

# The Oakland Station and Visitor Center



*The newly remodeled Oakland Station reflects its heritage and past days of steam. Inside, the Visitor Center welcomes all, with an array of information and a collection of arts by local artisans.*

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The Baltimore and Ohio Train Station, in downtown Oakland, Maryland, has graciously welcomed guests since the mid 19th century. The Garrett County destination offered Washington D.C. visitors, cooler summer temperatures in the western mountains, and business owners a means of transporting products to eastern markets. Built in 1885 from a design by Francis Baldwin, the Queen Anne-style station is nationally recognized for architectural beauty and its remarkable state of preservation. A yearlong restoration effort culminating in October 2000, returned the station to its original glory while also creating a centerpiece for community events. Oakland's B&O Station, and surrounding area, is busy once again with residents and visitors as they experience The Shoppe at Heritage Square, the town's latest retailing destination.

Restoring the B&O Station and creating Heritage Square provided a location for visitor services and a site for business opportunities. Guests will note the station is one of Garrett County's Visitor's Centers and a retail shopping venue. Local artisans offer a variety of unique items in a setting reminiscent of a bygone era, a time when handmade items were the rule rather than the exception. Agricultural artisans display maple syrup, honey, and stone ground cooking mixes. A local Amish store, "Sugar and Spice," provides customers with a variety of homemade products, while sweaters, knitted from local wool, make shopping an event to remember. One of a kind, hand made glass products, jewelry, and scented soy base candles add to the array of merchandise. And no train station would be complete without a selection of railroad memorabilia

for children and adults. Train buffs will also be interested in the detailed HO model train layout located in the basement. The extensive display features local B&O railroading operations and may be viewed during the Christmas season.

The Shoppe at Heritage Square displays merchandise, in a time appropriate setting. Oakland's Main Street Community Manager, Cherie Ross, explained, "We decided to integrate antique furniture into our display area, and local vendors brought furniture to meet that need. All furniture used for displays may also be purchased; it provides us with "the time period look" we wanted. The arrangement has worked out very well." An original baggage cart, waiting benches, and other original furnishings, augment furniture offered for sale at the station. High ceilings, wooden floors, and stained glass windows, complete the 19th century atmosphere, while a B&O caboose and boxcar add a 20th century railroading flavor outside The Shoppe at Heritage Square.

Restoration efforts at Heritage Square have been successful and both residents and visitors enjoy shopping in a relaxed atmosphere. Plans are underway to build on that success by completing a café for guests to enjoy year round and a portable ice-skating rink for winter use. Also planned are artisan demonstrations, from basket weaving to glassblowing. ♻️

*The Shoppe at Heritage Square and Train Station are located on Liberty Street in downtown Oakland. Shops are open daily from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. From Memorial Day until Labor Day, there are extended hours on Fridays until 8:00 pm. For more information, call 301-334-1243.*