

# **PRISON MUSEUM POST**

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

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## ***BATTLE OF IRON WORKS HILL RE-ENACTMENT TO BE HELD SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10***

The Battle of Iron Works Hill will be re-enacted on High Street in front of the Jail on Saturday, December 10 in the afternoon. This is a MUST for children of all ages. The Jail and the Historic Brainerd Street School House are open for free. There will be lots for everyone to enjoy: living history camps, an 18<sup>th</sup> century cooking demonstration, colonial dancing, open field cooking and of, course, the battle! Go on [www.ironworkshill.org](http://www.ironworkshill.org) for more information. PMA Board member Ian Johns organizes this great event, which is partially sponsored by the PMA.

The British Army was riding high in the fall of 1776 after pushing George Washington out of New York and through New Jersey. By December, Washington had retreated to Newtown, Pennsylvania, and the British were settling in for the winter, mostly in New York. They also had some troops in New Jersey, including 1500 Hessians in Trenton and 2000 more Hessians in Black Horse (Columbus) commanded by Colonel von Dolop. The British assumed that Washington would spend the winter licking his wounds. They assumed wrong!

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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, event updates, 10% off gift shop purchases, and free admission to the museum. Go on website for an application.

On December 17, on orders from Washington, Colonel Samuel Griffin set out with a ragtag band of 600 patriots from Pennsylvania to Mount Holly, where they set up artillery pieces on Iron Works Hill, on the far side of town, south of the Creek. Based on faulty intelligence that the rebel force was five times larger than it was, von Dolop decided to follow the Americans to Mount Holly with his entire brigade. On December 24, he dragged his artillery to the top of the Mount and attacked American posts on Pine Street and along the Creek. The Americans responded from Iron Works Hill. After a

day-long cannonade, the outnumbered and outgunned patriots evacuated their positions and marched to Moorestown. They must have laughed all the way.

The Hessians stayed and partied in Mount Holly. Their cohorts in Trenton were likewise celebrating the holiday when Washington and his men took a little boat ride over the Delaware on Christmas night. You know the rest. Had von Dolop's men not been lured to Mount Holly, they would have been available to reinforce the King's troops in Trenton. What a different story The Battle of Trenton might have been...

## ***HAUNTED EVENT A SUCCESS***

Many thanks go to PMA Board Member Clark Bish and PMA members Jimmy Reed and Kenny Orangers for another great Haunted Event. The show was spectacular this year, with several new features. Everybody got into the act, including Rancocas Valley High School's award winning dance team, which wowed the crowds with their fantastic rendition of Michael Jackson's *Thriller*. Our makeup artist was superb. We plan to put some of her artistry up on our website soon, so keep an eye out for it. We would like to extend our thanks to the County Fire Marshal's office for their cooperation and assistance. We would also like to thank Mount Holly Mayor Ryan Donnelly and his staff for their help, which included pulling some rabbits out of the hat on the opening day. Everything went like clockwork until the last night (October 29) when we had to close due to SNOW. We really thought we had seen everything in the last seven Haunts. We'll be talking about our Halloween snow for years to come.

## ***BICENTENNIAL YEAR COMES TO A CLOSE***

What a wonderful year this has been for the Old Jail! We celebrated her 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary in style. We published a well-received book, *The Burlington County Prison: Stories from the Stones*. We had a lovely celebration. We produced a commemorative medal. We forged a great friendship with the Philadelphia Ship Model Society, which refurbished the ship model built by an inmate in the 1890s. We commissioned a local artist to create a showcase for the model, which will be completed and installed in time for the Iron Works



Hill event. We had a great Haunted Event and look forward to participating in this and future years' Iron Works Hill reenactments. The only thing we didn't accomplish was the start of our movie series, cut short by the Big Hurricane of 2011. We have the screen and the sound system, though, and we will be ready to go next spring. First up will be *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

## ***THE OLD SCHOOLHOUSE***

The Old Schoolhouse will be open to the public, for free, on Saturday, December 10, during the Iron Works Hill festivities. Built in 1759, it is recognized as the oldest surviving one-room schoolhouse in New Jersey on its original foundation. Located on Brainerd Street, it was built through the efforts of 21 local citizens, who each bought 25 shares to acquire land and build a schoolhouse. For the next half century, the school was maintained by the original founders and their descendants.

In 1815, the school was deeded to the Female Benevolent Society. The group proposed to teach "in a public school, all the poor children of Mount Holly and its vicinity, gratis". After the State of New Jersey established free public school in 1845, the Old Schoolhouse was used as a private school and for other educational purposes. In 1951, the Female Benevolent Society turned the building over to the National Society of Colonial Dames of America in the State of New Jersey (NSCDA-NJ) for preservation and restoration. Founded in 1891, the NSCDA is an organization devoted to furthering an appreciation of our national heritage through historic preservation, patriotic service and educational projects. The New Jersey Society, founded in 1892, maintains two museum properties, Peachfield in Westhampton and the Old Schoolhouse.

IN HONOR OF THE CLOSE OF OUR BICENTENNIAL YEAR,  
THIS ISSUE'S NEWSPAPER AND HISTORICAL EXCERPTS  
ARE FROM THE EARLY AMERICAN PERIOD.

THANKS TO PMA VICE PRESIDENT DAVE KIMBALL FOR RESEARCHING THESE EXCERPTS.

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**MOUNT HOLLY HERALD, January 5, 1881:**

*Burlington* – From Bristol over to Burlington and return (on an ice yacht) has been made this winter in one minute and a half, the distance being two miles.

***Advertisements***

**MT. HOLLY MIRROR, January 20, 1819:**

The Highest Price given for

Hog's Bristle

By the subscriber, at his BRUSH MANUFACTORY

Opposite Mr. Samuel Hewling's tavern in Moorestown, where storekeepers and others will be supplied with all sorts of brushes of the best quality, on reasonable terms. George T. Risdon

**MT. HOLLY MIRROR, December 1, 1819**

The subscriber offers for sale that well known and long established

Tavern House,

Sign of General Washington

Together with the Ant-Houses, Garden, &c, &c, - Situate in Mount Holly, the Seat of Justice for the rich and populous County of Burlington, 17 miles from the City of Philadelphia, 18 from the city of Trenton, and 6 from the City of Burlington -- within a few rods of the Court House and the nearest public house to the same...The house is large and commodious with a convenient and spacious kitchen and wash-house in which there is a pump of excellent and never-failing water. The stables and sheds are good and sufficiently large to contain 200 horses....



**MT. HOLLY MIRROR, January 26, 1820**

FOR SALE

At the store of the subscribers, in the City of Burlington, A few thousand gallons of Old Cider Whiskey, of the first quality, only for CASH, or in exchange for country produce. Benj. & Budd Sterling

**MOUNT HOLLY MIRROR , June 7, 1820**

Jonathon Allen, Barber, Begs leave to inform the Public that he has settled himself in Mill Street, Mount Holly, where he will be happy to wait on all those who may please to favor him with their calls.

He has for sale, Pomatum, Shaving Soap, Spanish and Half Spanish Segars, shoe-blackening of a superior quality, &c, &c.

**MOUNT HOLLY MIRROR, November 8, 1820**

MAMMOTH APPLES

An apple was selected this season, from the Orchard of Caleb Newbold, Esq. in this County, which measured in circumference 15 inches and weighed 23 ounces. An apple was taken from the Orchard of John Dobbins, Esq. which measured 13 inches in circumference and weighed 24 ounces.

**MOUNT HOLLY MIRROR, April 4, 1821**

BERGAMI

A fine Jack will stand the present season at Joshua Darnell's, about four miles from Mount Holly, and the same distance from Moorestown and Lumberton, and will be let to mares at Nine Dollars the season; which may be discharged by the payment of Eight within the season; Bergami was purchased in Majorca, one of the Balearic Islands in the coast of Spain, in the Mediterranean, by the person who imported him last fall; and was considered amongst the finest animals of his kind ever produced on the island where his species so much excel...

## Some interesting letters:

### *An affair of State:*

As our next Legislature meets at Burlington, I say prepare your fishing tackle. If you Pennsylvanians will take Jersey money (and I believe it is as good as your own), I shall be making parties not to the Sign but to the reality of good victuals & drinks at Bristol at the House of Mr. McElroy.

-Governor William Livingston to Mr. McElroy, March 27, 1787

### *An un-arranged marriage:*

Rev'd Sir:

My daughter Katy has taken it into her head to be married tomorrow afternoon at four o'clock to Mr. Ridley, a gentleman from Maryland and a descendent of the famous Bishop Ridley. & as I have long since taken it into my head that all my daughters whenever they marry shall be married by Presbyterian Bishops [*sic, Livingston had spent much of his career fighting against the establishment of an Episcopal Bishop for North America and against Episcopal control of Kings College (Columbia)*], I should be glad to see the nuptial knot tied by the Bishop of Newark, by which I mean Dr. McWhorter.

-William Livingston to Dr. McWhorter, April 4, 1787

*Oops!*

United States, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1793

Gentlemen of the Senate:

I was led by a consideration of the qualifications of William Patterson of New Jersey, to nominate him an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. It has since occurred that he was a member of the Senate when the law creating that office was passed, and that the time for which he was elected is not yet expired, I think it my duty to declare that I deem the nomination to have been null by the Constitution.

- G. Washington

*The term for which Patterson was elected to the Senate ended on March 4, 1793. Washington re-nominated him as Associate Justice on that day, and the Senate, called into a special session for the purpose, confirmed the nomination on the same day.*

*What's wrong with a little nepotism?*

When I prohibited all intercourse at that post (*New York, still held by the British*) by Flags of truce, it was impossible for me to conceive that a door of private communication would be opened by one of our officers, and could not think it necessary to take particular precaution against it; but Sir, you will now consider it as my most positive order; that none of our Prisoners or any other characters of any description whatsoever shall be permitted to pass in any way whatever to or from the Enemy with the privity of any officer commanding under you. And if you should find Captain Dayton (*Elias's son, future delegate to the Constitutional Convention and future Speaker of the U.S. House*) or any other officers not disposed to carry this order zealously into execution, you will have them relieved by others who will pay the strictest attention to it.

-General Washington to Brigadier General Elias Dayton,  
June 24, 1782



## **INVITATION TO PMA MEMBERS**

*Wine and Cheese Reception\**

*In Celebration of Our New Office and New Exhibit*

**Saturday, December 10, 2011**

**2 p.m. to 4 p.m.**

**PMA Office, Warden's House attached to Prison Museum**

**Come view the Battle of Iron Works Hill from our new office in the Warden's House! And be the first to see the new custom built stand for the model of the SS St. Paul, which will be displayed in the Debtor's Day Room on the top floor of the Museum. The stand was designed and built by Furniture Maker William Robbins of Vincentown. The model will be covered by a glass dome built by Mount Holly native Mike Reardon, who recently moved his company, Broadway Glass, into one of the spaces at the old Eagle Dye plant off Washington Street. The Prison Museum Association gratefully acknowledges Mr. Reardon's assistance in the installation of the exhibit.**

*(\*non-alcoholic beverages offered as well)*

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