

# “William Penn Day” among four special events at the New Castle Court House Museum in October 2016

**-Listing of museum activities through December 2016 also included-**

(DOVER, Del.–Oct. 4, 2016)–The [New Castle Court House Museum](#), located at 211 Delaware St. in New Castle, Del., will be presenting four history-related programs during the month of October 2016.



Re-enactment of the Livery of Seizen ritual inside the New Castle Court House Museum. The ceremony will be conducted as part of William Penn Day on Oct. 22, 2016.

On Saturday, Oct. 22, the museum will present “William Penn Day,” a full day of programs commemorating the 334th anniversary of Penn’s disembarkment at New Castle, his first landing in the New World. Activities will 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 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.; “The Amazing Mrs. Penn,” a living-history performance by Jean Norvell as Hannah Penn at 2 p.m.; and a Baroque concert by the Immanuel Bach Consort at 6 p.m. Reservations for the 6 p.m. concert are required by calling

302-323-4453.

In keeping with the ghostly season, the museum will present "The Spirit of New Castle Past," an original play by New Castle Court House historic-site interpreter David Price that will explore historical figures of New Castle's past who return to tell their stories of conquest, murder, adultery, kidnapping, slavery and revolution. The play will take place on Wednesday, Oct. 26 at 7 p.m. Admission is free but, due to space restrictions, reservations are required by calling 302-323-4453. No admission after the play begins.

On Wednesday, Oct. 12 at 7 p.m., historic-site interpreter Bob Vander Decker will present "1781 Surrender: End of War," part 10 of his year-long series of lectures entitled "The Founding of America in One Year" which examines important local and national events that led to the creation of the United States. Admission is free.

Finally, on Saturday, Oct. 15, between 11:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., the museum will participate in the [River Towns Ride and Festival](#), a twin-festival held in the historic towns of New Castle and Delaware City. Activities include a bicycling event, food, craft beer, music, pumpkin decorating and children's games. Free admission.

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 Museum

In addition to the October programs, the museum is currently featuring the exhibit "[Emeline Hawkins: Her Journey From Slavery to Freedom on the Underground Railroad](#)" which 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; and [Sculpture by Charles Parks](#), a 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.

The New Castle Court House Museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Sunday from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. For additional information, call 302-323-4453.

### **New Castle Court House Museum activities, October–December, 2016**

#### **Wednesday, Oct. 12, 2016**

**"1781 Surrender: End of War."** Lecture by historic-site interpreter Bob Vander Decker. Part 10 of "The Founding of America in One Year," a year-long series that examines important local and national events that led to the founding of the United States. 7 p.m. Free admission.

#### **Saturday, Oct. 15, 2016**

[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. Free admission. **Note: Event originally scheduled for Oct. 1, 2016. Due to inclement weather, event rescheduled to Oct. 15, 2016.**

#### **Saturday, Oct. 22, 2016**

**William Penn Day.** Series of programs commemorating the 334th 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 at 10:15 a.m. in which Penn received possession of New Castle and a 12-mile circle of land surrounding it; a performance by De Blokfluiters recorder/flute ensemble at 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.; "The Amazing Mrs. Penn," a living-history performance by Jean Norvell as Hannah Penn at 2 p.m.; and a Baroque concert by the Immanuel Bach Consort at 6 p.m. Free admission but reservations required for the 6 p.m. concert. 302-323-4453. **Note: The time for the Immanuel Bach Consort performance has been changed from 5:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.**



Jean Norvell will portray Hannah Penn on Oct. 22, 2016.

### **Wednesday, Oct. 26, 2016**

**"The Spirit of New Castle Past."** Play by historic-site interpreter David Price explores historical figures of New Castle's past who return to tell their stories of conquest, murder, adultery, kidnapping, slavery and revolution. 7 p.m. Free admission but, due to space restrictions, reservations are required. No admission after the play begins. 302-323-4453.

### **Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2016**

**"1782-1783: Treaty Signed."** Lecture by historic-site interpreter Bob Vander Decker. Part 11 of "The Founding of America in One Year," a year-long series that examines important local and national events that led to the founding of the United States. 7 p.m. Free admission.

### **Friday, Nov. 11, 2016**

**“Veteran’s Walking Tours.”** Programs include stories and visits to grave sites of notable New Castle veterans from the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Civil War, United States Colored Troops, World Wars I and II, Korean War, Vietnam and Desert Storm. Tours depart at 11 a.m., 1 and 3 p.m. Free admission but advance registration requested by calling 302-323-4453.

**Saturday, Dec. 10, 2016**

**“Spirit of Christmas in New Castle.”** One of the best preserved Colonial-era towns in America will feature tours of historic homes bedecked in holiday decorations, Dickens-themed holiday activities, re-enactments, programs at museums including the New Castle Court House Museum, crafts, musical entertainment and more. Festivities will conclude at 5 p.m. with the annual Christmas tree lighting at Market Square. Downtown New Castle. Free admission.

**Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2016**

**“1784-1787: Continental Congress to Constitution.”** Lecture by historic-site interpreter Bob Vander Decker. Final segment of “The Founding of America in One Year,” a year-long series that examines important local and national events that led to the founding of the United States. 7 p.m. Free admission.

**-End-**

**Contact:**

Jim Yurasek

Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs

Phone: 302-736-7413

E-mail: [Jim.Yurasek@delaware.gov](mailto:Jim.Yurasek@delaware.gov)

Web: <http://history.delaware.gov>