

William Penn (and Mrs. Penn) return to New Castle, Del. on Oct. 24, 2015

(DOVER, Del.–Oct. 15, 2015)–On Saturday, Oct. 24, 2015, history will be vividly brought to life in New Castle, Del., during “William Penn Day,” a day-long series of activities commemorating the 333rd anniversary of Penn’s Oct. 27, 1682 disembarkment at New Castle, his first landing in the New World. All programs are free and will take place at the [New Castle Court House Museum](#), located at 211 Delaware St. in New Castle, Del. For additional information, call 302-323-4453.



Cast of “The Tryal of William Penn.”

“William Penn Day” will feature the following activities:

- **Livery of Seizen ceremony.** Historical interpreters Bob Vander Decker, David Price and New Castle resident Jim Whisman re-enact the ceremony in which the town of New Castle, and a 12-mile circle of land surrounding it, were conveyed to William Penn by appointed representatives of the Duke of York. Penn will then present his plans for his new three “Lower Counties.” 10:15 a.m.
- **Performance by De Blokfluiters.** Recorder/flute ensemble performing 18th-century music. 11:30 a.m.
- **“The Tryal of William Penn.”** Historical play about the 1670 trial of William Penn (portrayed by Jim Whisman of New Castle) who was accused of unlawful assembly and inciting a mob by preaching to a group of Quakers on a London street. Issues of religious freedom and the rights of a jury are explored in this 30-minute performance. Audience members may

participate in the trial as witnesses and as members of the jury. 12:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

– **“The Amazing Mrs. Penn.”** Living-history performance by [Jean Norvell](#) as Hannah Penn at 2 p.m.

One of the oldest and most historic courthouses in the United States, the New Castle Court House (main section built in 1732) served as Delaware’s first court and state capitol. Here in 1776, New Castle, Kent and Sussex Counties declared their independence from Pennsylvania and England creating the Delaware State. The museum features tours and exhibits that illustrate Delaware’s unique boundaries, law and government and the Underground Railroad.



New Castle Court House

Following is a complete schedule of New-Castle-Court-House-Museum-sponsored activities during October 2015. All programs are free and open to the public and take place at the New Castle Court House Museum located at located at 211 Delaware St. in New Castle, Del. Museum hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; and Sunday, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. For additional information, call 302-323-4453.

New Castle Court House Museum activities, October 2015

Ongoing

[“Emeline Hawkins: Her Journey From Slavery to Freedom on the Underground Railroad.”](#) Exhibit chronicles the compelling story of Emeline Hawkins and her family and their 1845 odyssey on the Underground Railroad from slavery in Maryland, through Delaware to freedom in Pennsylvania.

Ongoing

[Sculpture by Charles Parks](#). Display of works by the noted Wilmington artist featuring historical and political figures

including a Minute Man, and presidents Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and George W. Bush.

Saturday, Oct. 24, 2015

William Penn Day. Series of programs commemorating the 333rd anniversary of Penn's disembarkment at New Castle, his first landing in the New World. Activities include a re-enactment of the Livery of Seizen ritual in which Penn received possession of New Castle and a 12-mile circle of land surrounding it at 10:15 a.m.; a performance by De Blokfluiters recorder/flute ensemble at 11:30 a.m. (formerly 11 a.m.); "The Tryal of William Penn," a historical play exploring Penn's trial on religious freedom and the rights of English subjects under the law at 12:30 and 3:30 p.m. (formerly 3 p.m.); and "The Amazing Mrs. Penn," a living-history performance by Jean Norvell as Hannah Penn at 2 p.m. (formerly 1:30 p.m.). **Note change in program hours.**



Jean Norvell will
portray Hannah Penn on
Oct. 24, 2015.

Monday, Oct. 26, 2015

"7 Steps to Freedom." Lecture by James F. Turk, Ph.D., on "7 Steps to Freedom," a mobile-enabled, web-based story-telling program focusing on the history of the Underground Railroad and perspectives on race and enslavement in Salem County, N.J. Sponsored by the Underground Railroad Coalition of Delaware. 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 27, 2015

"Hollywood History at the Court House: 'Legend of Sleepy Hollow.' " Screening of the film "Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and a brief presentation on the world-renowned illustrator from Claymont, Del. Felix Octavius Carr Darley who illustrated the Washington Irving book upon which the film

is based. Film at 7 p.m. Free admission but, due to space restrictions, reservations are recommended by calling 302-323-4453. **Note: Event rescheduled from Oct. 14, 2015.**

Saturday, Oct. 31, 2015

River Towns Ride and Festival. Festivals in historic New Castle and Delaware City frame a bicycling event between the two cities. Family-oriented festival held from 11:30 a.m.–5 p.m. at the New Castle Court House Museum and The Green in New Castle will feature food and craft beer, music, pumpkin decorating and children's games. **Note: Event rescheduled from Oct. 3, 2015.**

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