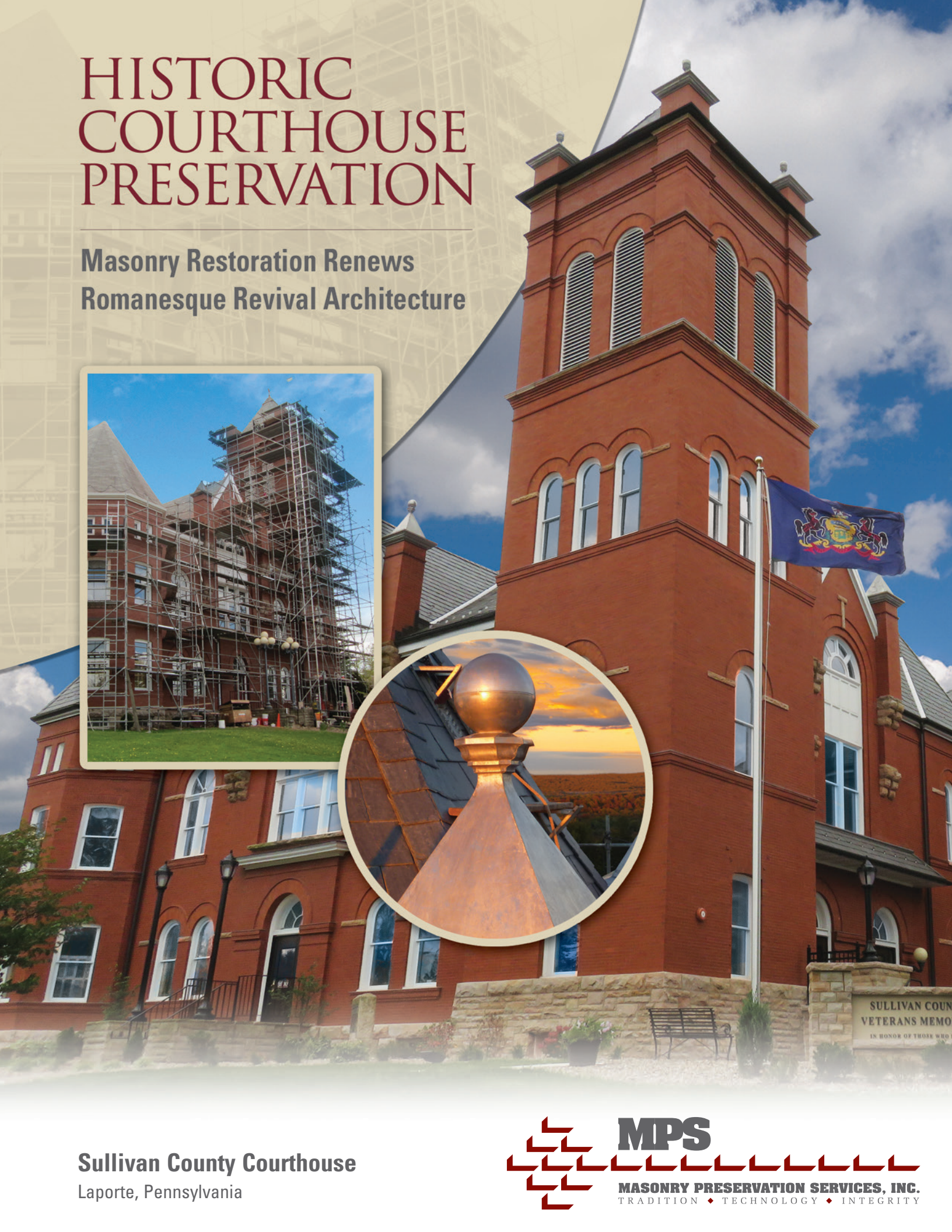


# HISTORIC COURTHOUSE PRESERVATION

Masonry Restoration Renews  
Romanesque Revival Architecture



**Sullivan County Courthouse**  
Laporte, Pennsylvania



# Improving the Performance and Aesthetics of 120-Year-Old Landmark

## Sullivan County Courthouse

## Historic Courthouse Preservation

### PROJECT BACKGROUND

- ◆ Constructed in 1894, the courthouse was designed by Wagner & Reitmeyer Architects and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978
- ◆ The mass masonry walls that make up the courthouse consist of multiple wythes of brick; the outer wythe of brick is corbelled at select locations throughout the facade of the courthouse, creating an architecturally appealing banded appearance
- ◆ A stone plinth is located at the base of the building and provides the distinguished appearance of the brick masonry of the building sitting on an elevated base

### PROJECT CHALLENGES

- ◆ Many years of water infiltration with limited long-term preservation-type repairs led to cyclical deterioration of building elements
- ◆ Minimizing disruptions to courthouse activities and occupants required careful planning, phasing, working hours, and noise/dust control
- ◆ Replacement of select roofing was completed simultaneously with masonry repairs; MPS coordinated this work with the roofing contractor as access via MPS scaffolding was required

### PROJECT APPROACH

- ◆ MPS completed a masonry evaluation of the building's facade and provided detailed recommendations to address masonry deficiencies
- ◆ A phased design and restoration strategy ensured that the project remained on schedule; provided long-term, high-quality repairs; minimized future maintenance; and limited the impact of construction on building occupants
- ◆ MPS designed, erected, and maintained system scaffolding to safely complete 100% brick repointing, select deteriorated brick replacement, and remedial masonry anchor installation
- ◆ Rebuilding of corbelled brick was required at multiple locations due to deteriorated masonry condition; at all corbelled locations, new metal flashing was installed
- ◆ Finials at the top of the building's tower and entrance locations were repaired as the original soldered joints were deteriorated at many locations; severely deteriorated finials were replaced with custom lead-coated copper finials fabricated by MPS
- ◆ The installation of structural truss tie rods was required to ensure stability of the building's roof assembly

*"To say that we were pleased with MPS would not be strong enough language to reflect the care, expertise, and craftsmanship that they demonstrated throughout this project. We were amazed by their attention to detail—whether repairs were in public view or on the top of the bell tower, their quality of work remained the same. We were very fortunate to have this historic structure renewed by such expert craftsmen."*

**Robert Getz, Wylie Norton, Darla Bortz**  
Sullivan County Commissioners

Crafting a higher standard for preservation, Masonry Preservation Services is recognized throughout America for our unique approach to masonry preservation and building envelope diagnostics. MPS has been specializing in architectural maintenance and restoration since 1985.



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