

PRISON MUSEUM POST

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

Volume XXI, Issue V

November 29, 2022



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

The Board of the Historic Prison Museum Association wishes everyone a Joyous Holiday Season and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

ANNUAL MEETING-ELECTION RESULTS

Approximately 40 PMA members, volunteers and guests attended the annual membership meeting and party at Robin's Nest Restaurant in Mount Holly on November 16. President Janet Sozio gave the State of the Association address. Generally, we are in a good state.

County Commissioner Dan O'Connell (who is also a long-time PMA member) was in attendance. County Director of Resource Conservation, Mary Pat Robbie, who oversees the Parks Department and the museum, addressed our group. She thanked us on behalf of the County for our efforts and advised that the Commissioner Board is about to take bids for a new roof on the building. The roof will be installed next year and the museum will have to be closed during construction.

Robin's Nest came through for us once again with delicious food and drinks, fabulous service and a wonderful atmosphere. A grand time was had by all.

The election results were announced. Returning to the Board are Clark Bish (Vice-President), Susan Dargay, Esquire, Ian Johns, Janet Sozio, Esquire (President), Carl Taraschi, Esquire and Gary Woodend, Esquire (Secretary). Joining the Board are Brenda Marris (Treasurer) and Rhondi Schwartz, Esquire. We want to thank Brenda and Rhondi, both long-time PMA members, for coming aboard.

Destroy not the ancient landmarks which the fathers have set. Proverbs 22:28

NEWSPAPER EXCERPTS

We'll keep it short this month. We found two items that we thought would be of interest.

The first is yet another escape, reported in the *Courier Post* on April 17, 1922:

“John Deno, 26 years old, of Riverside, was recaptured at the point of a revolver by Warden Clarence Horner, of the Burlington County Jail, after his sensational escape from that prison yesterday afternoon.

Deno was arrested several weeks ago on a charge of robbery at Riverside.

The man was assisted in making his escape by James Dembo, 25 years old. Dembo was charged with stealing boxing gloves from a gymnasium at Camp Dix.

Dembo is a giant in stature. He was exercising with Deno yesterday afternoon in the prison yard when the pair evolved the plan for the Riverside man's escape.

The prison wall, over which Deno made his short-lived escape, is 20 feet high. Dembo stood against the wall while Deno climbed on his shoulders. Deno hooked a garden rake on top of the wall and climbed to the top. He jumped to freedom on the other side.

A short time later the keepers discovered the man was missing and Sheriff Edward H. Flagg organized several posses to scour the countryside for the fugitive.

Warden Horner hurried to Moorestown in an automobile and notified Chief of Police Bradshaw of the man's escape.

Horner cut across the country to Rancocas and on the road between that town and Mount Holly the warden met Deno.

The officer drew his revolver and ordered Deno to halt and throw up his hands.

The jailbreaker dropped to his knees and began to pray as the warden advanced. The man was taken prisoner and hurried back to the jail, where he is being closely watched today.”

No one can ever say Burlington County doesn't respect the Constitution. Would it surprise you to know that African Americans served on a jury in 1873? Take a look at this article from the Mt. Holly Herald dated October 4 of that year:

“John Rochester and Henry Allison, charged with grand larceny to the amount of \$35 for rope taken from a raft, the property of Fisk & Green, of Trenton, were placed on trial. After the tenth juror had taken his seat, it appearing that the panel was exhausted and there being no white men in the room, the sheriff was about proceeding downstairs to procure two talesmen (1) when Col. Cannon suggested to the Court that there were a number of respectable colored men in the room and he saw no reason why they should not serve their country by being placed on the jury as they were citizens (2). The Court directed the Sheriff to call two of them. John Logan and William Edward Jester, two respectable colored men living on Sand Hill (3), have the honor of being the first two colored men that ever sat on a jury in Burlington County. The jury returned a verdict of guilty in petit larceny. Hendrickson for State, G.S. Cannon for defendant.”

**Historic Burlington County
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In Memoriam

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David A. Kimball 1930-2021

**Prison Museum Post Editor, Researcher, Writer,
Typesetter and Distributor:**

Janet L. Sozio, Esq.

Please help us preserve and promote the museum by joining the PMA. Annual dues are \$15(individual)/\$25 (family). Membership benefits include a quarterly newsletter, event updates and free admission to the museum. See website for application.

(1) Talesmen are persons added to a jury from among bystanders to make up a deficiency in the available number of jurors.

(2) The 14th Amendment to the US Constitution had been ratified on July 9, 1868. It said that all persons born and naturalized in the U.S.A. were citizens and no state could abridge their privileges as citizens.

(3) Would somebody please tell us where Sand Hill is.

PARANORMAL DAY A SUCCESS



Paranormal Day on November 12 was a great success, thanks to our friends at New Jersey Paranormal. Their fearless leader is John Ruggiero, pictured on the far right. Also pictured, from left, is NJP member Kenny Lund, PMA Treasurer Brenda Marris, PMA Vice-President Clark Bish and NJP member Chris Therrien.

Go on www.newjerseyparanormal.com for more information about the group, which raises money for historical societies all over the state.

NJP held court in the basement, where they answered visitors' questions about paranormal investigations. Palm reader Shannon delighted and astonished visitors on the main floor. PMA

Member Dan Wolverton kept the gift shop stocked and PMA members Janet Sozio, Brenda Marris, Clark Bish, Rhondi Schwartz and Megan Virella kept busy all day assisting visitors and keeping the crowd moving.

About 120 visitors had a great time during the day. Some stayed all day; one family of four made the day of it, getting their palms read, speaking to the paranormal investigators, taking the audio tour and playing the escape game! It was a beautiful, sunny day and several people took the opportunity to take photos. Gift shop sales were brisk, which reminds us -

**CHECK OUT THE PRISON MUSEUM FOR UNIQUE
CHRISTMAS GIFT ITEMS!**

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