

GALLERY GUIDE

Pop-Up Museum: Walls Make Good Neighbors

March 30 - April 8, 2018

Locked safely away in Eastern
State Penitentiary's old darkroom, just a few
steps from here, hundreds of numbered
artifacts rest in neatly organized drawers.
Thousands of photographs, also carefully
numbered, fill museum storage boxes. Rare
books line the shelves. The darkroom has
been fitted with modern climate control
systems to preserve the collection. Each
object—from a weapon hidden by an Eastern
State inmate to a photograph developed in
the darkroom where it is stored today—is
irreplaceable. It tells part of Eastern State's story.



Officers and inmates saved most of these rare artifacts. Many of them took keepsakes when Eastern State closed as a state prison in 1970. We thank these men and women for returning these fascinating objects to the historic site. Other artifacts were discovered here, abandoned with the penitentiary itself.

Plans are currently under way to build a museum-quality exhibit space inside the penitentiary. Until then, visitors can view photo reproductions (appearing on signs throughout the building and on our social media), while scholars carefully study the original artifacts.

And, once a year, here in the historic site's climate-controlled conference room, we'll display some of these precious artifacts for our visitors. Join us next year at *Pop-Up Museum!*

Videos:

Eastern State Penitentiary shortly after it closed, 1970. Courtesy of Temple University's Special Collections Research Center.

Al Capone, underworld personality—outtakes, 1930. Courtesy of the University of South Carolina's Moving Image Research Collections.

All of the artifacts in this exhibit are the collection of Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site unless otherwise noted.

Case 1:

A Curious Attraction

Built in the midst of a cherry orchard in the 1820s, Eastern State Penitentiary occupied a peculiar position in Philadelphia. The prison was a mechanical marvel and a novel criminal justice experiment.

The prison attracted tourists and curiosity-seekers. It appeared in guidebooks for travelers in the 1800s, much like the historic site does today. While the general public could tour the grounds of Eastern State with a visitor's pass, prisoners were not allowed visits from loved ones until the late 1800s.



As the city grew to encompass Eastern State, an asylum district developed just outside the prison walls. Several institutions emerged within a few blocks of the prison to care for Philadelphia's vulnerable young populations: Girard College, the House of Refuge, and the Northern Home for Friendless Children.

Why do you think so many people were—and still are—drawn to Eastern State? Would you want to visit an active prison? Why or why not?

<u>Go explore</u>: Visit the Room for Debate (near Admissions) to learn more about Eastern State's international influence and look at a stereoscope (3D) postcard through an antique viewer.

In Case 1:

Inmate-made bookends, shaped like the prison's original front gate, featuring heavy bolts from that door. When the original front gate was demolished in 1938, people collected these bookends, along with keys and bolts from the gate.

The Visiter, 1836, Magee's Illustrated Guide of Philadelphia and the Centennial Exhibition, 1876; Official Guide Book to Philadelphia, 1875; The Stranger's Guide in Philadelphia, 1864; and Authorized Visitors Guide to the Centennial Exhibition and *Philadelphia*, **1876.** These volumes highlight Eastern State as one of the most important sites in Philadelphia. Throughout its history, Eastern State hosted distinguished guests, including presidents John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson in 1833; Indian Chief Black Hawk and his companions in 1833; social reformer Dorothea Dix in 1847 and 1874; the Prince of Wales and his entourage in 1860; president Rutherford B. Hayes in 1887; 100 representatives from various South American countries in 1889; and a lieutenant from the Baghdad, Iraq Police Department in 1958.

Stereoscope postcard of Eastern State's façade, c. 1870. Stereoscope photographs once brought striking images from around the world into the homes of the middle class. The images often depicted famous buildings the senders visited on their travels.

Visitor's pass, c. 1885. Public curiosity accompanied the penitentiary from its very beginning. The day that the first prisoner arrived, October 25, 1829, Eastern State also received its first visitor: George Washington Smith, a prominent Philadelphia prison

reformer and the author of *A Defense* of the System of Solitary Confinement.

Death Ledger (1830-1896, 1904-1936; open to the years 1869-1872). Milton Stifer (inmate 6207) died of typhoid fever at the prison in 1871. "Hearing nothing from the friends of Milton Stifer, 6207, his body was taken to the Public Burial ground," the warden reported. It is unknown where Stifer was laid to rest, but the Cherry Hill burial ground once stood on the corner of 20th Street and Fairmount Avenue, the current location of a Rite Aid pharmacy.

Postcard of Eastern Penitentiary, Philadelphia, PA, c. 1913. The postcard shows the original front entrance to the penitentiary before it was replaced in 1938.

Lock, c. 1935. Gift of Katharine W. Sharp.

Eastern State Penitentiary facade printed on a postcard that was sent to France, 1905.

Eastern State Penitentiary facade printed on a postcard that was sent to Detroit, MI, 1913.

Miniature cutlery set made by a prisoner from soup bones, 1856. The set was made for eight-year-old Mary Anna Kaighn. Her father was a member of the Board of Visitors and took her with him on his visits to the prison.

Key to the original front gate of Eastern State Penitentiary.

Commemorating the demolition of the original gate, the key has "Front Gate" and "ESP" stamped on its head. "1823-1938" is stamped on the shoulder. Gift of Joseph B. Atkinson, Margaret Carter, and Suzanne Campbell, grandchildren of Warden Frank Martin.

Stereoscope of Girard College. Three blocks north of Eastern State, Girard College opened in 1848 as a school for "poor white male orphans." After a contentious desegregation battle that spanned the 1950s and 1960s and reached the U.S. Supreme Court, Girard College admitted the first students of color in 1968. Today, the school offers a college-preparatory program for students in grades 1st through 12th, and its campus includes a museum and archive.

Print of the House of Refuge. Gift of Dr. Norman Johnston. Houses of refuge provided a mix of moral education, employment, and housing for those unable to support themselves. Several Eastern State prisoners had lived in a house of refuge before their commitment to prison.

Professional Criminals of America, Thomas Byrnes, 1886. Even as the field of criminal justice became more professionalized in the late 1800s and early 1900s, many Americans remained distant from crime and incarceration. Books such as this one satisfied curiosity about who went to prison and why. The author, a detective in New York City, hoped his book would help police departments track down and identify local law-breakers. It features at least 30 Eastern State prisoners, including Edward McGee, who served five sentences here.

Large crowds of inquisitive onlookers gather while hundreds of police and fire officials assemble to combat riots within the penitentiary, September and November 1933. Acme Newspictures (Getty Images).

<u>Case 2:</u>

Life on the Block

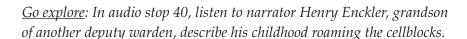
Covering an entire city block, Eastern State
Penitentiary was a looming presence in the
neighborhood. Its walls isolated its inhabitants,
creating a "city within a city." About 80,000 men,
women, and children served time here over the
course of its 142-year history. Prison officials
lived in the front administration building until
the mid-1900s.

In this unusual domestic space, unexpected friendships emerged. James Fraley, pictured on this table with two young children, befriended the deputy warden and babysat his grandson. Fraley was serving a murder sentence.

Perhaps no other family was as personally entwined with the prison as that of Warden

Robert McKenty (featured on the far right on this table, wearing glasses). McKenty, a widower, married the prison's matron, Ella Dickinson, in 1912. He employed three of his sons at Eastern State, and his daughter Elsie also got married at the prison.

Can you imagine being born and raised in a prison?





In Case 2:

Mug Shot Book, 1904-1906 (inmates B-2375 to B-3374, open to pages featuring B-3185 to B-3204). Essie Pollett, inmate B-3185, arrived at Eastern State three months pregnant. A 17-year-old actress, Pollett gave birth at the prison and kept her infant with her for six months. Fellow prisoner Laura Irons, paroled before Pollett, took the baby girl and cared for her until her mother was released. Gift of the Scheerer Family.

Pennsylvania Bureau of Correction Inmate's Handbook, Eastern Correctional Diagnostic and Classification Center, c. 1967.

Eastern State Penitentiary Handbook for Inmates, c. 1960. Gift given in honor of Howard H. Haines, Captain of the Guards.

Rules and Regulations of the Board of Inspectors Governing the Eastern State Penitentiary, 1920; General Rules of the Eastern State Penitentiary for the Government of Inmates, c. 1950. Gifts of the family of John D. Shearer.

Willie Cavalier (inmate C-3259), age 15, entering Eastern State Penitentiary's front gate, 1926.

Cavalier was originally sentenced to death for killing his grandmother. The Pennsylvania pardon board saved him from execution by commuting his sentence to life imprisonment after receiving hundreds of letters and petitions from citizens. Acme (Getty Images).

Deputy Warden Myer's grandson Franklin Hespell (left) with babysitter James Fraley (inmate B-7965) and another child, 1922. Courtesy of Franklin Hespell.

Small wooden model ship.

Dr. Samuel Leopold was a prominent Philadelphia psychiatrist who worked with prisoners at Eastern State Penitentiary. He kept the prisoner-made ship in his home's entryway until he passed away. His granddaughter inherited it and donated it to the historic site. Gift of Dr. Samuel Leopold and his family.

Portrait of Deputy Warden Myers, c. 1923. Deputy Myers lived in the prison's front administration building with his family during the early 1920s. Gift of Franklin Hespell.

Bertillon (intake) card for Reba Kimble (inmate C-1127), 1927. Kimble arrived at Eastern State in 1921 when she was two months pregnant. In June of 1922, she gave birth to a baby, whom she named Kenneth, during her incarceration. Kenneth spent the first year of his life at Eastern State. He was baptized and circumcised at the prison. Mother and child left Eastern State in October of 1923. **Handcuffs and lock.** Gifts of the Scheerer Family.

McKenty Family portrait in a prison courtyard, c. 1920. Gift of the McKenty descendants, the Banks, Myers, and Calkins Families.

Dishes given as a wedding gift to Warden McKenty's son by prisoners, c. 1920.

Franklin Hespell, grandson of Deputy Warden, in baseball gear with Guard Walter Tees, 1921. Gift of Franklin Hespell.

Small portrait of Warden Herbert "Hardboiled" Smith, c. 1930.

Herbert Smith, head of the prison from 1928-1945, was the last warden to live in the front administration building.

Baby doll with knitted clothing.

The clothes were made by a female prisoner and given as a gift to Mary Jane Fry, a social worker who volunteered at the prison. It is unlikely the doll itself originated at Eastern State. Gift of the Baginsky Family in memory of Albert and Mary Jane Fry.

Portrait of Warden Robert J.

McKenty, c. 1920. Gift of the

McKenty descendants, the Banks,

Myers, and Calkins Families.

Case 3:

Sirens and Smoke

By the late 1800s, the city had grown to envelop Eastern State on all sides. Stores, restaurants, and homes surrounded the Fairmount fortress. Even though the prison predated the community, neighbors grew wary of the escapes, uprisings, and chaos that spilled out into the neighborhood.

Dozens of people escaped from
Eastern State. Prisoners found creative
ways of getting out: underground
through sewers and tunnels; over
the wall with ladders and ropes;
and through the front gate, concealed
in supply trucks or dressed in civilian

REWARD

South

S

clothing. They often carried homemade weapons, like the ones featured in this case, to secure their freedom.

Newspaper coverage of escapes and riots fueled the sentiment that a maximum-security prison in the middle of a busy neighborhood was illogical and potentially dangerous.

What do you think it was like to live across the street from this prison as smoke, shouts, and sirens filled the air?

<u>Go explore</u>: Learn more about Eastern State's most notorious jailbreak, the 1945 tunnel escape, in Cellblock 7.

In Case 3:

Unless otherwise noted, all of the keys, prisoner-made knives (also called shivs or shanks), and bullets in this case are gifts of the Scheerer Family. The Scheerer collection was donated in memory of Andreas Scheerer, Captain of Maximum Security from 1946 to 1971. It is the largest collection donated by one family to Eastern State Penitentiary.

Inmate-made blackjack (club-type weapon). Gift of the William F. Derau Family.

Wanted Poster for Marion Albert Elliotte (inmate C-4213), 1921.

Wanted Poster for Julius H. Allison (inmate B-5273), 1913.

Guards Joseph Gyser (left) and Harry Schofield (right) examine the end of the tunnel used by 12 prisoners to escape from Eastern Penitentiary, April 1945. AP WirePhoto.

Zip Gun. A "zip gun" is an improvised handgun. Zip guns typically use ground-up match heads as firing powder. This example is made from wood and threaded plumbing pipe.

Gift of the Scheerer Family.

Black bullet. Found in the penitentiary, 2007.

Pennsylvania State Policemen and Warden Herbert J. Smith, with head bandaged, 1933. Warden Smith was severely beaten by prisoners during a riot before guards rescued him. Prisoners rioted for more than an hour and set fires in a demonstration against the alleged brutality of the guards. Acme (Getty Images).

Wanted Poster for James Van Sant (inmate D-3385), 1945 Tunnel Escape.

Handcuffs.

Key marked with a 6. Gift given in honor of Howard H. Haines, Captain of the Guards.

Keys to Cellblock 13. Cellblock 13 consisted of 10 dark isolation cells.

A fire truck, followed by police, enters the main gate of Eastern State Penitentiary during a riot. AP Wirephoto.

Rickenbacker motorcar that was commandeered by six escaping prisoners when they scaled the prison walls in 1923. The driver of the car, Thomas J. McAllister, Jr., was forced to drive to Maryland before being released by the prisoners. United Newspictures.

A search party looking for two escapees along railroad tracks by the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, 1934. Acme Newspictures (Getty Images).

The Fire Department detaching ropes used by escapees, 1923. Five prisoners

escaped over the wall after beating and tying up two guards. They ascended the wall by climbing a four-part ladder they constructed in the prison's woodworking shop. They repelled down the wall using a rope. Acme (Getty Images).

Nathan Goldstein holding a pair of trousers a prisoner discarded during a 1934 sewer escape. Acme Newspictures (Getty Images).

Shank marked "no program." Gift of Katharine W. Sharp.

Locks.

Keys to Cellblock 14 cellar. The basement of Cellblock 14 housed dark, remote isolation cells, one of several places in the prison called "the hole" or "the Klondike."

Cover of Finger Print and Identification Magazine, featuring Martin Farrell (inmate C-8359) and Francis Wiley (inmate C-8825), October 1934. The pair escaped from Eastern State in July 1934 via a sewer and participated in a murder while on the run. Once recaptured, they received the death penalty for the killing. They were executed in the electric chair at the state prison at Rockview on December 2, 1935.

Case 4:

Abandonment and Transformation

Eastern State has occupied many identities since it opened nearly 200 years ago. It has been a site of radical innovation and profound isolation during its operation (1829-1971); a dilapidated eyesore to its neighbors during the abandonment period (1971-1988); and a bustling museum and historic site for visitors and staff alike (1988-present).

Today, the site prides itself on connecting the past to the present and discussing the legacy of American criminal justice reform.



As we convene conversations about justice and ponder the future of this site, artifacts continue to surface. In recent years, we have found many items hidden in the penitentiary's forgotten corners, including a shank, a toothbrush, and a coat rack signed by several prisoners.

Surely there are more artifacts to uncover and stories to tell. What do you hope we will find next? Whose stories do you want to know?

Go explore: We strike a delicate balance: maintaining the site as a "stabilized ruin" while keeping our artifacts, including the building, safe and stable for future generations. Learn more about this work in audio stop 28, titled "Why Don't You Fix This Place Up?" Ponder the future of incarceration in our Prisons Today exhibit, located near the baseball diamond.

In Case 4:

Promotional poster.

Pennsylvania Horticultural Society poster.

Advertisement for Eastern State Penitentiary's first Halloween Party.

Over the course of 25 years, the historic site's annual fall fundraiser evolved from a modest Halloween party to a major haunted attraction. *Terror Behind the Walls* now employs more than 300 people every year and attracts more than 100,000 visitors. It is consistently ranked among the nation's top haunted attractions.

Dan "The Cat Man" hat, c. 1990. There were few witnesses to the complete transformation of Eastern State
Penitentiary from a prison into a historic site. Dan "the Catman"
McCloud was one of them. Having visited Eastern State before its closing in 1970, Dan went on to care for a colony of cats that lived in the complex during the 20 years the property was abandoned, and continued to stop by several times a week once the historic site opened. He left his hat in the historic site offices before he passed away in 2002.

Philadelphia City Paper featuring a story about Dan "The Cat Man" McCloud, October 13, 1989.

Lock.

Pipe. Found on a cellblock roof in 2016.

Wood carving: cowboy. Prisoners made crafts and sold them to neighbors and visitors in the penitentiary's "curio shop" in the front gatehouse. Earnings from these sales and other jobs helped prisoners restart their lives after release. Gift of Pamela Pertgen and John A. Eastman, who was a neighbor of the penitentiary and served as a guard.

Cellblock chalkboard. This item was saved from the trash by a neighbor and donated to the historic site. Gift of Julian Skalski.

Philadelphia Daily News featuring an architectural plan for the re-development of Eastern State,
July 24, 1984. When the city of Philadelphia listed the abandoned penitentiary for sale, developers placed bids ranging from \$2.5 million to \$3 million. Suggested developments included a condominium complex,

a supermarket, restaurants, and a nightclub. A preservationist group, Eastern State Task Force, successfully fought the sale of the building. In 1988, the group offered the first limited tours of the building.

Toothbrush. Found in the historic site offices in 2017.

Criminal court docket book. This book records individuals who stood trial in Lycoming County. The court dismissed some cases, but some of the people involved in others were sentenced to Eastern State. A neighbor rescued this book from the trash when the prison closed in 1971. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Leo Judge.

Ornament.

Tin cup.

Calendar, 1994.

Counter Cases:

Everyday Visitors and Neighborly Acts

Dozens of employees—guards, counselors, parole officers, secretaries, and chaplains—reported daily for duty at Eastern State. The longest-serving employee, Captain Joseph Smith, spent 50 years of his life at Eastern State, working under eight different wardens.

Though separated from the community by 30-foot walls, staff and prisoners alike found ways to be neighborly. Staff and prisoners cleaned the sidewalks and planted trees around the prison's perimeter. During World War II, prisoners made model ships and tent pegs for the military. They joined in blood donation drives and even gave their own skin to help burn victims.





Prisoners made a variety of handcrafts, including the wooden figurines and shoe-shaped pincushions on this counter. Neighbors and prison employees purchased these items as gifts and mementos.

What do you think the relationship between a prison and the outside community should be?

<u>Go explore</u>: Take the hourly Hospital Hands-On History tour for a glimpse of the prison's operating room, where you can see an image of Eastern State prisoners donating blood to the Red Cross.

In Case 5:

Officer's jacket.

Officer's gold hat pin. This insignia once adorned an officer's hat at Eastern State. The Pennsylvania state seal appears in relief, and "ESP," for Eastern State Penitentiary, appears at the bottom.

Gold and brass guard uniform buttons.

Silver guard uniform button. Gift given in honor of Howard H. Haines, Captain of the Guards.

Officer's silver hat pin. Gift of Retiree Bernard M. Sekula, Correction Officer I.

Certificate of award for William Biedermann for 25 years of service. Gift of the Biedermann Family.

Guard Adam Tyson in uniform outside the walls. Gift of the Miller Family.

Program for banquet commemorating Captain Joseph Smith's 50th anniversary.

Guard looking out of corner tower, c. 1960. Loneliness and boredom defined some guard shifts, particularly those in the towers. Gift of the Biedermann Family.

Department of Corrections badge. Gift of Retiree Bernard M. Sekula, Correction Officer I.

Name badge for Bernard M. Sekula. Gift of Retiree Bernard M. Sekula, Correction Officer I. Employee banquet. The prison employed thousands of individuals over the course of its 142 years. Guards and officers patrolled the cellblocks and secured the facility. Meanwhile, a robust office culture emerged among the prison's typists, clerks, and secretaries.

Staff identification card for David Lazar.

Sergeant Elwood T. Cannon outside original front door, c. 1937.

Staff identification card for Carol Tanner. Gift of Carol Tanner.

Badge in leather case with pad of paper. Gift of Amy, Rachel, and John—great grandchildren of Milton Sloan.

Employe Handbook, **1960.** Gift of Howard James.

Manual of Rules, Regulations, and Required Duties for Corrections
Officers, 1957. Gift in memory of Lieutenant Jack Skelton.

Silver trophy presented to Hedda van den Beemt, Bandmaster of Eastern State Penitentiary, Christmas 1922. Gift of the van den Beemt Family.

Prisoners and guards celebrate Christmas on the gallery of Cellblock 5, c. 1960. Gift of Officer Howard James (standing to the left of the Christmas tree).

In Case 6:

Ceramic Santa Claus party dish, mug, and leaf dish. Gift given in honor of Howard H. Haines, Captain of the Guards.

Wood carvings: peasant man and woman and two boxer dogs boxing. All of the wood carvings on this counter were made by prisoners. Gifts of the McGraw Family.

Wishing well nightlight.

An Eastern State Penitentiary Labor Industry worker inspects a batch of 4,000,000 tent pegs that prisoners created for the Marine Corps, 1942. Acme (Getty Images).

Prisoners Fred Hoagland (left) and Thomas McIntyre (right) performing in the 1938 Christmas broadcast on radio station KYW. Radio broadcasts allowed incarcerated people to speak or sing directly to the world at large, including family and friends tuning in at home. Acme Newspictures (Getty Images).

Daniel Donahue (inmate C-5540) and Evelyn Henderson, 1943. Daniel Donahue underwent two skin graft surgeries to help Evelyn Henderson, a 9-year-old with severe burns on her entire body. Incarcerated for murder, Donahue was selected from 30 prisoners who volunteered to donate skin to save the girl's life. Acme (Getty Images).

continued on back

Shoe-shaped pincushions.

Miniature cowboy boots, c. 1910. A note accompanying the boots reads: "These boots were made by hand by the prisoners at the Eastern Penitentiary and given to my father as a gift. Laura H. Shupert."

Connie Mack, manager of the Philadelphia Athletics baseball team (left), and Warden Cornelius J. Burke (right) looking at a prisoner-made warship, 1949. Telephoto.

Chaplain's suitcase. This suitcase belonged to Rev. Bernard Farley, who served as Eastern State's Catholic chaplain in the 1930s. Gift of John P. Farley, Mary B. Maiden, James J. Farley, Kate Farley, and Bernard C. Farley.

Prisoner William Yun and Warden Herbert Smith. Yun composed a solo in Chinese and performed it during the prison's 1938 Christmas broadcast on radio station KYW. Acme (Getty Images).

Visitor's pass, c. 1945.

Beaded "Peggy" bracelet, c. 1947. The donor's mother ordered it at the penitentiary to give to her as a gift. Gift of Margaret Moore Walker. "Master's Boozers" baseball team with guard in front of prison offices.

Outside groups frequently played against prison teams. "Master's Boozers" may have been a bar league. Gift of Jack Flynn.

Bocce ball, remnants of a softball, and a baseball. Discovered by historic site staff.

Heavyweight boxing champion
Max Baer with unidentified man in
the prison yard. Gift of John P. Farley,
Mary B. Maiden, James J. Farley,
Kate Farley, and Bernard C. Farley.

Visiting choir (possibly from Temple University) at Eastern State, c. 1960. Gift of the family of John D. Shearer.

Quaker City String Band appreciation book. The Quaker City String Band visited Eastern State on July 9, 1957 and performed a concert in the prison yard. A group of prisoners wrote notes of thanks and signed their names in this book and sent it to the band. Gift of Quaker City String Band.

Eastern Echo, Winter 1957. Gift in memory of Retiree Bernard M. Sekula, Correction Officer I.



Ceramic cat, c. 1960. Gift of Mary, daughter of William F. Derau, a former guard at Eastern State.

Inlaid wooden chessboard and chess pieces, c. 1960. Chess was a popular activity at Eastern State. Dr. Richard Fulmer, a corrections counselor at the penitentiary in the late 1960s, purchased these prisoner-made items. Gifts of Dr. and Mrs. Fulmer.

