

From the **Philadelphia Business Journal**:

<http://www.bizjournals.com/philadelphia/news/2011/10/24/franklin-court-renovations-begin-in.html>

Franklin Court renovations begin in Phila., to cost \$21M

Philadelphia Business Journal by **Peter Van Allen**, Reporter

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Peter Van Allen

Reporter - *Philadelphia Business Journal*

[Email](#) | [Twitter](#)

Work started Monday on the \$21 million renovation of Franklin Court in Philadelphia's historic district.

The **National Park Service** said renovations will take 18 months and will include a complete makeover of underground space and exhibits. Once finished, it will be known as the Benjamin Franklin Museum, on the site of the statesman's former compound, which includes a U.S. Post Office and a symbolic "ghost house" rendering of Franklin's home.

It was made into a museum in 1976 in advance of the Bicentennial.

Work on the exhibits will be paid for in a public-private partnership that includes the National Park Service, **Pew Charitable Trusts**, the city and state, philanthropist [Gerry Lenfest](#), the **William Penn Foundation**, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and the **Independence Visitor Center**.

Officials held a groundbreaking ceremony Monday morning.

"Franklin holds a unique place in the country's history and in its imagination. His story doesn't get old, but it needs to be told well," said [Donald Kimelman](#), managing director of the Pew Charitable Trusts' Philadelphia program. "We're pleased that the rebuilt museum will play that

role for generations to come.”

Of the major expenses on the project, Narberth, Pa.-based [Daniel J. Keating](#) Co. will handle construction, valued at \$9.54 million. The company has done construction or renovation work on a variety of historic-and-cultural sites, including the Liberty Bell Center, Independence Hall and the Please Touch Museum at Memorial Hall.

Exhibits for the site will cost \$4.7 million and will be created by Mount Laurel, N.J.-based Maltbie, which has done exhibits for the Disney Family Museum, the NASCAR Hall of Fame and Museum and, in Philadelphia, the **Chemical Heritage Foundation**.

During construction, the courtyard, print shop, Post Office and other Market Street buildings will remain open to the public. Construction will fence off the Chestnut Street (backside) of Franklin Court.

The “ghost house” — a white-painted steel structure outlining what had been Franklin’s house — will remain. It was designed for the Bicentennial by architects [Robert Venturi](#), [John Rauch](#) and [Denise Scott Brown](#).

The Benjamin Franklin Museum at Franklin Court will reopen in 2013.

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