

Facts about the Railroad Station

The station was built in the winter of 1874 and opened in June of 1875. The cost of construction was \$10,400. Townspeople donated \$4,400 towards the construction of the depot.

The walls on the first floor are 19" thick and the walls on the second floor are 16" thick.

The station contains a total of 7,200 square feet 3,731 on the main floor, 558 in the north tower, 558 in the south tower, 759 in the center tower and the basement which is used for storage, contains 1,594 square feet.

The original station restaurant closed in 1927

The Last Passenger train went through Kent on January 5, 1970

The last steam operated train went through Kent in February, 1952

Original Use of the Station

Main Floor	<p>The south end of the depot was used by Wells Fargo and later by Rail Express. Today the kitchen is located in that area. The original kitchen of the early restaurant was located in the area now occupied by the dish washing equipment.</p> <p>The early restaurant was in the same area as it is today minus the bar section.</p> <p>The area between the center tower and north tower (today's bar area) was the waiting room and rest rooms for women and children.</p> <p>The men's rest rooms and waiting area is now the location of the rest rooms.</p> <p>The bay window area (now a part of the restaurant) was the telegraphy and ticket room.</p>
South Tower	<p>The second floor south tower is used today for the offices of the Pufferbelly Restaurant. During railroad days, it served as sleeping quarters for layover crews.</p>
Center Tower (Birkner Tower) Named in honor of the KHS's former president, Bill Birkner (decd.) Birkner is also responsible for the renovation of the towers into the former home of the KHS.	<p>At one time it was used as offices for the Kent Area Chamber of Commerce and the Kent Historical Society. Historically it was the living quarters for the restaurant manager and his family. In later years it was used as sleeping quarters for railroaders.</p> <p>Within Birkner Tower are three rooms; the reception area known as the SMITH ROOM, named in honor of Alexander and Evangeline Davey Smith who contributed generously to the renovation of the station; the Gougler Room in honor of Charles and Mary Gougler, a prominent Kent family who strongly supported the renovation of the depot; and the Parson's Room in honor of Dorothy Parsons who also donated generously to the renovation project.</p>
North Tower	<p>Originally this large room was the inspiration of George Hines for a Reading Room and it became Kent's first library.</p>

Restaurant Managers

Mr. George Musser was the first restaurant manager. He was married to Lucetta Hughes and their daughter married W.W. Reed who was Francis Reed Wiland's great grandmother.

Elmer Elgin (Mildred Elgin Bumphrey's grandfather's brother) was the second restaurant manager. Mr. Elgin left the railroad station restaurant management in 1916 to become KSU's first food service director. His restaurant boasted white tablecloths and waiters who wore white coats and black bow ties. Cost of a sandwich was 10 to 15 cents.

J. L. Long took over as restaurant manager when Elgin left.