

PRISON MUSEUM POST

Official Newsletter of the Historic Burlington County Prison Museum Association

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LAW DAY COMMEMORATION AT JAIL - MAY 2, 2009

The Prison Museum will be open for free on Saturday, May 2, 2009 in honor of Law Day. All our readers are urged to visit. Spread the word and post a copy of the enclosed flyer in your workplaces, churches, neighborhood centers, etc.

Law Day is on May 1. Many countries celebrate the day as May Day or International Workers Day. Law Day was created in the United States in 1958 by President Eisenhower to counterbalance those celebrations, which at the time were perceived as communist. The purpose of Law Day is to celebrate the ideals of equality and justice under law in our relations with each other and with other countries. In recognizing the first Law Day, just 13 years after a horrible war in which 56 million people perished, President Eisenhower, who led our forces in that conflict, said, "In a very real sense, the world no longer has a choice between force and law. If civilization is to survive, it must chose the rule of law."

We hope to have something of interest for everyone. Copies of the original plans for the Jail drawn by Robert Mills in 1808 will be on public display for the first time. The Plans include not only the architectural plans but also

Mills' ideas, written in his own hand, about how the Jail should be operated and what should be done to reform those incarcerated in it. The theory that the penal system should strive to reform inmates at all was revolutionary at the time.

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Please help us preserve and promote the Prison Museum by joining the PMA. Our annual dues are only \$10. Membership benefits include a quarterly newsletter, event updates, 10% off gift shop purchases, and free admission to the museum. For an application, call the PMA office.

Local author Dennis Rizzo will be on hand to discuss and sign copies of his books. Those who wonder if ghosts occupy our Jail will be able to talk to paranormal investigators. PMA members will be posted throughout the Jail to answer questions.

TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Please support the Prison Museum by joining or renewing your membership with the Prison Museum Association (PMA). For a mere \$10 per year, you get the *Post*, free admission to the Museum and a 10% discount in the Museum Gift Shop. It's a true bargain. Dues and other income are used to produce our publications, website, projects and events. One of our planned projects is the production of a booklet about the Jail authored by PMA member Dave Kimball and illustrated with wonderful photographs taken by a local art student.

HISTORY SYMPOSIUM A SUCCESS

The Burlington County Historical Society and the Burlington County Division of Cultural Affairs and Tourism sponsored a conference of historical societies on March 14, 2009. This very informative symposium could not have been more timely. Many believe that in these hard economic times, people will seek things to do close to home. The purpose of the symposium was to help us find ways to let the public know we are here.

A highlight of the day was a presentation by Megan Giordano, the curator of the James and Ann Whitall House in Gloucester County. The Whitall House is an 18th century house located on a 44-acre site along the Delaware River known as "Red Bank". The park is also the historic site of Fort Mercer, which along with nearby Fort Mifflin guarded Philadelphia harbor and all communities north of Philadelphia along the river during the Revolution. The Battle of Red Bank started when the British attacked the fort in October of 1777. The patriots were victorious against the Hessian soldiers who were sent by the British General Howe to destroy the fort. The wounded were carried from the battlefield to the Whitall's home, which was used as a field hospital.

The Whitalls were prosperous Quakers who built their home on Red Bank in 1748. Ann Whitall, who had remained at her spinning wheel throughout the battle, emerged to tend the injured soldiers, American and Hessian alike. She went on to keep a diary that contains important historical insight into the lives of people in the Red Bank area in that period.

Ms Giordano has overseen the production of a wonderful interactive website about the Whitall House and the Battle of Red Bank. She and the other speakers were very interesting and informative, and gave us many good ideas which the PMA will explore in the coming year.

IN MEMORIAM

Sincere condolences are extended to PMA member Eleanor Rich on the loss of her daughter, Gladys Danser. Ms Danser was a former Mt. Holly Council member, deputy mayor and mayor. She was admired and well-liked by many because of her deep concern for her community and her neighbors. She was highly respected for her devotion to the preservation of local history through her involvement with the Mount Holly Historical Society. This fine, civic minded woman will be sorely missed.

THIS 'N THAT

It looks like we'll be putting on the Haunt again this year...Plans are underway for the refurbishing of the Warden's House...We have no details as we are pretty much out of the loop... Jailkeep Ron Reed's brother, Joe Reed, has graciously agreed to allow two of his Springfield Civil War rifles to be displayed at the Jail in our old gun rack. Jailkeep Reed has polished them up real pretty...We continue to attract visitors from far and wide, including guests in the last few months from Utah, Canada, Alaska, Florida and California...We hope all enjoy this issue's newspapers articles... To understand one of the ads, you'll have to know that "chilblain" is an inflammation of the hands and feet caused by exposure to cold and moisture... The article complaining about the cost of the court on the taxpayers is a hoot - if they only knew today's costs, they'd be dumbfounded... Actually, if today's taxpayers knew, they'd be dumbfounded, too....See you on May 2.

Museum Hours: Wednesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday noon to 4 p.m.
(No admission after 3:30 p.m.)

Admission Fee: \$4 for adults, \$2 for students and seniors over age 55, and free for children under age 5. The tour is self guided. Guided tours and groups rates are also available. Call for further information.

Mount Holly Herald

November 29, 1873

Our Court expenses are a source of earnest inquiry among the tax-payers, and the question is often asked, cannot the expenses be loosened? We answer yes! In the first place, the Grand Jury is greatly to blame for finding bills of indictment against parties for petty squabbles in strawberry patches, cranberry bogs and sometimes in the street. Each one of these indictments cost the county one hundred dollars or over and what is the result? If the prisoner is convicted, he or she is sentenced to confinement in the county jail for 30 to 60 days or fined a nominal amount, and stand committed until the costs are paid. After the expiration of the sentence, and being unable to liquidate the costs, the prison liberating committee wisely releases them from the jail, thus saving a further expense to the county for board. In the second place, there is no earthly necessity for twenty-eight constables being on daily duty during the sessions of the courts, drawing their per diem pay. Our courts generally last from two to three weeks. One third of the constables might be detailed on the opening of the court for attendance on the court during its session and the remainder dismissed for the term. It is practiced in Monmouth and other counties with success. In the third place, our justices are too much given to committing old "bummers" and tramps to our jail for four days for drunkenness and vagrancy. Their sentence in many cases is no sooner out than they are again sent up for four days more and so on to the years' end, spending four-fifths of their time on short commitments, costing the county almost the sum of \$5.30 for each commitment, exclusive of board at the jail; the aggregate amounts to a considerable sum in the course of a year. For the benefit of future Grand Juries and particularly for the one that will meet in December, we give in round numbers the cost of running our last (September) term of court. Jury - \$1,000; Clerk's fees - \$500; Prosecutor's fees - \$500; Witness fees - \$500; Judges' fees - \$600; Justices' bills - \$300; Sheriff's fees - \$150; for trials and commitments before Justices between terms - \$300; making the cost of the court for one term \$6000.

ROBERT MILLS' PLANS OF THE MOUNT HOLLY JAIL

By Marisa Bozarth



*Robert Mills
1781-1855*

A few years ago, the Prison Museum received a knock at its front door from someone with the Mount Holly Library. The original plans for the construction of the Prison had been found in a desk in the Library, and they wanted to sell them to the Museum or the County.

Someone had bequeathed the plans to the Library in the 1800s, and, surprisingly, they had apparently forgotten that they had them!

While the idea of displaying the original plans

in the Prison Museum initially intrigued the County and the PMA, everyone agreed after much discussion and consideration that the plans should be sold to Philadelphia's Athenaeum, a non profit special collections library which would properly restore and preserve them. The Athenaeum would also provide the PMA and the Library with museum quality copies.

The Prison Museum recently received the copies of the plans from the Athenaeum. They were drawn by Robert Mills in 1808, as his first independent architectural endeavor. Mills later went on to design many other buildings throughout the United States (churches, courthouses, private homes, etc.). He was also appointed Federal Architect under President Andrew Jackson, and as such designed the National Monument in Washington, DC, the U.S. Post Office, the U.S. Treasury Building and the U.S. Patent Office. Throughout his life, Mills was also an innovator of things such as a rotary wheel, steam powered wagons and reapers, and city planning.

The plans consist of architectural drawings of the three floors of the Prison from various viewpoints, as well as Mills' ideas on penology. Included in the plans are detailed writings of how Mills believed the Prison should operate, and how his design would make certain operating principles feasible. These were very influential in the day to day operation of the Prison.

MOUNT HOLLY HERALD

August 14, 1897

Local News. While digging in the S. Budd Norcross sandpits, near Hainesport, the embankment gave way, and down with the sand rolled a human skeleton that had been buried four feet underground. This makes a fifth body that has been found there.... Although he has been married but a short time, Frank Krumbower don't seem to be inclined to support his wife, so she had him hauled up before Justice Slack, who gave him to understand that he must either fish, cut bait or go to jail. He promised to do the square thing hereafter, so they let him go...The finest peaches seen in Mount Holly for many a day were shown on Wednesday by ex-Sheriff George Harbert, who raised them on his farm. They are known as the "Lillie Miller" and the trees came from Mississippi where they were grafted by George Miller, a son of the late Samuel Miller, of Mount Holly.... A German who gave his name as Edward Bender, probably a son of old "Ticklish" Bender, came to Mount Holly on Friday, drank himself full of half and half and then walked off with T. W. Hulme's horse, which was grazing in the yard attached to Trinity Church. He was arrested while trying to sell the animal, and landed in the County Jail....An attractive musical program will be given on the balcony of the Arcade Hotel on Saturday evening which the public will doubtless appreciate. It will be free. The orchestra will consist of eight pieces, and the musicians will be selected from Mount Holly, Smithville and Burlington.

Town Topics. The Courthouse yard has become a favorite trysting place for certain couples during the last month or so, and the night officers never bother them, although several Water Street youngsters have been in the habit of taking a sly peep at the lovers.

A Remarkable Woman. Perhaps the oldest, and in all probability the most remarkable woman in this section is Mrs. Sarah Terry, who, if she lives until September 26 next, will celebrate her 105th anniversary. She resides with a distant relative in Philadelphia. On Monday, "Aunt Sarah" gave a sketch of her life to a reporter. Among many other interesting things, she said: "I was born in Pemberton, Burlington County, New Jersey. My father was of Irish descent and my mother of English parentage. The family subsequently became Irish Quakers. My mother died when I was three years of age and I was adopted by Joseph and Mary Campion, who kept a large dairy farm near our home. My father was with General George Washington in the war of independence, and was engaged in the Battles of Trenton and Monmouth. I often heard my father tell how he asked General Washington during these engagements for something to eat to appease his hunger and how the latter put his hand in his pocket, giving him a mouthful of corn. I remained with the Campion family until I had grown to womanhood, when I sailed for Europe as a companion to Anna Caroline Pedersen, of Charleston, South Carolina. She had married Peter Pedersen, the Danish Ambassador to this country. Upon our return to America I left the Pedersens and went to Philadelphia,

where I have resided ever since. I was married to David Ferry. My husband served through the War of 1812, when the English had a skirmish with us. We had no children. My husband died shortly after the assassination of President Lincoln."

Escaped from the Officer. There was considerable excitement in Mount Holly on Wednesday night, when Lee Eckert, age 18 years, who was charged with horse stealing, broke away from Constable Frank Banks as he was on the way to jail, and made his escape. Banks had just left the office of Justice Slack and was walking up Main Street with his prisoner in tow. As they reached the Washington House, Eckert made a sudden break from his captor, and ran down Water Street with the fleetness of a deer. Banks followed after him as fast as he could, but being rather fleshy and not quite as spry as he used to be, was unable to keep with the fugitive. When near Pratt's Blacksmith Shop, Banks sprained his knee, but still kept on as best he could. Several men were standing on the corner of Kearney and Water Streets to whom he called out "Stop thief!", but they either misunderstood him or else didn't crave the job, as they made no effort to stop Eckert, who quickly turned the corner and ran up Kearney Street, where all trace of him was lost. The search was continued for over an hour without any clue being obtained as to his whereabouts, but he will probably be captured before many days. Sometime on Wednesday, Eckert, who lives in Pemberton, went to the house of William Marshall and asked to be given the horse and carriage as he was told to come and get it. Mr. Marshall was away at work, and his wife was unwilling to lend the rig in his absence, but Eckert insisted that it was all right; that he had seen Marshall only a short time before and had secured his consent. Mrs. Marshall was not satisfied, however, and refused to give her consent, whereupon Eckert went to the stable, hitched up the horse and drove off. Soon afterwards word was sent to Mr. Marshall of the affair, and he denied having told Eckert he could have the rig. A warrant was then issued for his arrest, which was placed in the hands of Constable Banks, who afterwards overhauled Eckert on a stone road driving in the direction of Pemberton, and placed him under arrest. The prisoner said he had merely driven near Vincentown to take some girls out riding, but they were not home so he concluded to return to Pemberton. He made no effort to escape then, but as he began to get pretty close to the jail he evidently didn't like the prospect, and so took leg bail.

Pemberton. W.W. Lippincott is one of the active members of the Creamery Association, and is increasing the business of the concern... A quiet poll of the voters in the Borough shows that there is a large majority in favor of the formation of an anti-bribery society... Ex-Postmaster Philip Allen and John Ritzendollar, of Chatsworth, were initiated in the mysteries of the order of Red Men last Thursday night... Samuel Dennis will have to sit up all night for awhile to watch his truck patch, as the tramps have been stealing his potatoes at a lively rate lately... Budd Haines, who was committed to jail for refusing to support his wife, has been released on bail, and they have decided to live together in the good old way...

Fieldsboro. The Burlington County Authorities will send an officer to St. Francis Hospital, Trenton, to guard James Robinson, who murdered his wife at Fieldsboro early on Sunday morning, and then attempted suicide. Robinson is recovering from his wounds and will be removed to Mount Holly jail as soon as possible.

Advertisements. Tetter, salt-rheum and eczema. The intense itching and smarting, incident to these diseases, is instantly allayed by applying Chamberlain's eye and skin ointment. Many very bad cases have been permanently cured by it. It is equally efficient for itching piles and a favorite remedy for sore nipples, chapped hands, chilblains, frost bites and chronic sore eyes. 25 cents per box...Guernsey bull for sale. Two years old, and titled to registry, by Sir Rocmont, out of Countess 3d. For extended pedigree and price inquire of E. O. Lippincott, Smithville, NJ.... House for sale or rent. A rough cast house in good order at number 36 Church Street, Mount Holly, 7 rooms, 2 kitchens with water in both, large lot in the rear. Call on Annie P. Edwards, nearly opposite... Valuable Mount Holly property for sale. I offer at private sale the following property in Mount Holly: Two 8-roomed houses on Bispham Street, all improvements. Price for the two, \$3,000. One 6-roomed brick house on Water Street, with bath \$1,000. One 12-roomed brick house on Mill Street, all improvements, garden and stable attached. Cost \$9,000, will sell for \$7,000. Sixty building lots on Smithville Road. Cheap. For terms, which will be easy and further particulars, address Job E. Pharo, Bayonne, NJ.

Notice. Having purchased a new, wheat and rye thresher, hay bailer and fodder shredder, I will be prepared to do the work of all in that line who will favor me with their patronage, with either steam or horse power. Thomas H. Marter, Moorestown, NJ

The Mill Street. Under New Management. Convenient to Post Office and Depot. Table unsurpassed. Special rates to theatrical parties, jurors and court attendants. Bar always supplied with choices to wines, liquors, beer, cigars, &c. Pool and billiard room attached. House lighted by electricity. Livery stable and sheds in connection, and careful hostler in attendance day and night. Walter H. Evans, Prop., Mill Street, opposite Pine, Mount Holly.

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