

## Community Unites to Clean Crane

*A piece of Pennsylvania history was restored by a group of dedicated residents.*

*Lynn Gladieux  
Community contributor*

One of the Boyertown community's greatest virtues is its ability to come together on a project that benefits the region at large.

The clean-up of the historic crane located in the railroad yard at Washington and Third Streets in Boyertown borough is a prime example that ability, a cooperative effort between members of the Boyertown Lions Club and the Colebrookdale Railroad Preservation Trust, a nonprofit group working to bring an active tourist railroad to the Boyertown area. The crane's clean-up, which was completed late last year, included sandblasting and repainting the more than 150-year-old structure, once used actively to load railroad cars stationed in the lot.

According to project coordinator and Trust secretary Preston McEvoy, the project was a fantastic opportunity to make a difference.

"I've always been a railroad lover, and working on this project and being on the [Preservation Trust] board has always been part of a dream of mine," McEvoy said.



Photo courtesy of Len Shaner

According to the Trust's Facebook page, the crane will serve as a monument on the site.

"We are aiming to treat it the utmost respect, and hope that the crane will serve as a monumental greeter to the future station site, one visitors to the town won't soon forget," McEvoy said.

The crane, made between 1862 and 1870, may be the only one left of its kind using a Phoenix column made by the former Phoenix Iron Company of Phoenixville, Pa. The scarcity of such a crane indicates its cultural importance to the

Boyertown region and beyond, McEvoy said.

An antique car restorer who considers himself a "jack of all trades," McEvoy said refurbishing the crane was a relatively straightforward process. The crane was first sandblasted by local firm Coopers, LLC (to which McEvoy says he owes a special debt of gratitude) and was then primed and sealed. To complete the process, it was finished with two coats of shiny, black paint, and "Boyertown, Penna." was embossed across the crane's arm.

"This is the first phase of a multi-phase project to beautify the lot," said Nathaniel Guest, Trust president. "That, then, is part of the larger project, that being the railroad itself."

### IN BRIEF

#### Colebrookdale Railroad

The crane's restoration is just one goal in the larger effort to bring back the Colebrookdale Railroad line, as chronicled in the January edition of *Boyertown Life*. In another major Colebrookdale development, the Colebrookdale Railroad Preservation Trust was able to secure a caboose to use with the line, as told in this issue on page 18.

The trust hopes to be able to restore the 8-mile line that runs between Boyertown and Pottstown so that residents and tourists alike may enjoy the beautiful and unique route as passengers once again. Organizers are hopefully they'll be able to have a train up and running by October 2014. For more information or to make a donation visit [colebrookdale railroad.com](http://colebrookdale railroad.com).

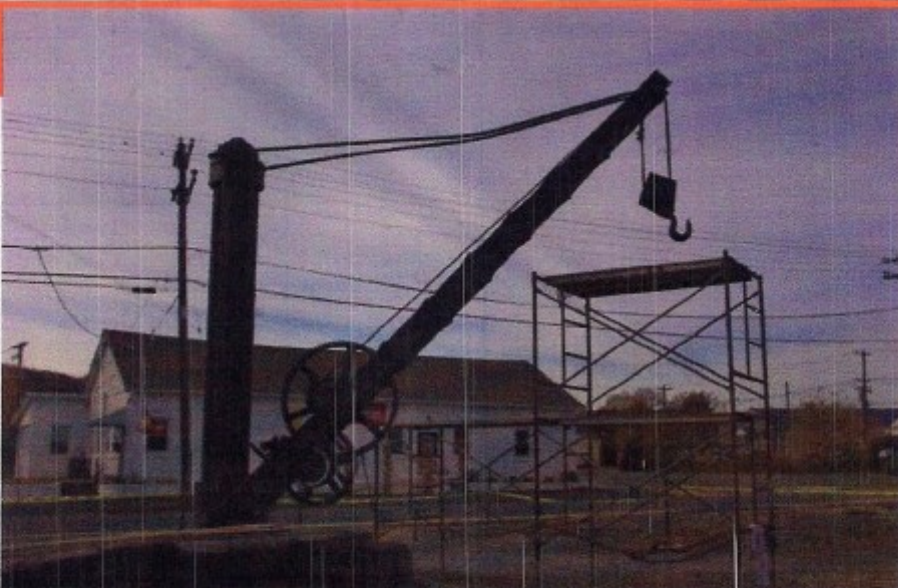


Photo courtesy of Len Shaner