

## HISTORIC BURLINGTON COUNTY PRISON MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

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### **PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!**

May 1, 2001

Dear PMA Members and Other Friends:

It's the time of year to renew your PMA membership. Please do so by using the attached renewal form.

A lot of exciting things will be happening at the old Jail over the next several months. The Freeholders have hired professional exhibit designers and builders to create high quality exhibits and to conserve some of the graffiti. The cost of this project is significant, to put it mildly. The Freeholders have made it clear that they intend to create one of the best park systems around, and for the Jail to be a key part of it. While their enthusiasm and money are of course essential, the job won't get done without the support and enthusiasm of the people of Burlington County. That's us, folks. Be a part of something that will put our County on the map and have a wonderful impact on our fellow citizens for many years to come.

The Freeholders have also authorized the Parks Department to hire a part-time site coordinator to answer inquiries, conduct tours, coordinate docents, and assist with special events and related activities. The position will start out at 24 hours per week. If you know of anyone who may be interested in applying for the position, have him or her call the Parks Department at 265-5858.

We continue to conduct tours on the fourth Saturday and fourth Sunday of each month. Our first weekend in April went well, with approximately 100 tourists going through. The Jail will also be open on **Saturday, August 11, 2001**, in conjunction with the annual **Bike Race**. It will also be open the week of **May 14-18, 2001**, when over 400 area

students are scheduled to be given tours as part of **Burlington County/Mount Holly History Tour Week**. It will also be open the evening of **Tuesday, May 15, 2001** as part of **Court Night**, an event sponsored by the Burlington County Bar Association and the Burlington County Court Administration, which is designed to familiarize county residents with their local court system. **WE NEED YOUR HELP!** If you are interested in serving as a tour guide, or even as a monitor to help in the flow of traffic, for any of the above events, please call the Parks Department at 265-5858.

If you missed our special tour on March 24, 2000, you missed a great time. Charlie Farner and John Coverly told us what the Jail was like when their respective father and grandfather served as warden and night warden in the 1930s. Charlie told us about an inmate who, during an escape, peered through the window and watched as he, then eight years old, slept in his bed in the warden's house. John told us about an inmate who grabbed the gun of the trooper who brought him in, and got a couple of shots off right in the reception room. Stan Fayer and Ken Gilbert told us what it was like to be guards in 1965. We were surprised to learn that the inmates rarely went outdoors, and even more surprised to find out why. Even when the place (built for 30 inmates) was brimming over with over 100, there were typically only two or three guards on duty at any given time, and certainly none to spare to take any inmates outside. The Jail was so crowded when it closed that inmates slept on bunk beds lined up in the basement hallway, which came to be known as the "subway". All great stuff. We plan to ask the guys to come back in the next month or so, when we will get them and their great memories on videotape.

Also in the works - a new brochure and the reconstruction of the gallows by Mount Holly architect and PMA member Regan Young, who has graciously volunteered his services.

Finally, PMA member David Cranmer has come through for us once again by offering to organize another haunted event in the fall. The tentative date is Saturday, October 27, 2001. A ghoulishly fun time was had by all last year, and this year promises to be even better. Don't miss it. A preliminary meeting will be scheduled soon. Call me at 265-0202 if you would like to be invited to this meeting.

As you can see, things are really happening at the old Jail. Don't miss out on all the fun. Renew your membership today!

Cordially yours,  
  
JANET L. SOZIO  
President