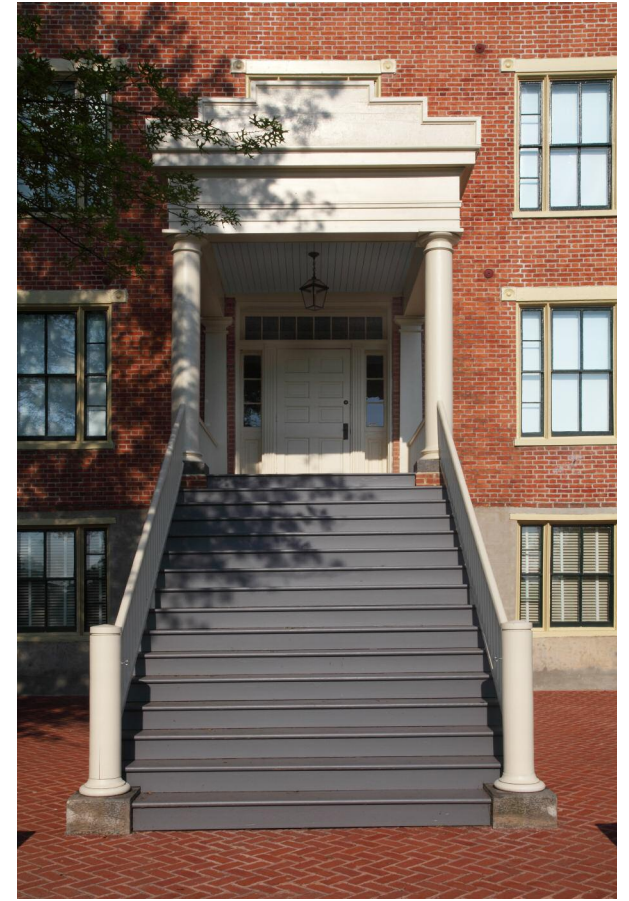
- 1. Orientation & Ticketing
- 2. Museum Gift Shop
- 3. Changing Exhibit Gallery
- 4. Office
- 5. Elevator
- 6. Restrooms
- 7. Audio/Visual Controls



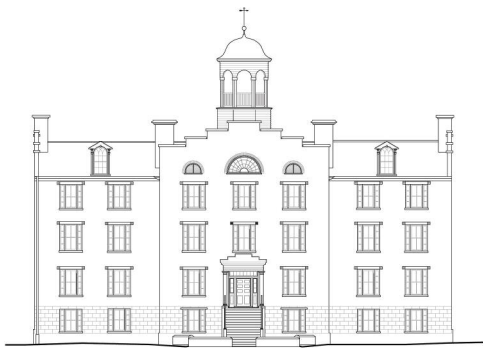
Exhibition Floors After Rehabilitation



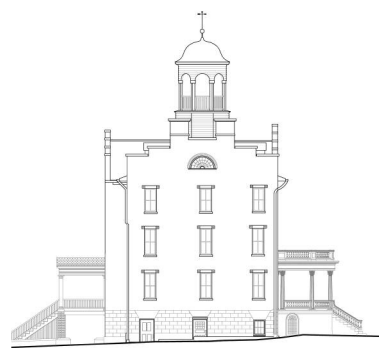
Orientation Galleries and Exhibition Rooms



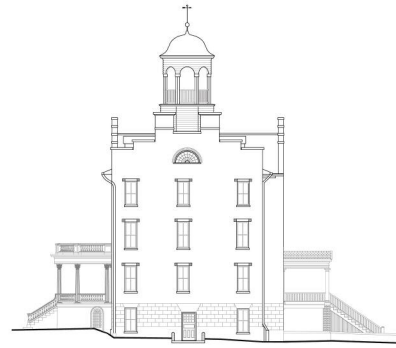
Exterior Views After Restoration



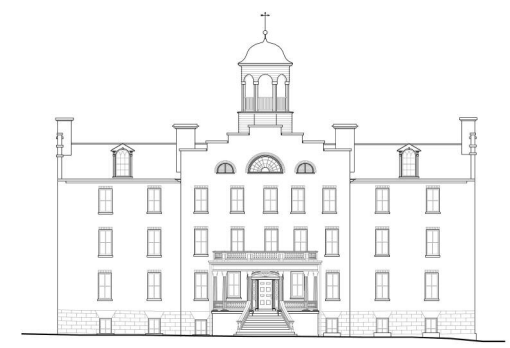
East Elevation



North Elevation



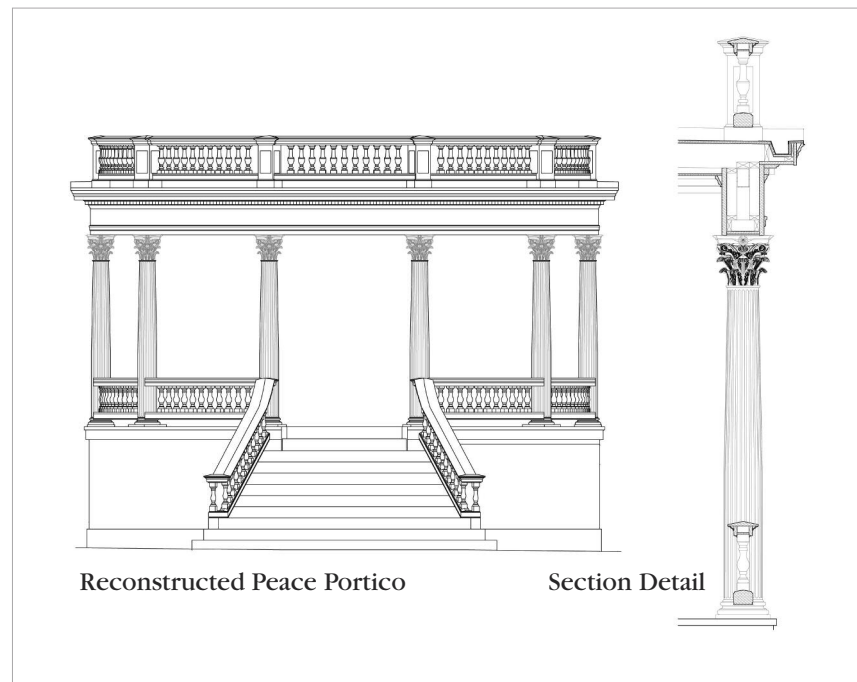
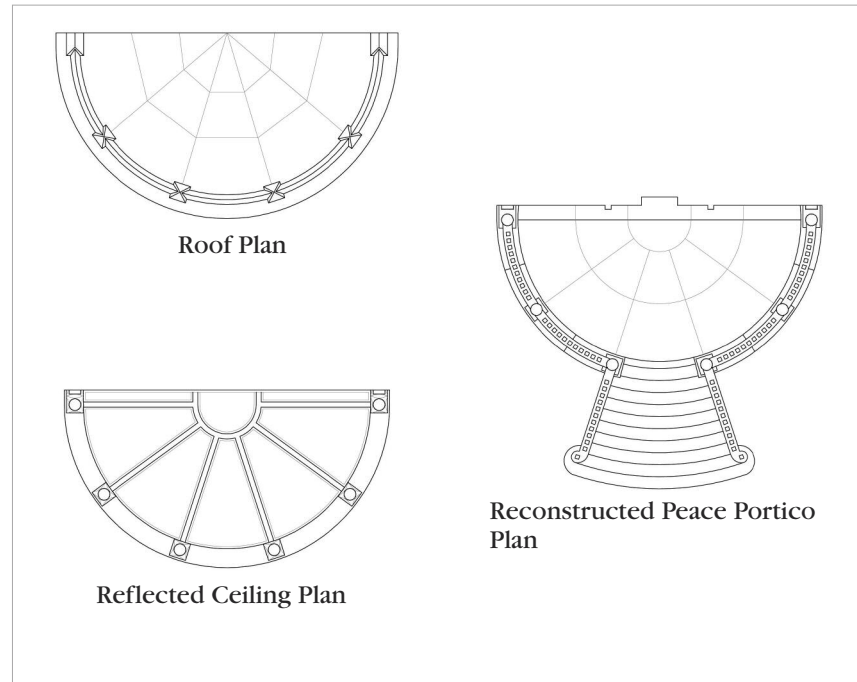
South Elevation



West Elevation



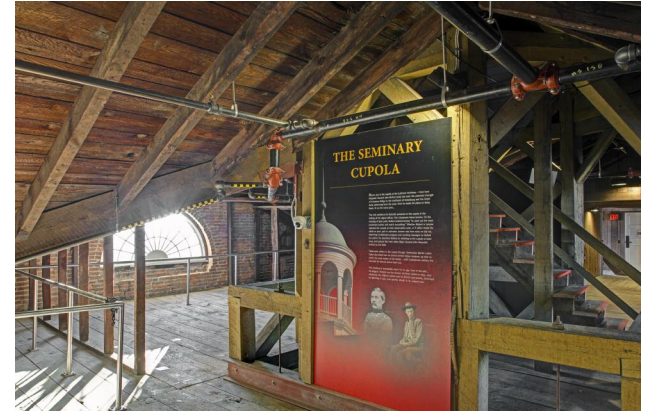
Reconstructed Peace Portico



Cupola Restoration



Building Section 'A'





West Facade and Peace Portico at Twilight