

Memorial Building renovations 40 percent complete

By GREG JORDAN

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PRINCETON — Work is progressing on a project to renovate one of Mercer County's landmark buildings.

The Princeton Memorial Building, located near the Mercer County Courthouse, was built in 1928 as a tribute to the county's World War I veterans. It now houses agencies including the Development Authority of Mercer County, the West Virginia University Extension Service and the Those Who Served War Museum.

However, the building has been in need of an electrical wiring update, improved windows and other upgrades. In 2008, the late U.S. Sen. Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., obtained \$980,000 to repair and renovate the landmark structure.

Construction bids were opened in June this year and a contract

for work costing \$830,900 was awarded to Main Street Builders, LLC, in Princeton. The contractor began work immediately and has shown good progress to date, the county commissioners were told Tuesday in a progress report.

In a project meeting conducted on Dec. 2, the contractor's representatives said that the renovations are approximately 40 percent complete. The contract was for 300 days, but an earlier completion date was anticipated. Exterior drainage work, concrete and stone restoration is "substantially complete" according to the report. Work is underway on the fire sprinkler

system, refurbishing interior doors and windows, and the electrical system.

Tony Whitlow, president of the Those Who Served War Museum board of directors, said the improvements would help protect the collections on display.

"Oh, yes, yes, it certainly will," Whitlow said of the upgrades. "With the sprinkler system in place, that will provide a safer place for the veterans' relics.

They're going to have another door in the museum to make it safer.

The new electrical wiring is replacing the place of wires that have not been changed since the building was built. This will help the museum display cases. New wiring in the building will also help protect the collections.

"When it get done, it will be a safer and better facility for these new upgrades," Whitlow said of the overall project.



Staff photo by Tom Bone

High-level maintenance...

Dave Banner, left, and Shane Auber of Wilson Restoration work on the exterior of the Memorial Building in Princeton on Tuesday afternoon. The Pittsburgh-based firm also did repair work on the old post office that now houses the Princeton Public Library.