

OLD CITY MINI TOUR



We hope you enjoy this Old City self-guided tour, featuring a few of our favorite buildings from our very popular Old City walking tour. We'll schedule the full walking tour led by one of our knowledgeable guides as soon as we're able.



Photo: Tristan Loper, Flickr

ARCH STREET MEETING HOUSE

Southeast corner of Arch and 4th Streets

1803-5 (central building and east wing), 1811 (west wing)

Pennsylvania founder and Quaker William Penn deeded this land to the Society of Friends in 1701 to be used as a burial ground, which it was until the meeting house was constructed in 1803-1805.



Photo: HABS Survey PA-1388

The central section of the building and east wing were designed by Owen Biddle, architect and author of the highly influential trade book, "The Young Carpenter's Assistant," in the Federal architectural style with plain Quaker influences. This is the second oldest Friends meeting house in the city (oldest is in Frankford).

OLD CITY MINI TOUR



CORN EXCHANGE NATIONAL BANK

249 Arch Street

Constructed in the late 1800s, this Greek Classical Revival style building has been home to two banks, the Seaman's Church Institute, a set for an MTV series, and now a tech headquarters for Linode.



Photo: Halkin Mason Photography for the National Trust for Historic Preservation

The granite building conveys strength through its monumental stylings, and the symmetry and balance of the design.

Over the past few years, this building was completely rehabilitated for its current use with sensitive design interventions that respect the historic building and masterful restorations of the historic materials.

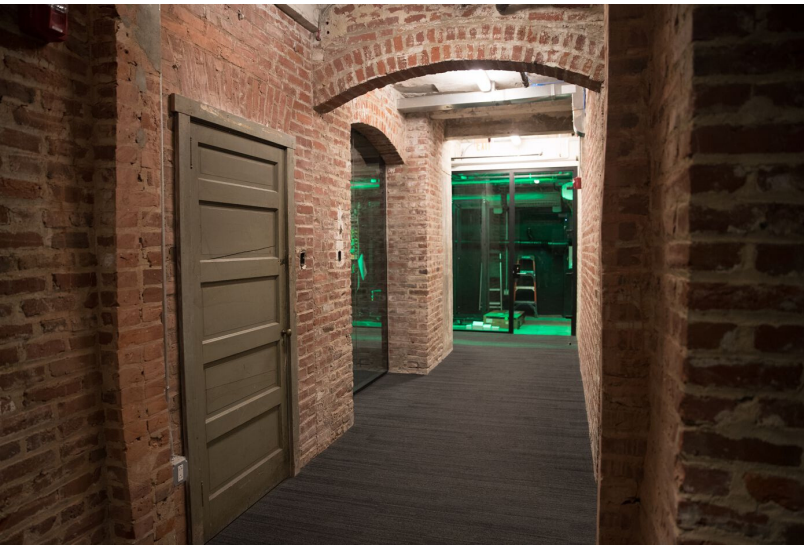


Photo: Jessica Griffin for Philadelphia Inquirer

OLD CITY MINI TOUR

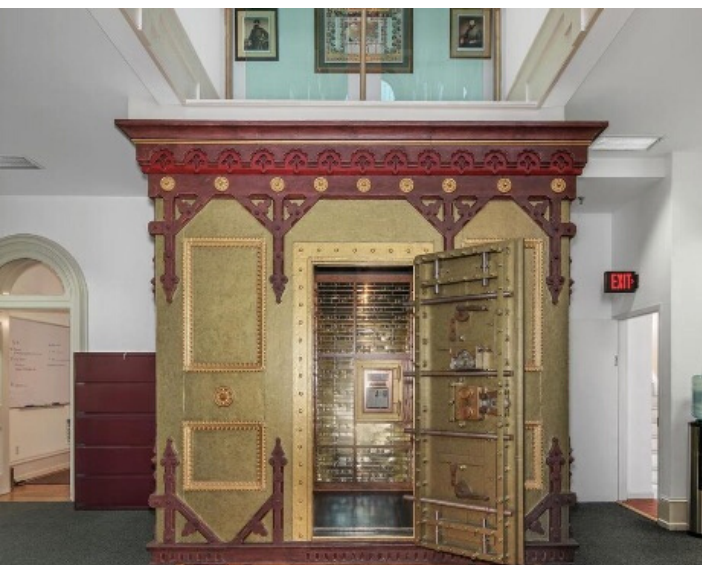


MANUFACTURER'S NATIONAL BANK

27-29 North 3rd Street
circa 1870

Manufacturer's National Bank, 27-29 North 3rd Street was constructed circa 1870 in the Italianate architectural style, with tripartite symmetry emphasizing the central entrance, , using Doric order elements of pilasters, entablatures, and quoins.

The façade has a monumental granite facade intended to express the trust strength and power of the bank. The interior contains a beautifully detailed vault, seen in the photo to the left.



OLD CITY MINI TOUR



CHRIST CHURCH

Corner of 2nd and Church Streets

1727-44 (building), 1751-54 (steeple),
1908 (steeple rebuilt after fire)

One of Philadelphia's most historic sites, the National Historic Landmark Christ Church. The main part of the building was constructed between 1727-1744 in the Georgian architectural style, modeled on the work of English architect Christopher Wren, and was designed to be symmetrical in plan and elevation. The steeple was added 1751-1754, financed with money raised through lotteries organized by Ben Franklin. From 1754 to 1810, the church's 196-foot (60 m) tower and steeple was the tallest structure in what is now the United States of America. After a fire, the steeple was rebuilt in 1908.



Engraving by James Peller Malcom, 1814

Photo: HABS survey PA-51



The baptismal font in which William Penn was baptized is still in use at Christ Church; it was sent to Philadelphia in 1697 from All Hallows-by-the-Tower in London.

Christ Church's congregation included 15 signers of the Declaration of Independence. American Revolutionary War leaders who attended Christ Church include George Washington, Robert Morris, Benjamin Franklin, and Betsy Ross. Christ Church Burial Ground is located at 5th and Arch Streets. Ben Franklin and others prominent in the Revolution period are buried there.

OLD CITY MINI TOUR



HENRY HARRISON HOUSES

112-116 Cuthbert Street

circa 1760

We all know about the beautiful historic homes on Elfreth's Alley, but just around this corner is an under-appreciated gem. This row of small rowhouses was constructed in 1760, commissioned by Henry Harrison to provide rental housing for newcomers to the city.

The Georgian style rowhouses have a common gambrel roof with cornice and cove pent eave, which extends over all three. The simple plan has one front and one back room on first and second floors.

Harrison was a dry-goods merchant, and served as the Mayor of Philadelphia from 1762-1763. He was a member of Christ Church and is buried in their cemetery. His headstone reads, "Alderman and sometime Mayor of Philadelphia, A Christian and useful Citizen. His desolate Widow, sadly bewailing her irretrievable loss, and striving to alleviate her grief with the memory of his worth, Erected this Stone."



Photo: Philadelphia Department of Records, 1957. Via PhillyHistory.org.

OLD CITY MINI TOUR



Photo: Peter Miller, Flickr

BEN FRANKLIN BRIDGE

1919-1926, designed by Paul Cret

Paul Cret designed monumental Ben Franklin Bridge (originally the Delaware River Bridge) combining the technology of a work of engineering with the classical Beaux Arts ethic. The steel structure with stone-clad masonry piers was the first bridge across the Delaware River and the longest suspension bridge in the world at the time of its construction. Cret's decision to leave steel structure exposed was daring at the time (even the George Washington Bridge towers were planned with stone cladding). The stone clad pylons express their function as counterweights to the bridge structure.

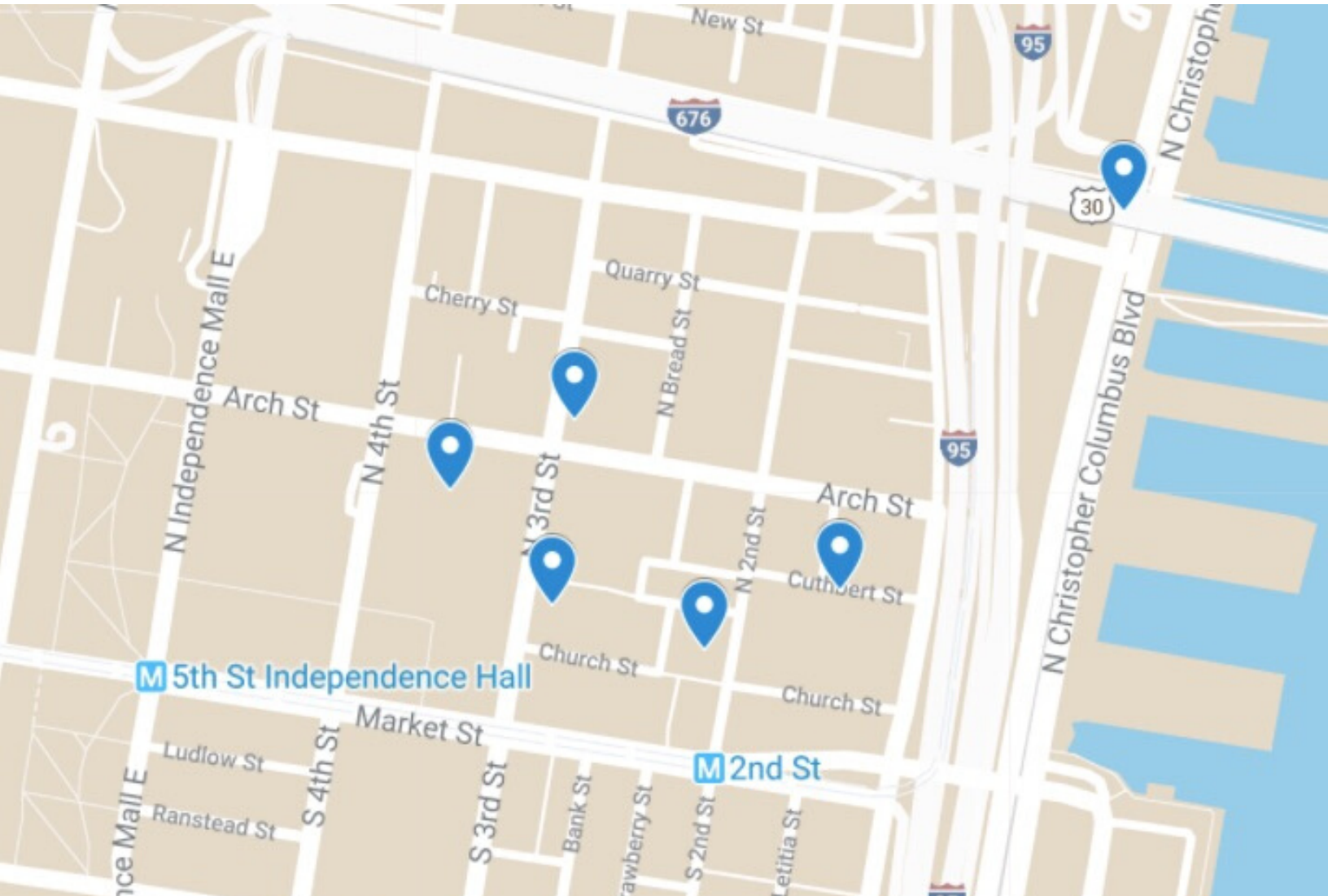


Image: Paul Philippe Cret Collection, Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania

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MAP OF SITES ON THIS MINI TOUR



We hope you enjoy this glimpse of Old City. Follow us on Instagram to see more photos of these buildings @presalliancephl and tag us in your photos when you visit them!