

# WAGNER

## ROOFLINES



Since 1914

SUMMER 2009

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## Restoration Continues at 1899 Post Office

Washington rooftops can be a roofer's dream: They're beautiful, historic and varied enough to keep the job interesting. But they also present some unique situations. Imagine, for example, repairing the extraordinarily steep roof of the second tallest building in the city, without using scaffolding. That was the challenge that Wagner's roofers faced more than five years ago when they were selected to repair and renovate the existing roof and masonry of the 110-year-old Old Post Office on Pennsylvania Avenue and 12th Street, NW.

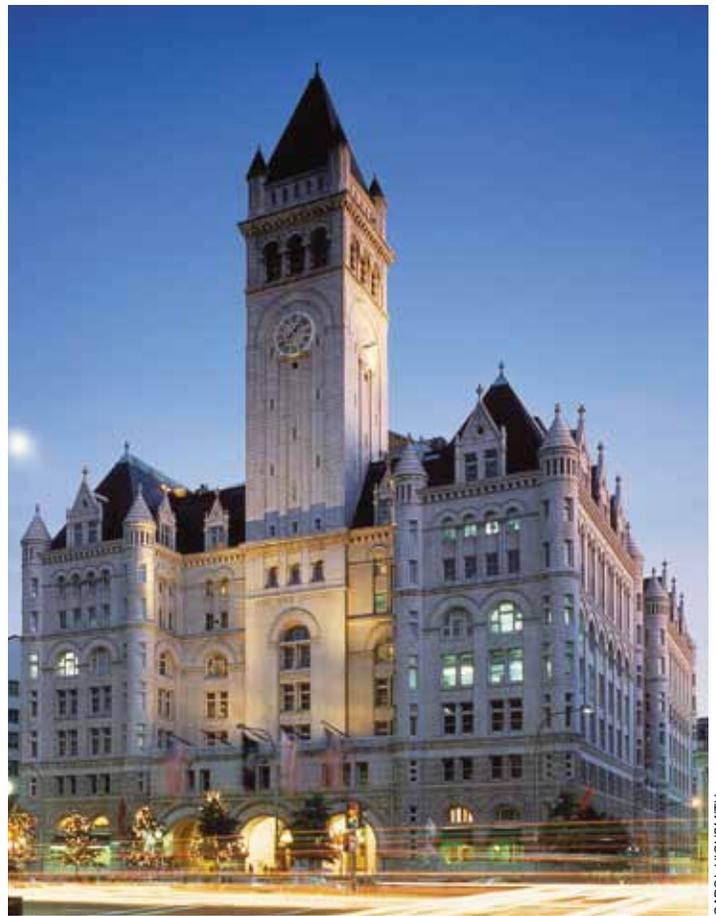
"It was extremely difficult," admits Tony Cosentino, the superintendent on the job. "Getting the material to certain locations on the roof, and removing the debris, all without scaffolding, was the biggest challenge." He says that extra safety precautions were taken. For example, safety railings were built, and all workers snapped on safety lines, not unlike the belay systems used by climbers. Material was delivered to the roof by cranes, and crews accessed the roof by climbing out the dormer windows or by using the glass elevator to the observation tower and

then exiting on the roof through a very small access door.

Bob Shoemaker, president of subcontractor Ev-Air-Tight Shoemaker, Inc. (a masonry restoration company), said his company was responsible for repointing the eight turrets on each corner of the building. He explained how a ladder was made to hang from a steel ring that fit around the top of the turrets. Then the ladder, on wheels, rode around the steel ring, allowing the crew to access the stone turret. "But you could imagine if you stepped off the bottom," Shoemaker says, it would be a long way down."

One of the reasons that scaffolding was not used is that the building is an historic one, says Terry Bear, a construction representative for GSA Public Buildings Service, "and we don't like to drill holes if we don't have to." Also, Bear says that using scaffolding can be very disruptive to pedestrian traffic on the ground. By avoiding scaffolding, Wagner passed on a significant cost savings to GSA.

The renovation has occurred in two phases: Phase I began in February 2003 with general contractor Haris Design & Construction Co. Phase II began in January 2009 with Kaleo Construction LLC.



CAROL HIGHSMITH

The work included replacing built-in gutters and water tables using 24-ounce lead coated copper, 40 percent heavier than residential standard. To accomplish this work, a sheet metal brake—which facilitates the bending of sheet metal—was set up on the roof. To date, the

*continued on page 3*

### Old Post Office

**Location:** 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW

**General Contractors:** Haris Design 2003, Kaleo Construction 2009.

**Roofing:** Replaced copper built in gutters and water tables, copper valleys and flashings at 29 dormers and 12 turrets

**Masonry:** Repointed joints in turrets and dormers.

Under  
the **Roof**  
at Wagner

**Kevin Morgan**

**Job:** Project Operations Manager

**Years in the Roofing Business:** 25

**Favorite Roofing Job in D.C.:**

Georgetown University's Healy Hall

**Lives in:** Edgemere, MD

**Daily Wake-Up:** 4 a.m.

**Tool He Can't Live Without:** I have a lot of tools, but if I leave home without my Sprint mobile phone, I'm really in trouble. Being involved with so many projects at once, I really have to stay in the loop, even if I'm not at the office or at a particular site.

**Pastimes:** I have played the blues guitar for 30 years and enjoy traveling to Civil War battlefields with my wife.

**Last Vacation:** The Caribbean, for my 20th wedding anniversary.

**Work at Home:** I have a house on the water. It's a constant work in progress. Right now I'm in the middle of ripping out my walls and part of the foundation. I go from one project to the next project.



CHUCK WAGNER

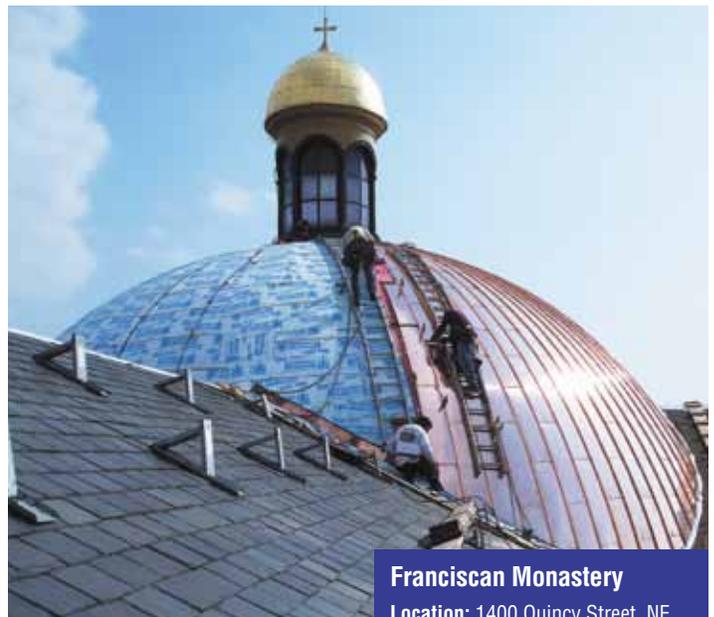
# Historic Dome Shines Again

For 20 years, Wagner Roofing field superintendent Dan Williams had saved his high school math notebooks. He kept them for nostalgic reasons, not because he thought he would ever refer to them again.

But then came the Franciscan Monastery and its domed roof.

"That copper dome was the toughest part of the whole job, and one of the toughest jobs I've ever done at Wagner in my 18 years here," Williams says. "I had to dust off those notebooks and remind myself how to use trigonometry."

The Monastery, located in Washington's Brookland neighborhood, was designed by Roman architect Aristide Leonori and built in 1898-99. The floor plan of the church is the five-fold Crusader Cross of Jerusalem, and it is built in the Byzantine style, after the Hagia Sofia in Istanbul, with some



CHUCK WAGNER

**Franciscan Monastery**

**Location:** 1400 Quincy Street, NE

**General Contractor:** Maizel Construction

**Roofing:** New standing seam copper on Dome, new slate roofs, gutter and downspouts

modified Romanesque influences. Surrounding the church is the Rosary Portico, with 15 chapels containing artistic ceramic plaques bearing the Angelic Greeting in nearly 200 ancient and modern languages. The Monastery's roof was



CHUCK WAGNER

leaking so badly that at one point a couple years ago, 38 buckets of water collected under the dome. So Wagner was hired to rebuild the entire slate roof and copper dome of the main sanctuary plus three entrance roofs, for a total of 11,400 square feet. Wagner's job began in August 2007 and was completed in March 2008.

"We've worked with Wagner a lot in the past, so it was an easy decision to hire them," says Michael Watson, president of Maizel Construction, the project general contractor.

The standing-seam copper dome required panels to be pre-cut and bent to an exact size (versus flat seam, where the panels can be bent and

*continued on page 3*



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## Letter From the President

# Past Is Present

Wagner Roofing Company's ability to thrive for nearly 100 years is a tribute to an entire team, past and present, that has helped us maintain our quality of workmanship. All of the people who came before us set the bar very high. I know if my Dad were around to see our jobs today, he would be proud. My brother Jack, my wife Sheila and I have been fortunate enough to inherit his good name and will continue our efforts to maintain it. My mother, who is 88 years "young," still promotes Wagner



Roofing around town, even though it has been 65 years since she ran the company during World War II.

The team we now have in place is fantastic. Each person—from our capable office workers to our skilled roofers, slaters, sheet metal crews and their professional, dependable supervisors, plays an integral role in our success. For the last several years, we have also had a solid team in place to produce this newsletter—Melanie Kaplan and Jerry Parks of The Magazine Group help us keep our customers informed of the work we do.

Throughout Wagner's history, our customers' needs haven't changed much—they

all want to stop the leaks or replace a roof with a long-term fix. But more important, the skill level and professionalism of our staff hasn't changed, which means our customers continue to trust our good work and our good name.

Thank you to all who have helped build Wagner Roofing into what it is today, and to our customers, who make sure we keep moving forward.

Chuck Wagner  
President

### Old Post Office *continued from page 1*

crew has used more than 16,000 pounds of lead-coated copper and has replaced more than 700 missing and broken slates. The Buckingham slate comes from a quarry in southern Virginia and has a life expectancy of more than 100 years. This spring, Wagner is repairing some dormers and turrets, a project that will be completed this summer.

Shakil Siddiqui, president of Haris, says the project was difficult for several reasons.



Slaters replacing copper valley.

DAN WILLIAMS

"It's a challenging job because the roof is very steep, and the work is very intricate," he says. "Plus, it's a historic building, which requires special treatment." Bob Coberly was the Project Manager for Haris Design and vital in the management of the project and negotiations of the \$1.3 million change order for the roof. Coberly has since joined the Wagner Roofing team.

Built in 1899, the Romanesque/Revival style building was Washington's first skyscraper. At that time it was the largest government office in the city and the first to have its own electric power plant. It was built to house both the U.S. Post Office and the D.C. Post Office. Its granite clock tower measures 315 feet high and has a 360-degree view of the city. Today, the observation deck is open to visitors. "This building is the second tallest, after the Washington Monument," says Cosentino. "We were able to see up to 12 miles in the distance, in any direction." ●

### Monastery *continued from page 2*

trimmed once they're in place) and tapered on a tapered panel curving machine to match the curvature of the dome. This was the first of its kind that Williams says he has done at Wagner since he's worked there. Plus, he faced the challenge of an imperfect dome.

Watson said the dome was so tricky because it wasn't a true dome; rather, it was egg-shaped, and it required a lot of tedious math equations to figure out the size of the copper panels. "One hundred years ago, it was tough to make a perfect circle," he says. "They didn't have new-age scaffolding. So that made our job tough—trying to divide it into equally sized pieces."

"It was a dome, but typically you'd have a gutter or eave at the bottom where you could get the circumference," Williams says. "But there was really no bottom on this. There were four different A-frame roofs tying in with the dome, and they

intersected at the bottom, and even that wasn't at the spot that would have been the center of the sphere. The center was about 7.5 feet below that."

So Williams went home one night, armed with his high school math notebooks and calculator and spent six hours trying to determine the sizes for the copper panels. When he returned to the site the following day, a few measurements showed that his figures were accurate within one two-hundredth of an inch. "I looked at that," he says, "and I figured that was close enough." Williams says he was pretty impressed with himself for using math he hadn't used in two decades to come up with the right solution. The way the dome was built before, the panel sizes ranged from 16 to 24 inches wide, so not only did they look uneven, but they leaked. Now, all the panels are uniform, the horizontal seams line up, and most importantly, Williams says, the water stays on the right side of the roof. ●

# Did you know?

## Keeping It Green by Keeping Your Roof

With all the talk about the “green economy,” conserving energy, reducing landfill waste, buying eco-friendly products and recycling, you might wonder, “What’s the most environmentally sound roof?” The answer is easy: It is the one already on your house or building. According to the US Green

Building Council, 2.5 pounds of debris is created for every square foot of new building construction. Also, construction materials and demolition waste constitute 40 percent of the total solid waste stream in the United States. The best way to reduce waste and avoid the energy consumption required for producing new materials is to maintain and repair your roof.

Wagner Roofing offers a Roof Maintenance Agreement with semi-annual inspections and repairs to prolong the life

of your roof. Typically, the service technicians will inspect all surfaces, flashings, drains/gutters and make minor repairs while onsite. By keeping your roof performing and not leaking, you will also avoid the cost of repairing decking and interiors and all the consequential waste generated. And best of all, a performing roof means you will not incur the cost of replacing a roof. Keep your greenbacks in your pocket by keeping your roof maintained regularly. Now that’s some easy green action we can all support.

**GWU @ Mt. Vernon Campus – Pelham Hall** – 2100 Foxhall Road, NW – Donohoe Construction – New construction of residence halls for synthetic slate and membrane roofs (LEED).



RENDERING COURTESY OF ENHORN YAFFEE PRESCOTT ARCHITECTURE



RENDERING COURTESY OF SMITH GROUP

**National Intrepid Center of Excellence** – Bethesda, MD – Turner Construction – Will be a center for psychological health and traumatic brain injury to help cure soldiers with psychological health and traumatic brain injury disorders.

## In the Works

Other Wagner jobs in progress or recently completed.

**Maret School Sturtevant Academic Center** – 3000 Cathedral Avenue, NW – New 20-year rubber roof and 50' x 15' skylight.

**Fort Meyer Military Community, The Stables** – Sherman & Jackson Avenue, Fort Meyer, VA – JTR Finishing Contractors – New slate roof and copper gutters.

# In the Works



DAN WILLIAMS



Copper built-in gutter being installed.

DAN WILLIAMS

**Staunton Hill Farms** – Brookneal, VA – Castellated Gothic Mansion built in 1848 – New copper roofs, built-in gutter and decorative metal work.



LARRY MYERS

**Lincoln Theatre** – 1215 U Street, NW – New membrane roof.



CHUCK WAGNER

**Kogod Residence** – 2929 Massachusetts Ave., NW – Structural repairs, new slate and lead coated copper built-in gutter. Architect George Hartman (center) reviewing slate mock-up with slater Bob Wooldridge (right) and Project Manager Kevin Morgan.

# Back When...

**2609 Evarts St., NE,  
1925. Boyhood home  
of Jack Wagner, Sr.  
Built by Otto Wagner  
(below). Also, first  
Wagner metal shop  
in basement.**



## Who We Are

**Chuck Wagner,  
Sheila Wagner**  
Owners

**Heidi Jennings**  
Accounting Department

**Bob Coberly, Larry Myers,  
John Ray**  
Estimators/Project Managers

**Colleen Kennedy,  
Sarah Reynolds**  
Administrative Assistants

**Mary Day**  
Service Manager

**Dan Williams**  
Sheet Metal Superintendent

**Kevin Morgan**  
Operations and Project  
Management

**Jeremy Lee**  
Purchasing

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