

# PRISON MUSEUM POST

*The Official Newsletter of the Historic Burlington County Prison Museum Association  
Incorporated in 1966*

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## ANOTHER POST ALREADY?

Many of you are no doubt burning with curiosity about why our newsletter is issued so erratically -- six or seven months go by with no *Post*, and then you get three in a three-month period. Our inconsistent publication schedule is a function of the time it takes our volunteers to research the newspaper articles and other material we like to attach to each issue. We typically research enough articles at one time to last several issues; when we run out of material, it usually takes a while before we can engage in another research session. But look on the bright side: it's always a delightful surprise when it shows up in your mailbox/email, isn't it?

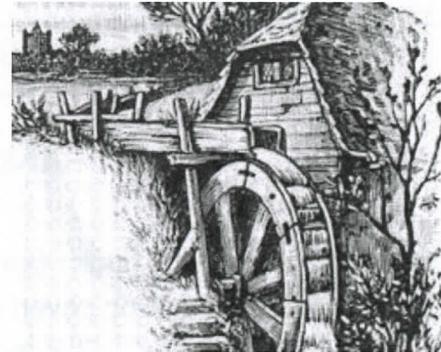
## INTERESTING VISITORS

We get many interesting visitors to the museum. We have had visitors from every state in the country and several foreign countries. Last month we had a lady from the Mt. Holly Historical Society - the Mt. Holly, *North Carolina* Historical Society. Yes, there is actually a Mt. Holly down there. No kidding; google it. It is in the southwestern part of the state, just west of Charlotte. In 1754, a land grant in that area was issued by King George II to James Kuykendall of Holland, who founded a town there called Woodlawn. In 1875, the name of the town was changed to Mt. Holly, after the Mount Holly Cotton Mill that was started there that year. The name "Mount Holly" was used in recognition of the famed yarn made at a spinning mill in *our* Mt. Holly. Our Mt. Holly began in 1677, when Walter Reeves acquired land from the Lenape Native Americans who lived here at the time. He constructed a dam on the Rancocas Creek to channel water through a raceway (what's a raceway?) to power a grist mill and a saw mill. After the mills were established, more settlers were attracted to the area and built houses, including the Shinn Curtis Log Cabin (pictured on the right) which was built in 1712. The cabin still exists in its current location behind the Mt. Holly Municipal Building and is operated as a museum by the Mt. Holly Historical Society.



## SO WHAT **IS** A RACEWAY?

Water power was the only major source of power available in Walter Reeves' day. A water raceway, like the one he constructed, is a structure built to carry water to and from a water wheel. Whether for grinding grain, cutting lumber, refining ore or other forms of processing, water power was an essential component of the economy. Raw material couldn't be economically transported a significant distance over the rough roads of pre-industrial New Jersey. (Yes, the roads were even worse then!) Consequently, small mills were located wherever appropriate stream locations (like our Rancocas) could be found.



## THANK YOU



We thank PMA member Karen Smith for her generous donation to the PMA. The current incarnation of the PMA became acquainted with Karen during the big renovation in the 1990s, when she served as the County's Capital Project's Manager. She later moved on to a gig with the State; we are happy to see her again. We also wish to thank all those who leave donations in our donation box in the gift shop. The box itself is actually a piece of history - its original function was an election ballot box. Take a look next time you come to the museum.

## NEW MUSEUM ATTENDANT

The PMA welcomes a new museum attendant, Dennis McDonald of the Burlington County Parks Department. Dennis is a professional photographer and previously worked for many years for the Burlington County Times. Dennis jumped in with both feet and is working closely with the PMA to promote our site. Our long-time former attendant, Marisa Bozarth, has moved on to a new position in the Parks Department. We wish her well in her future pursuits.

## HISTORIAN ROUNDTABLE NEWS

One of Marisa's new jobs is to organize and facilitate the Historian Roundtable, which was founded by the late County Historian Joe Laufer. His idea was to preserve our County's rich and varied history by providing our many volunteer historical societies a forum in which they could meet, exchange ideas and support each other. Marisa took up Joe's mantle when he passed away in 2014.

Many organizations are represented at the Roundtable, including The Burlington County Historical Society, Whitesbog, Paulsdale, Peachfield, and several towns' historical societies (e.g., Riverside and Delanco). The Prison Museum Association is represented by Vice-President David Kimball.

We assume that if you are reading this, you are interested in history. If you belong to a local historical society and would like to join the Historian Roundtable or have ideas about how it can promote our local history, please contact us at [pma18@verizon.net](mailto:pma18@verizon.net).

One way we think we can promote local history and support our colleagues is to use our newsletter to let you know what other historical groups are doing. In this issue we would like to tell you about the Armed Forces Heritage Museum (AFHM). The



AFHM was founded in 2010 to preserve, interpret, exhibit and educate all on the rich history, artistry, heritage and environment of the armed forces, especially in New Jersey. They are endeavoring to meet their goals in several interesting ways, including a unique museum and a wonderful website. Their museum will be unique because it will be **mobile** -- a traveling,

educational, multi-media 30-foot display trailer that will feature their current on-going projects. The museum is still under the construction, but the website is up and running and we encourage you to take a look at [www.afhmu.org](http://www.afhmu.org). The website features their Living History Project, which includes fascinating oral histories.

In 1938, Jewish boy from Vienna managed to get out of a German work camp and emigrate to the United States, only to end up back in Europe as an American G.I. fighting the Nazis. After his return home to America, Ernest Kaufman became a successful businessman here in South Jersey. You can hear this 97-year-old war hero tell his riveting story simply by clicking on the AFHM website. There's plenty

more to hear as well, including the stories of two Quaker conscientious objectors who served their country in other ways during WWII.

We applaud the efforts of the AFHM and our other colleagues at the Roundtable. Without the dedication of all our volunteers, members and donors, precious and important pieces of our national heritage would be lost.

### **PLEASE LIKE US ON FACEBOOK**

The museum appears to be attracting an increasing number of visitors. We had the best March we have ever had. We think this is due to a number of factors, including our audio tour. Please stop by and try it out if you haven't done so already.

Another reason is that we are attempting to have a greater presence on Facebook. Let's face it: social media is where it's at these days. We thank museum attendant Dennis McDonald and PMA member Brenda Marris for their efforts relative to our Facebook page. We are resolved to put something up every few days. If you have any ideas about this, please email us. And of course, **LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!**

**Historic Burlington County Prison Museum Association ("PMA")**  
P.O. Box 483, Mt. Holly, NJ 08060  
PMA Office Fax: 609-261-5252  
Museum/Gift Shop Phone: 609-265-5476  
Email: [pma1811@verizon.net](mailto:pma1811@verizon.net)  
Website: [www.prisonmuseum.net](http://www.prisonmuseum.net)

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**Please help us preserve and promote the Prison Museum by joining the PMA. Our annual dues are only \$15(individual)/\$25 (family).**  
Membership benefits include a quarterly newsletter,

## MOUNT HOLLY HERALD

**November 4, 1897, Vincentown:** A fresh instance of juvenile depravity occurred here on Monday night, when Henry, the 10-year-old son of Beebe, set fire to the barn of Dr. J. C. Brown "just for the fun of seeing it burn". There were seven loads of hay and a lot of rye straw in the building, all of which was destroyed. The youthful incendiary was arrested and taken before a justice, who ordered that he be sent home and given a good washing, as he was too dirty to be sent to jail. He will probably be committed to the reform school, as he cannot be controlled by his parents, and they are willing that he should be placed in such an institution. Some time ago he set fire to a big pile of brush on the farm of Daniel Kelly, and last week he burned down a willow tree belonging to Charles Rogers. He seems to have a mania for setting fire to things just for the fun of seeing a blaze. It will be a good plan to keep him locked up for a few years, as there is no knowing how much damage he would do if permitted to go on in the way that he has been doing.

**Saturday, September 25, 1897, Local Affairs:** An eagle measuring six feet from tip to tip was shot on Wednesday by Amos Evans on his farm between Mt. Holly and Rancocas. It is now on exhibition at Flynn's Drugstore... The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Women's Christian Temperance Association will be held at Delanco on October 1... A wagonload of drunken tramps was brought from Pemberton on Monday by Constable Banks, and lodged in jail. One of the tramps stole a scarf from Curlis Davis, and on reaching Mt. Holly he kicked a hole through the glass door at the jail.... A clever young woman with a sweet smile and a bogus \$50 bill tried to buy a ticket for Trenton at the Mt. Holly Station on Saturday night. Station Agent Davis looked at the woman and then at the bill. The former looked good, but the latter was hardly a match for her as it was "made up" from a \$5 bill, so he handed it back to her. She said she had received it from a Mt. Holly storekeeper, but her evident desire to get away showed that she was as crooked as the bill. It is said there was a man waiting for her with a horse and carriage on King Street, and that both drove off in the direction of Moorestown... The constitutional amendment election in Mt. Holly on Tuesday resulted in the defeat of all three of the amendments. Those who favored the adoption of the amendments, were for the most part indifferent, and did not vote. The opponents of the amendments voted, as a rule. As far as can be learned, it was an honest election and no money was used unlawfully. The majority against

the gambling amendment was 119, against ad interim appointments 94, women's suffrage, 55.

**Vincentown.** Attorney Francis B. Lee on Monday secured an order for the release of Albert L. Haines from the Camden County Jail upon Haines giving a bond in the sum of \$1,000 to insure against his leaving the State of New Jersey. Haines was in jail exactly one year. He was charged with having failed to provide alimony for his wife in accordance with the decree of the Chancery Court. Mr. and Mrs. Haines are both of Vincentown. In 1886, Mrs. Haines secured a decree against her husband by which the Chancery Court ordered he should pay her a weekly allowance. But Haines did not like to pay out a good slice of his salary in alimony each week, so he left the state for parts unknown. Just 10 years after his departure, he came back to New Jersey and was caught in Camden and jailed. He had an opportunity at the time of his arrest to give a bond, but would not do so. A few weeks ago, he applied to the Chancery Court for his release from jail, claiming that his health was failing. This application was denied at the time.

**Bridgeboro.** A number of people were aroused from their slumbers on Saturday night about midnight by the shrill shrieks of a woman. Her calls for help soon brought several men to the scene, and they were not long in learning the cause. A woman, accompanied by her little children, was pleading in the night air with the husband and father to return to his home, but he was crazed with drink, and was simply uncontrollable. It was a pitiful site, and brought tears of sympathy to the eyes of many of the onlookers.

**Medford.** Considerable interest was manifested by a number of leading citizens in the Constitutional amendment on Tuesday, and those who opposed the amendments were comparatively few... The third amendment, allowing women to vote for school trustees, was adopted by a vote 174 to 65.

**Saturday, October 9, 1897.** The work of building the telephone line in Mt. Holly will be begun next week.

**Burlington:** In consequence of overindulgence in alcoholic stimulants, Webster McClellan, formerly of Edgewater Park, cut high jinx in the Oddfellows Cemetery and was in consequence was removed to the city hall where he was kept confined until his nerves got in working order again.

**Pemberton:** A number of the friends of Blanchard White went down to Mt. Holly on Friday to see him initiated in the Mysteries of the Knights of Pythias. He stood the ordeal well.

**Beverly:** For being drunk and disorderly on Saturday night, Joe McClosky was arrested by Marshall Austin and taken to the City Hall where Constable Meeks took charge of him. Just then, William Beck came in and managed to get McClosky out of the officer's clutches, whereupon both men took to their heel and escaped. Meeks fired several shots after them but did not scare them; they knew that Meeks was never known to hit anything.

**Moorestown:** Last week, Ex-policeman John Toole shuffled off the mantel of unrest that has enveloped his manly form for years, and has now settled down for life with a fair partner. The marriage took place quietly, only a few members of the family being present. The happy groom is now ready for congratulations.

**October 23, 1897** Henry Beebe, a small boy in knickerbockers, was next put on trial for the malicious burning of the barn of Dr. J.C. Brown, near Vincentown. The lad came in court with a broad smile on his face, as if he regarded the affair as a huge joke. He was defended by George M. Hillman. Dr. Brown, who owned the barn in question, testified that the fire occurred on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September... The defendant was afterwards arrested and admitted that he caused the fire. There was a lot of chaff piled up against the barn... William Foulke was near the barn when the fire broke out and saw the defendant jump over the fence and run down the road as if "the old fellow was after him".... The boy's father said he is uncontrollable... Henry Beebe, the defendant, is 10 years old, and was sworn as a witness. He said he went over in the field after apples, and dropped a ciggerette in some old trash, but didn't mean to do it. He said he didn't know the farm was on fire until he got home, but he afterwards contradicted himself. This was all there was of the testimony. The jury a rendered a verdict of not guilty.

The next case moved by Prosecutor Budd was against George Kellock, who was charged with having committed an indecent assault on a 13 year old girl living on Water Street in Mt. Holly. The defendant is a married man and has 3 children. The circumstances attending the assault were detailed by the

victim, who at the time was an occupant of Mrs. Hermann's house, where the defendant boarded. ... The defense, as outlined by Blanchard White, was a general denial of the charge. The defendant swore the whole thing was a put up job as far as he was accused; that Gus Powell was the man that did the deed, as he had admitted it to him. Powell cannot be found now. The jury returned a verdict of guilty.

A jury was empaneled on Tuesday to try Harry Smith, indicted as William Smith, who was charged with the larceny of 5 baskets of tomatoes from Abraham Austin, of Adams' Wharf, of Willingboro Township. Abraham Austin testified that the tomatoes were stolen on the 21st of July during his absence in Philadelphia. On learning who the thief was, a warrant was issued for his arrest. Mrs. Mary Kemble, who lives adjoining the farm, swore that she saw Smith go to the field, pick a bagful of tomatoes, and on being remonstrated with the curse said he would do as he pleased. His father and brother were with him at the time. This concluded the State's case. John Sims, counsel for the defense, in his opening to the jury said they would prove that the defendant did not gather any tomatoes that day, and that the whole plan of the prosecution was to extort \$10 from him. James Chant, of Willingboro, said that he known the defendant for years, as an honest and reputable man. The verdict was not guilty.

The next case called was that of Fredrick Van Winkle, colored, against whom an indictment was found for assault on Lizzy Purnell, of Shamong, with whom he was living in a rather connubial way. They had a quarrel, and Van Winkle assaulted her. The defendant was going to sell the witness's hogs and other things, and when she resisted, he threatened to shoot her, but she declined to be shot with her own gun and, seizing it, started off for the 'squires office to secure a warrant. The foundation of the trouble was a white woman that the defendant had been going with. Thomas Jones said that the defendant had come to him and wanted to be taken to the railroad station, as he said he was going to leave. He was sober, but Lizzy was not. Catherine Jones testified that she heard the defendant threaten to shut off Lizzie's wind if she didn't stop talking so much. M. E. Matlack, counsel for the defense, was about to call his client to the stand when Prosecutor Budd announced that he would not ask for a conviction under the circumstances. The jury found a verdict of not guilty.

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