

EASTERN STATE PENITENTIARY HISTORIC SITE
AUDIO TOUR SCRIPT

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1. INTRODUCTION

STEVE BUSCEMI:

Welcome to Eastern State Penitentiary.

In a moment, we'll enter the cellblocks, but our tour begins here in this gravel covered area.

I'm actor and director, Steve Buscemi. I'll be one of your guides as you visit the prison. You'll also hear from former inmates, guards and the people who have studied and preserved this historic building. These are their real voices.

ANONYMOUS INMATE 5:

I was scared to death. You didn't know what was going to happen.

RICHARD GRIFFIN, GUARD:

Well, I used to tell 'em outright, you try to hurt me, I'm gonna try to kill you. Tit for tat, pal.

JESSE DIGUGLIELMO, INMATE:

If you look at the walls outside, they were like 25, 30 feet in the air. But on the inside, they were like 60 or 70 feet in the air.

NORMAN JOHNSTON, SOCIOLOGIST:

Eastern State is without a doubt the most influential prison that was ever built.

STEVE BUSCEMI:

Before we enter the cellblocks, follow the road to the raised concrete surface facing the outside wall.

I first came to Eastern State in 1999. I was scouting a film location, and was amazed to find this magnificent ruin—still standing in the middle of a modern city.

You should now be on the raised concrete surface alongside the road. You're standing inside the world's first true penitentiary, a building designed to inspire penitence—or true regret—in the hearts of criminals. The architects here believed that all human beings, regardless of their behavior, have good in their hearts.

They believed Eastern State Penitentiary would inspire a new generation of prisons, worldwide, built on this optimism and faith in the human character. On the inside, Eastern State was progressive, even visionary.

But on the outside? This illustration shows Eastern State, on its isolated hilltop, a year after it opened. Look at the walls. They're 30-feet tall—with an additional 10 feet below ground level. Look at the battlements across the roofline, the towers. On the outside this building is a castle, a fortress, a dungeon.

ACTOR:

“Let the avenue to this house be rendered difficult and gloomy by mountains and morasses. Let the doors be of iron; and let the grating occasioned by opening and shutting them extend a sound that shall deeply pierce the soul.”

Benjamin Rush, 1787

STEVE BUSCEMI:

Standing isolated on a lonely hilltop, some mile and a half outside the early City of Philadelphia, this massive building was designed to dominate the landscape and imply a harsh physical threat to lawbreakers in the city below.

But the prison's Gothic Revival architecture is mostly for show. The battlements across the top of the administration building are fake—they're only ankle-high—and wouldn't provide much protection in battle. And you may have noticed tall arrow slit windows lining the front wall as you approached the prison today, the type of windows seen

in castles. Well, they're fake too. You're now looking at that huge wall from the inside, and you can see that those window frames don't penetrate this solid, featureless wall.

Step down from the raised concrete surface, and follow the roadway around the corner to the left.

When you arrive at the entrance to Cellblock 1, in the courtyard under the corner guard tower, press 2 and the green play button on your Acoustiguide.

2. CELLBLOCK 1: PRISONS BEFORE EASTERN/ FIRST MODERN BUILDING/ ISOLATION

STEVE BUSCEMI:

This is Cellblock 1. It opened in 1829. Step inside. Take your time, and look around.

There is an illustration on your right. Before Eastern State, criminals were sent to places such as the Walnut Street Jail in Philadelphia, to await punishment. You can see all sorts of prisoners, men and women, adults and children, petty thieves and murderers, thrown into the jail together—and left to scheme or fight among themselves, in crowded, unheated rooms.

But as bad as these jails were, they were not designed to punish. They were simply holding pens for those waiting to receive their sentences. Flogging, whipping, public humiliation, heavy fines, public execution—these were the typical punishments of the 1700s.

A group of prominent Americans were horrified by the conditions in the jails. They met, just after the American Revolution, in the home of Benjamin Franklin. They had a great 18th century name for their

organization: "The Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons" and they were the first prison reform group in the world.

They believed convicts needed time alone—in silence, to rediscover their good nature.

The early prison reformers saw solitary confinement, not as a punishment, but as an opportunity for reflection. A chance to become penitent.

Our tour continues at the illustration of Eastern State in 1830, on the right-hand side of this corridor. When you're ready to continue your tour, press 3 and the green play button on your Acoustiguide.

3. THE FIRST MODERN BUILDING

STEVE BUSCEMI:

Who would design this massive structure? The State of Pennsylvania held a competition—and a one hundred-dollar prize was awarded to John Haviland, a young, British-trained architect. He was faced with a huge challenge: holding hundreds of prisoners in strict solitary confinement. Now that may sound simple today, but remember that in 1829, even the White House had no running water, and the president—Andrew Jackson—used a chamber pot. Even the wealthiest Americans heated their homes with wood or coal fireplaces.

The model represents a cross section of this corridor as it stood in 1830. Notice that each prisoner here had his own cell—roughly 8 by 12 feet—with a bed, a workbench, and a cast-iron toilet that was flushed with water once a day.

Architect David Cornelius has studied these buildings since 1983. He's even explored the utility tunnels that run beneath this corridor.

DAVID CORNELIUS:

There were actually a few escapes through the sewer, but prisoners usually found easier ways of escaping. Try escaping through your toilet at home [*laughs*].

STEVE BUSCEMI:

Now remember, when they were new, these cellblocks had a striking, church-like appearance. The cells had wooden floors and a high, arched ceiling almost like a chapel—with a round skylight, called the “dead eye.”

The back of each cell had a small door. It opened into a walled exercise yard, slightly larger than the cell itself, but open to the sky.

Notice, on the model, that there is no door connecting the central corridor—where you’re standing—to the cells.

The doors you see now lining this corridor were added in the 1850s. Originally, there was just a small opening, called a feeding hole, through which meals could be passed to the inmates. Originally, the only way into these cells was through the exercise yard door.

The cells were heated by a furnace located in a small shed at the end of the cellblock. You can see it at the very back of the model.

Haviland designed a prison system that would allow each prisoner to be kept completely isolated from his neighbor. Gone were the rowdy crowds of thieves and prostitutes. Gone, too, they hoped, were outbreaks of typhus—or, as it was known, Jail Fever. Again, architect David Cornelius.

DAVID CORNELIUS:

Keep in mind that in the 1830s germs were basically unknown, people believed that illnesses were spread by bad air, which is not entirely true but not entirely false either. And Haviland had the challenge that if his

architecture didn't work, his users were going to die. It had to work. It was the 1830s equivalent of designing a spaceship, wherein all life support had to be provided successfully.

STEVE BUSCEMI:

John Haviland had built the first truly modern building in the United States. But would it reform criminals? When you're ready to continue your tour, press 4 and the green play button on your Acoustiguide.

4. A PRISONER'S LIFE

STEVE BUSCEMI:

This section of the corridor has been restored to its appearance in 1830.

The most common crimes that might land a person in Eastern State Penitentiary were robbery, burglary, horse theft, forgery, and murder. Typical sentences lasted only about two years, and few were longer than eight. At that time, there was no such thing as a "life sentence." And those condemned to die were sent elsewhere.

Look inside the restored cell and consider the case of John Currin, a 22 year old white gardener, convicted in 1829 of stealing his neighbor's horse. He received a two-year sentence and was fined six cents. He was Eastern State prisoner number six.

Upon his arrival prison staff placed a hood over his head—so he couldn't get a sense of the layout of the penitentiary and so that no other prisoner would recognize him after his release. He would wear that hood whenever he was outside his cell. In the two years he spent here in Cellblock 1, John Currin may never have seen another inmate.

Currin spent twenty-three hours a day inside his cell. He was not allowed to speak to anyone except the chaplain or the guards—who were called "overseers." He slept in his cell. He ate three meals a day in his

cell. And he worked there as well. Prisoners made chairs, some wove fabric, others dyed cloth.

An overseer, named Allen Fisher, taught John Currin to make shoes. You can see shoemaking tools on the workbench in his cell.

John Currin was allowed to keep only one book in his cell: a Bible. He could read. Most prisoners could not. He would receive no letter from home, no newspaper—no visitors.

Currin received two half-hour breaks a day. He was allowed to go through that iron door at the back of his cell, out into his exercise yard to breathe fresh air and feel sun on his skin. Once every two weeks—maybe three—he would be taken from that yard to bathe.

Step away from Currin's cell and continue walking up the corridor. When you are ready to continue your tour, press 5 and the green play button on your Acoustiguide.

5. EFFECTS OF ISOLATION

STEVE BUSCEMI:

We encourage you to step into one of the open cells ahead. They've been modified over the years with concrete floors and modern toilets, but you'll get the idea. The rule at Eastern State was not only isolation, but silence. Twenty inches of masonry separate each cell. And the guards walking these corridors wore wool socks over their-shoes, to muffle their footsteps.

The warden's journal records the punishments given for breaking the rule of silence.

ACTOR:

“January 27th, 1835: I discovered that six prisoners had been talking through holes made along side of their hot water pipes.”

“Aug 11th, 1840: Female convict one-thousand-fifty confined to a dark cell on bread and water for disorderly conduct, shouting, and disturbing the other prisoners.”

“June 27th, 1833: Number one-hundred-two, having on several occasions got the men next to him talking and being detected in the act, last evening I ordered the straight jacket and the gag.”

STEVE BUSCEMI:

This was hard time.

ACTOR:

“In the gloomy solitude of a sullen cell, there is not one redeeming principle. There is but one step between the prisoner and insanity.”

Inmate James Morton

STEVE BUSCEMI:

When you're ready to continue your tour, step out of the cell and press 6 and the green play button on your Acoustiguide.

6. THE RESULTS/ COMPROMISE BEFORE COMPLETION**STEVE BUSCEMI:**

You should be back in the corridor of Cellblock 1. Please continue to walk slowly up the corridor and through the iron gate. Stop before you reach the arched doorway.

Eastern State Penitentiary was now the largest and most ambitious prison in the world. And at least for a short time, the men who ran Eastern thought they were on the right track.

But did inmates repent and become good citizens? What happened to John Currin—the horse thief?

Prison documents show that Currin completed his sentence on November 17th, 1831.

ACTOR:

“The Warden reports that John Currin has left us on the 25th. I am glad to be able to bear testimony of his sobriety and good conduct up to the hour of his leaving us and we have a reasonable hope of his doing well.”

STEVE BUSCEMI:

But without the aid of photography or fingerprinting, prison staff had no clear way of tracking inmates after their release, and the success of Eastern State Penitentiary remained the subject of debate.

Our tour continues inside the round room through the arched doorway. This room was called “Center.” Take a look around.

The architect John Haviland envisioned a prison laid-out like the hub and spokes of a wheel—with seven, one-story cellblocks radiating from this central point. One overseer could spin, from the middle of this room, and see down all the corridors.

You entered through Cellblock 1—the first wing completed. Cellblock 2 housed female prisoners until they left in 1923. Cellblock 3 later became the hospital block—you can see a red cross inside a small circle in the middle of its iron gate. Al Capone had his tonsils removed there in 1929.

John Haviland’s original plan would have held, amazingly, only 256 inmates. The State wanted to increase that number, so with Cellblocks 4, 5, 6, and 7, the architect was forced to build two-story cellblocks.

The model in this room shows the completed penitentiary in 1836. You can get a good sense here of the scale of the building—ten and half acres, surrounded by half-a-mile of wall—and how much of the original design was open space.

That too, would change in time.

We'll continue the tour with a trip to the catwalks above the cellblocks—called “galleries.” When you're ready to continue, go into Cellblock 7—look for the number on the gate—and press 7 and the green play button on your Acoustiguide.

7. REACTIONS

STEVE BUSCEMI:

You should be just inside Cellblock 7. Please go up the stairway on the right. It's steep, so use the handrail, and go slowly. From the gallery, you'll get a magnificent view of the Cellblock, with its 30-foot, barrel vaulted ceilings. I think it's one of the most striking places in the prison.

The system of isolation developed in this building became known as “The Pennsylvania System,” and it met with great enthusiasm, especially in Europe and the European colonies.

A steady stream of government officials traveled to Philadelphia to study this building, and roughly three hundred prisons, on five continents, were modeled after Eastern State Penitentiary. With its enormous scale, remarkable systems of running water and central heat, and its revolutionary system of prisoner isolation, Eastern State became a tourist attraction surpassing Independence Hall.

But not all visitors were so well impressed. English author Charles Dickens wrote that the two sites in the United States he most wanted to see were “The falls at Niagara” and the Eastern State Penitentiary.

ACTOR:

“I hold this slow, and daily, tampering with the mysteries of the brain to be immeasurably worse than any torture of the body.”

Charles Dickens, 1842

STEVE BUSCEMI:

Dickens believed that isolation at Eastern State could drive men insane, and, increasingly, he wasn't alone.

When you're ready to continue, walk down carefully using the other staircase. The tour will continue through the iron gate to your left, at the photograph of prisoners in striped uniforms. Press 8 and the green play button when you get there.

8. THE END OF ISOLATION

STEVE BUSCEMI:

The Pennsylvania System, based on silence and isolation, was competing with another model—The New York System—developed at Sing Sing. It's shown in this photograph. There too, prisoners were forced into silence, but in New York, they worked together in silent, factory-style workshops, and ate together in huge, silent dining halls. Virtually all U.S. prisons built in the 1800s were modeled on the New York System. But in Europe, South America, and Asia, the “Pennsylvania System” dominated.

This system of physical isolation was expensive and cumbersome, and increasingly controversial. Even at Eastern State, where it was created, the Pennsylvania System gradually broke down. By the 1870s, half of all Eastern State's prisoners lived with a cellmate.

Walk back into the Center. Prison officials were determined to get Eastern's inmates back into isolation, and they began to build new cellblocks between the spokes of the original seven.

But the Pennsylvania System was doomed. In 1913, it was finally abandoned, and the corridors around you filled with men and women, finally able to speak freely among themselves.

While you're here in the Center, turn and notice the brass World War I plaque. It thanks the prisoners who served their country by their inmate number only.

The tour continues in Cellblock 4—through the first door to the right of the plaque. Press 9 and the green play button when you get there.

9. 20TH CENTURY

STEVE BUSCEMI:

Step forward into Cellblock 4 and walk slowly, down the corridor. Stop when you reach the photographs on the left. These are the sounds of the 20th century at Eastern State.

MAURICE TALLEY, INMATE:

I think I was there about three weeks and then I went to Four Block, I remember, which was an old block; it was damp and stinky. The whole place seemed cold to me.

STEVE BUSCEMI:

By 1940, Eastern State had become a maximum-security facility, with inmates serving life sentences—and even death sentences. But they lived here, in the century-old shell of this once-revolutionary prison.

Here are the real voices of inmates and guards who remember those days. Some of these men are still incarcerated in the state of Pennsylvania. Their stories last about five minutes. They accompany the photographs along the walls.

ANONYMOUS INMATE 1:

Everybody pretty much was assigned to a job and this place needed a lot of upkeep. There were guys who worked in the electric shop, worked in the plumbing, did the painting, did the plastering. And the place was old then. I mean, tremendously old, so there was a lot of upkeep. There was always something...

ANONYMOUS INMATE 5:

And we had televisions in the block certain times. They made a schedule. And that's what we had to abide by, the schedule. Ed Sullivan and Jackie Gleason, all them old-timers, you know...

JESSE DIGUGLIELMO, INMATE:

The chess playing. We played chess every day. Every day, every minute that we got. And I taught this one guard, Sloan, to play. He loved the game.

We'd sit there for hours on hours, and naturally he did his job. But we were sitting out at the desk, you know, he had to go watch, do his job.

RICHARD GRIFFIN, GUARD:

Some guys were bullies and they thought they could do this and do that. But a few of them got shanked themselves. I mean, you know, this was like a city within a city.

ANONYMOUS INMATE 2:

We had a good basketball team as far as the inmates playing each other. But when we played outside competition, you know, we wasn't competitive. First there was no mixture. There were blacks against

Caucasians. They played that. But then as time went along they got the mix of the team, and they became better teams.

CHARLES GINDLE, INMATE:

This was when I was new in jail asked if I wanted to play football, I said sure. So I go in the cell, I changed, and I come out in the block and I see their jerseys are one color and mine's another, I couldn't figure it out. I was the first white to play in a black team, and I was in their back field more than their quarterback was.

FLOYD WILSON, GUARD:

We had this Puerto Rican guy come in to Eastern State Penitentiary, and I don't think they really knew what to do with him because they had the blacks in certain blocks and the whites in certain blocks. I don't ever remember any blacks being on the same block as whites. Or the whites being on the same blocks as blacks.

JOSEPH BRIERLEY, WARDEN:

Some of the work places in the institution, for instance the kitchen, were predominately black. The print shop and the choice jobs were predominately white. So that I devised a plan of integrating all the work areas first. This young...

ANONYMOUS INMATE 1:

Well, the attitude at Eastern was a much more relaxed attitude. One thing, I think you had relatively older inmates here. They referred to Eastern as the House. The atmosphere between the guards and inmates was a lot more relaxed.

RAY BEDNAREK, GUARD:

We had youngsters here too. When I say youngsters, I'm talking 22, 23 year olds, you know. We had a lot of them.

ANONYMOUS INMATE 3:

This is what I had in my cell. You had a bed, a table, a bench, a wooden-locker box, and you had a set of earphones that you plugged in four channels. This is where you got your radio from, and you had your commode and a spigot.

ANONYMOUS INMATE 1:

It was cold in the winter and hot in the summer. I mean, sometime you'd put water on yourself. There were times that you'd be in a cell it was almost like you gonna suffocate. And there were guys who would flood their cell. Just get buckets of water and throw it in the cell, on the cell floor, since it was all cement anyway.

MATTHEW EPPS, GUARD AND INMATE:

There are conditions and rules and restrictions in life that you can't possibly know about without living them. And no matter how sensitive you think you are to someone else's conditions or someone else's needs, until you actually live it yourself, you can't know it.

RICHARD PARCELL, GUARD:

You know, even when times are going right in the prison, you don't let your guard down. You have to be aware that these people are going to try to get out.

JOSEPH BRIERLEY, WARDEN:

Theron King was a likable loner that impressed me a great deal. I had a number of conversations with him and learned nothing at all about him except that he was a loner. Yeah. And Theron King had stated that we weren't going to hold him. And he got this young prisoner, young lifer, Charles Smith, with him and attempted gathering material for an escape. We caught him and of course had him segregated.

RICHARD PARCELL, GUARD:

Frank Phelan was called the Bird Man. Because of the type of crime he committed, he always fashioned himself as a big shot. In Fifteen Block,

where we kept Frank, he got a hold of two pieces of metal and made daggers out of them and he taped them into his hands so that he wouldn't lose them in a scuffle. Well, we finally subdued him. He was the type of person you couldn't trust, because he would hurt you.

JOHN MCCULLOUGH, INMATE:

If you hit a guard at that time, the rules was that you got beat all the way to isolation. It wasn't a smack. It wasn't a kick. I never saw an inmate go to isolation just with a spank or a light bruise. That was impossible at that time. So the rules...

CLIFFORD REDDEN, INMATE:

At the time I thought this was a real horror, a place of horrors. But, well, Alcatraz, the guards there were so brutal. Not like here. Here you had a lot of good guards. You only had two that I know of that was bad at Eastern State Pen.

JESSE DiguglieLmo, INMATE:

Sloan was my guard on my block. He was like my guardian. He was the type of man; he had a little bit of a heart. Christmas, his wife made him take down all of her Christmas decorations and take them in to us so we would have a Christmas tree.

ANONYMOUS INMATE 1:

There were hard times. There were times I laid myself and cried, you know. I could hear people celebrating New Year's outside my wall, and New Year's Eve, you know, but...

JESSE DIGUGLIELMO, INMATE:

And I said, "Once I get my foot outside this door, this prison door, they ain't never going to see me."

Because the guards used to say, "Well, we'll see you in six months."

I said, "Well, you hang around. You hang around."

We had three doors to go through before you could get out to the street. Once I got out, I just turned around and looked, and I says, "Well pal. That's the end. You ain't never going to see me again."

STEVE BUSCEMI:

Step outside, and press 10 and the green play button on your Acoustiguide to conclude our tour.

10. CONCLUSION

STEVE BUSCEMI:

Turn to your right as you leave Cellblock 4, and walk around to the side of the building. Through the first low doorway you can see into one of the small surviving yards, used by prisoners for exercise in Eastern State's early years.

Contrast that to the modern baseball diamond, behind you.

Standing here, outside the cellblocks, you can get a sense of how much Eastern State changed over time. Look at the central guard tower, with its catwalks and searchlights. It was added to the prison in the 1950s. Behind it is the old stone tower built in the 1820s. And beyond that, the modern skyline of Philadelphia.

Although the architecture of this building was worked and reworked to reflect changing prison policies, it wasn't enough. Even by the 1930s, Eastern State was in trouble. The prison was outmoded; its heating and plumbing systems outdated. The corridors, and these outdoor spaces, were never intended to handle the huge crowds of prisoners that now filled them. The aging prison became increasingly hard to manage, expensive to maintain, and dangerous.

The State began shutting Eastern down in the 1960s, and in 1971, the massive front door was locked...

...this time to keep people *out*.

What would become of this massive complex? The City of Philadelphia planned to reuse the site as a prison, but adapting the building proved too expensive. They decided to resell the property for commercial real estate development; the leading plans throughout the 1980s included condominiums, a shopping mall, or complete demolition.

But on the eve of the decision to sell the property, a loose organization of historic preservationists, criminologists, and community leaders won out. Surely this building, the world's first penitentiary, should be preserved. But for what?

Executive Director Sally Elk:

SALLY ELK:

We are compelled to preserve this amazing place, to stabilize it as a ruin, and yet to restore a few places that will help us to tell its stories.

STEVE BUSCEMI:

Historic Site Program Director Sean Kelley:

SEAN KELLEY, PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

The American prison system has undergone an historic transformation since Eastern State Penitentiary closed in 1970. Many of these changes are illustrated on the Big Graph in the middle of this baseball diamond.

Start by facing the graph on the side that says “U.S. Rate of Incarceration.” From this side, the graph illustrates that, for most of American history, the percentage of Americans in prison or jail was pretty steady.

That began to change around the time that Eastern State Penitentiary closed in 1970. That year is represented by the low red bar. New laws and longer prison sentences throughout the 1970s, 80s, and 90s began to dramatically increase the number of men and women living behind bars.

The tall red bar illustrates the year 2010. By that year, the U.S. prison population had grown more than 600 percent. There are now more than 2 million people in U.S. prisons and jails, costing Americans 80 billion dollars every year.

Crime rates have gone up and down throughout these decades. They are largely independent of the rate of incarceration.

Now walk around to the right, and look at the tall edge of the graph. The top of the red bar still represents the U.S. rate of incarceration. You'll see that it's the highest in the world, by far. Every other nation, with its rate, is listed below.

Our visitors often ask if some countries keep their prison populations low by executing a lot of their prisoners. To answer that question, we have divided this list into nations that practice capital punishment (they're on the left) and those that don't (they're on the right). You can see there really is no pattern.

Look at China and Canada. You can find them both at around 120 per 100,000 citizens. China is on the left: it's one of the world's leaders in executions. Canada, on the right, has abolished the practice.

You can find the closest U.S. allies—countries like Canada, Australia, or the nations of Western Europe—on the right side of the graph. They all have between 75 and 200 prisoners per 100,000 citizens, or, a rate less than one quarter of that in the U.S.

Finally, walk around the far side of the graph. You'll see the U.S. prison population now broken down by race in 1970 and again in 2010. You'll

see that the percentage of white inmates has been shrinking over time, increasingly replaced by Latino and Other racial groups. But perhaps the most striking thing is that the massive growth of the U.S. prison population since 1970 has created more prisoners in all racial groups.

So, why does the U.S. need to imprison so many people? What are the consequences? Has this historic expansion made our communities safer? And can we continue to afford this expense? Of course these questions are complex and opinions differ—just like they did when Eastern State Penitentiary was a model for the world.

You can find our new exhibit, called *Prisons Today*, behind the bright red door on this baseball diamond. It explores many of these questions in greater depth using innovative filmmaking and digital interactives.

STEVE BUSCEMI:

The first part of our tour is over. You now have a chance to explore the rest of this fascinating and haunting property on your own. One way to continue is follow the large prison wall. It will lead you past several cellblocks that you haven't visited yet.

If you'd like to help us preserve this National Historic Landmark, please consider joining our Membership program. Thanks for visiting today.

11. SPORTS

DONALD VAUGHN, GUARD:

I am Donald Vaughn, superintendent of the State Correctional Institution at Graterford, originally a guard at the Eastern State Penitentiary.

After solitary confinement ended at Eastern State Penitentiary, group sports became an important part of prison life. The administration even invited Babe Ruth to visit and play baseball with the inmates in 1928.

Sports also gave the prison staff something to take away from prisoners who didn't follow all the rules.

If you turn towards the center guard tower, you will see a baseball backstop. The two poles on top are football field goal posts. Behind you, on the large prison wall, you may notice a faint white line. That's the foul ball line. And on top of the wall there is a fence. It was designed to keep fly balls from leaving the prison. Sometimes balls were thrown back, and in the 1960s some of the balls had drugs or weapons hidden inside them. Warden Joe Brierley, who was the warden when I started, remembers those days.

JOE BRIERLEY, WARDEN:

Oh, that was a never-ending problem. Balls being thrown over the wall with pills in it. In the beginning, when we first became aware that marijuana was coming in, that was coming in various ways.

DONALD VAUGHN, GUARD:

As you walk around the site today, look for handball courts near the corner guard towers, shuffleboard courts painted on the asphalt, and the long, narrow bocce ball courts at the base of the walls.

12. CELLBLOCK 14

SEAN KELLEY, PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

I'm Sean Kelley, Program Director here at Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site. You're standing inside Cellblock 14. Take a look around. The cellblock was built nearly 100 years after Eastern State opened.

At the time this Cellblock was added, Eastern State Penitentiary had its highest inmate population: roughly 1,700 inmates, including Al Capone, by the way. And it was no longer a model reform prison. This concrete bunker was simply the cheapest and most efficient way for the institution to hold more prisoners. In some ways the optimism of the early years

was gone. The warden's name was Herbert E. Smith. They called him Hard Boiled. He testified that he believed one-third of his men were, quote, "insane, defective or degenerates." Efforts at rehabilitation of inmates were, in his words, "a joke."

To hear about the architecture of this Cellblock, press 13.

13. CELLBLOCK 14 (EXTENSION)

SEAN KELLEY, PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

Cellblock 14 was designed by a Harvard trained architect who was here following a forgery conviction. It was built by inmate labor. It's three stories high, has the same catwalks and the corridor sky lights of the older cellblocks you've seen on the tour, but the system of solitary confinement was already abandoned when they built this cellblock, so you can see that change reflected in the architecture.

The bars overhead are called jumper bars, but they were more likely there to keep inmates from pushing each other from the higher floors. The cells are much smaller, even though they were designed for two inmates each, and of course there were no exercise yards on the back of the cells. But the biggest change is the total disregard for the old surveillance system from the penitentiary center. This cellblock design had to curve to fit in between existing buildings, so not only is this corridor we're standing in invisible from the penitentiary center, you can't even see from one end of the corridor to the other.

14. NOTABLE INMATE: PEP THE DOG

DICK FULMER, CORRECTIONAL COUNSELOR:

My name's Dick Fulmer. I was a Correctional Counselor, and that's the work of a social worker at the institution. I was there from 1966 until 1970.

Perhaps Eastern State's most unusual prisoner was Pep "The Cat-Murdering Dog." Pep was a black Labrador Retriever who was admitted to Eastern State Penitentiary on August 12th, 1924. Prison folklore and records tell us that Pennsylvania Governor Gifford Pinchot sentenced Pep to life without parole for killing his wife's cherished cat. Prison records support the story and his inmate number, C-2559, is skipped in the prison intake log.

The governor, however, tells a different story. While the truth regarding Pep's alleged life of crime may never be known, in photographs Pep, with his head down and ears back, certainly looks a little guilty.

ACTOR:

[*barking*] "Bad Dog!" [*whimper*]

15. NOTABLE INMATE: "SLICK WILLIE" SUTTON

BRETT BERTOLINO, PROGRAM COORDINATOR:

I'm Brett Bertolino, Program Coordinator at Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site.

William Francis Sutton began his career in crime with a burglary at the age of nine. By the 1930s, 40s and 50s, "Slick Willie" had become one of America's most notorious criminals. He was a flamboyant bank robber and escape artist and was often called "The Actor" because he sometimes dressed up as a mailman, messenger, or even a police officer when robbing a bank.

It is often reported that when asked why he robbed banks Sutton replied, "Because that's where the money is." But it is worth noting that he spent his entire life denying ever saying this.

He was arrested for the machine gun robbery of the Corn Exchange Bank in Philadelphia in 1934 and was sentenced to 25 to 50 years at Eastern State Penitentiary. While here, Sutton tried to escape on at least five occasions. His final attempt was on April 3rd, 1945, when he joined eleven other inmates in a tunnel escape from Cellblock 7. He was caught within minutes, only two blocks from the penitentiary. Sutton wasn't surprised by his quick capture. In his official statement after the escape, he told prison officials that when he got out on the street he was all wet and muddy. He looked back, saw his own muddy footprints down the street and knew he was in trouble.

To learn about Willie Sutton's escape from Eastern State Penitentiary, press 23 and the green play button now.

16. NOTABLE INMATE: CLARENCE KLINEDINST

ELIZABETH WILLIAMSON, TOUR GUIDE:

I'm Elizabeth Williamson, a Tour Guide here at Eastern State.

In the late 1930s, a quiet inmate worked steadily repairing the stone walls of this prison. His name was Clarence Klinedinst, and he was serving a five and a half to 11 year sentence for burglary, larceny and forgery, plus the remainder of a previous sentence for which he had been paroled. Everybody called him Kliney.

His initials, CK, are carved into the walls of this courtyard. You can see them on the wall to the right of this sign, the wall with two ground level windows. They're up high just below the roof. To the right of the initials you can also see the year 1938, and to the right of that a smiley face.

Sometime in the mid-1940s Kliney used his reputation as a good worker to get himself transferred to Cellblock 7, Cell 68. Once there, he used his mason's tools and knowledge of stonework to begin digging a tunnel.

SEAN KELLEY, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS:

You can see the remains of the 1945 Tunnel Escape in Cellblock 7 and learn more about it by pressing 23 and the green play button now.

17. NOTABLE INMATE: ELMO SMITH

SEAN KELLEY, PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

I'm Sean Kelley. I'm the Program Director here at Eastern State Penitentiary.

Eastern State Penitentiary housed some of Pennsylvania's most violent offenders. One of the most notorious prisoners ever to be held here at Eastern State was a man named Elmo Smith. He was convicted of raping, murdering and mutilating a young school girl named Mary Ann Teresa Mitchell. He was housed here in 15 Block. Smith was convicted to be executed in Pennsylvania's death chamber. In upholding that conviction, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court called Smith, quote, "a deadly killer with a lust for rape and the brutal instincts and actions of a cave man."

On April 2nd, 1962 Elmo Smith was the 350th person to be executed in the electric chair in Pennsylvania. It was the last time the electric chair was used in this state. Today there are more than two hundred inmates on Pennsylvania's death row, and the state executes inmates using lethal injection.

18. SYNAGOGUE

LAURA MASS:

Welcome to the Alfred W. Fleisher Memorial Synagogue at Eastern State Penitentiary. I'm, Laura Mass. In 2004, I wrote my master's thesis on the history of this synagogue. At that point, this space was in a state of ruin. I later worked on the archaeology and conservation teams that have returned the synagogue to its appearance today. I'll show you around the

space a bit, but please don't touch anything: everything in here is surprisingly fragile.

Okay. Start by facing the raised platform at the far side of the room. The platform is called a *bimah*. The wooden structure on top is called the *Torah Ark*. These are typical features of a synagogue. The ark is usually on the east wall, facing Jerusalem, as it is here. It houses the Torah, the sacred scroll that is used in Jewish worship. This ark was built around 1924, when this room was first converted into a synagogue. Our conservation team has done some careful work on its original columns and cabinetry, beginning by disassembling it into 60 pieces and removing it to a workshop off site. All of the pieces were carefully refinished and reassembled.

Above the ark is the eternal light. It's meant to symbolize God's eternal presence and therefore it is never turned off. It hangs in front of a tablet of the Ten Commandments. The tablet and the eternal light that you see today are reproductions. We used historic photographs to painstakingly recreate the originals.

The light fixtures on either side of the ark are also exact replications of what was here when the prison closed. They spell out the word *shalom*, meaning "peace" in Hebrew. The room is lined with benches, also built around 1924. We have restored these, fabricating some new legs, and have replaced some sections altogether. We've also done extensive conservation of the historic plywood that lines the room and forms the wall at the back. For this work, we used a vacuum press to reintroduce adhesive to the deteriorated layers of plywood.

Although this synagogue interior was likely designed by a well-known 1920s architectural firm, we believe that most of the wood elements were actually built by inmates here at Eastern State. The bench legs, for instance, are lovingly crafted by hand with noticeable variation among them. A professional woodshop would have made their cuts more uniform.

The tall desk in the middle of the room is called the reader's table. It's another typical feature of a synagogue. The Torah scroll is removed from the ark and placed on the reader's table during worship.

The floor in this room is a vinyl tile. It was an inexpensive floor when it was put in, but many of the tiles were damaged beyond repair and are no longer available. We had to custom screen-print tiles to match the originals.

In the back of the synagogue, there is a little room. Feel free to look in, but please don't open the door. We purposely left this room in a deteriorated state. You can see the exposed stone walls of the space before it was a synagogue and there is evidence of an earlier blue plaster ceiling in the back right corner. We believe this room was used for food preparation: notice the sink and shelves. The little Dutch door even looks like it was designed to act as a serving counter. It was probably associated with the preparation of meals and ritual hand washing. Although the inmates here didn't get kosher food every day, we know the volunteers from outside often provided kosher meals for special occasions, such as Passover.

So, maybe you're thinking that the synagogue doesn't look like a room designed in 1924. We know that's the date the wood elements were installed by reading the Eastern State Annual Reports and careful investigation of the construction. But we also know from dated photographs that the lighting fixtures, the ornate plaster ceiling, the tile floor, and the paint colors that were carefully matched through paint analysis, were all added in 1960. We decided to return the room to the 1960s appearance so we wouldn't have to remove anything that could be saved. One of the most moving elements in this synagogue was the original door that identified this room as a place of Jewish worship. The door is fragile and would have been damaged if we had put it back into everyday use. But you can see it in the William Portner Exhibit of Jewish

Life at Eastern State Penitentiary, which is next door. Thank you for visiting today.

19. RELIGION IN THE 20th CENTURY

DONALD VAUGHN:

My name is Donald Vaughan; I am the superintendent of the State Correctional Institution at Graterford, and I started my career at Eastern State Penitentiary in 1966.

In the early years, the system of isolation at Eastern State Penitentiary was supposed to be a kind of a religious experience in itself. When they gave up that isolation they built group meeting-places, including a chapel for Christian inmates in 1907 and a synagogue in 1927. If you look through the arched doorway, you can see murals painted onto the walls. The paintings have Catholic themes and were painted by an inmate who had experienced a religious conversion while inside prison. He signed his paintings 'Paul Martin', the names of his two favorite saints.

Many inmates here, as in every prison, turn to religion to provide structure and meaning in their lives.

MAURICE TALLEY, INMATE:

I think that there were some sincere followers of Christianity and Judaism and probably Islam and it also brought about some camaraderie between the groups, and that was respect. [. . .] A couple of the guys read the Bible to study, and they were teaching themselves to read. I found that out. One fellow I remember in particular had been there, he couldn't read or write but he used to keep the Bible with him all the time, and when he finally admitted it, we started to help him to read and that's what he wanted to read was the Bible.

20. AL CAPONE'S CELL (ARCHAEOLOGY)

LATEEF OAKMAN, TOUR GUIDE:

I'm Lateef Okaman, a tour guide here at Eastern State Penitentiary.

MATT MURPHY, TOUR PROGRAMS SUPERVISOR:

And I'm Matt Murphy, Tour Programs Supervisor at Eastern State Penitentiary.

LATEEF OAKMAN, TOUR GUIDE:

In 1929, Al Capone lived in this little area of Eastern State. Back then, they called it Park Avenue.

MATT MURPHY, TOUR PROGRAMS SUPERVISOR:

Take a look around. Notice how the people held in these cells were on the wrong side of the gates that are supposed to separate the officers from the prisoners. Oral tradition tells us that this empty cell was Al Capone's actual cell, but we can't be sure. We've been studying this cell, carefully removing the upper layers of plaster to learn what it looked like over time.

LATEEF OAKMAN, TOUR GUIDE:

Liz Trumbull is our Manager of Historic Preservation.

LIZ TRUMBULL, MANAGER, HISTORIC PRESERVATION:

When we removed this top layer of plaster, we exposed over 20 layers of decorative and colorful paint on the surface below, and as you look into the cell, you can see three things that caught our eye. First, on either of the side walls, there's a white stripe at the mid-height of the wall. Above that white stripe is some blue paint that starts dark at the mid-height of the wall and gets lighter as it moves up the wall. Third, when you look at the rear wall, to the left of the skylight near the top, you'll see a vertical stripe of brown paint. This brown stripe could be the last remaining trace of a mural painted on this wall—perhaps even the one that you can see in the photo on the sign.

LATEEF OAKMAN, TOUR GUIDE:

To the left of the empty cell, you can see documents about Al Capone's 1929 arrest in Philadelphia. Press 39 and the green play button to hear more about these documents and Capone's time here at Eastern State Penitentiary.

21. AL CAPONE'S RELEASE**ELIZABETH WILLIAMSON, TOUR GUIDE:**

Hi, I'm Elizabeth Williamson, and I'm a Tour Guide here at Eastern State.

Look out across the courtyard to the street. That doorway is the only opening in Eastern State's half-mile long wall. With two months knocked off his sentence for good behavior, Al Capone was scheduled for release on March 17th, 1930, and it was through that door that Al Capone would walk. But the single entrance posed a security problem.

Newspapers reported that on the day of Capone's release, 500 people lined the streets. They were to be disappointed. Warden Herbert Smith had transferred Capone in secret to the State Correctional Institution at Graterford, and he was released on schedule and without incident from there. In 1931, Al Capone pled guilty to tax evasion and prohibition charges and spent the next seven and a half years at the Federal Penitentiary in Atlanta and at Alcatraz.

22. DEATH ROW (CELLBLOCK 15)**SEAN KELLEY, PROGRAM DIRECTOR:**

I'm Sean Kelley. I'm the Program Director here at Eastern State Penitentiary.

This is Cellblock 15. It was completed on April 27th, 1959. These were the only truly modern cells at Eastern State, and they held some of Pennsylvania's most violent offenders. This was a prison within the prison.

Walk down the left hand side of the room close to the windows. On your right, you'll see an electric control panel. A guard would use these buttons to open and close the cells. Now stand looking directly down the block. There used to be a row of bars that ran along the center of the hallway forming two corridors. Notice the line on the ceiling and the row of stubs on the floor. The corridor closest to the windows was called the safety corridor, used by the guards, and the corridor near the cells was used by the inmates. The safety corridor minimized contact between the officers and the inmates. But Warden Joe Brierley thought the safety corridor made the staff look weak.

JOE BRIERLEY, WARDEN:

I never walked in the safety corridor. I always walked in the inmates' corridor. My ego. Because I was tough.

SEAN KELLEY, PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

Most inmates were here for severe disciplinary punishment. This was hard time.

JOHN MCCULLOUGH, INMATE:

You had a small window across from your cell that let in a little light. It was dim most of the time. You weren't allowed any privilege too: no magazines, no books, no visitation, and you were only given one meal a day.

SEAN KELLEY, PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

Merv Richards, the penitentiary dentist, recalls being called to Cellblock 15.

MERV RICHARDS, DENTIST:

And there was a young man there from Harrisburg who was scheduled to die for blowing away a guard in a bank robbery in Harrisburg. The man, he was in his 20s, and the young man was considered so dangerous that they wouldn't bring him down to the dental office and they wouldn't allow me to go into his cell. And the deal was I had to treat this young man. The guard came up with a rifle, he stood on the outer wall so he was not in contact in any way. He told the inmate to put his head up as close to the bars as he could, to open his mouth and that if he so much as breathed the wrong way he was, quote, "going to blow his head onto the other wall."

SEAN KELLEY, PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

Fifteen is often called death row because inmates awaiting execution were housed either here or on One Block. There were never any executions at Eastern State, however, and as the date of their executions approached, the inmates were transferred to the State Correctional Institution at Rockview. There the sentences were carried out.

Now step outside and look at the cellblock from the outside. It's a reminder of the reality of executions in American prisons. While much of Eastern State Penitentiary may look like a romantic ruin from the 19th century, death row looks curiously, starkly modern.

23. ESCAPE! 1945 TUNNEL ESCAPE

BRETT BERTOLINO, ASSISTANT PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

I'm Brett Bertolino, Assistant Program Director at Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site.

In 1945 Eastern State's most famous escape took place from this cellblock. Inmate Clarence Klinedinst lived in the last cell on the left, number 68. Step inside.

Kliney, as he was known, was a good worker and trusted by the administration. He had the job of fixing the plaster and stone walls around the prison. Klinedinst asked the warden if he could re-plaster his own cell. The warden agreed. While working in the cell, Klinedinst began digging a tunnel in the wall, concealing the hole behind the wooden panel.

Archeologists excavated the tunnel's entrance in 2005...look how narrow the entrance was!

After about a year of digging, the tunnel was nearly complete. It extended 15 feet down, 97 feet out to Fairmount Avenue, and 15 feet up. It was equipped with lights, and reinforced with wood bracing. Step out into the hallway, turn left, and step outside.

The archeologists used ground-penetrating radar to identify the path of the escape tunnel. Today, a painted line traces the path of the tunnel. Imagine when, on April 3rd, 1945, Kliney and his cellmate, William Russell, broke through ground in front of Eastern State. Ten inmates joined the escape. One of them was the flamboyant bank robber and escape artist, Willie Sutton. Sutton was caught within minutes, only two blocks from the penitentiary. And he later claimed public credit for the tunnel's design and construction.

Klinedinst was captured about two hours later, and an additional three to six years was added onto his sentence.

James Grace surprised the guards when he returned to the penitentiary early on the morning of April 11th. He rang the doorbell and asked to be let back in. He was hungry. All of the inmates were eventually recaptured. The staff filled in the tunnel with ash from the prison incinerator.

A short video explaining the archeology of this famous tunnel can be seen inside, in one of the open cells on your right.

SEAN KELLEY, PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

You can learn more about “Slick Willie” Sutton by pressing 15 and the green play button now; or more about Clarence Klinedinst by pressing 16 and the green play button now.

24. ESCAPE! 1923 LEO CALLAHAN ESCAPE**ELIZABETH WILLIAMSON, TOUR GUIDE:**

I'm Elizabeth Williamson, a Tour Guide here at Eastern State.

Take a look at that wall. Imagine you're an inmate. How would you get over it? Notice that it's curved at the corner to make it harder to climb. In July 1923, six inmates did get over it. One of the prisoners, George Brown, was an expert cabinet maker. He had built a ladder in the prison wood shop in sections and put it inside what appeared to be an ordinary inmate foot locker.

Five of the inmates were eventually caught: one of them in Honolulu, Hawaii. But Leo Callahan, a 22 year old prisoner who had been serving 18 years for robbery, larceny, and assault and battery with intent to kill, was never recaptured. That's very unusual. Of the 100 inmates, roughly, who escaped during Eastern State's 142 years, Leo Callahan was the only one able to avoid recapture. So take a look at his photograph. Have you seen this man?

25. THE HOLE (“KLONDIKE”)**DICK FULMER, CORRECTIONAL COUNSELOR:**

My name's Dick Fulmer. I was a Correctional Counselor, also known as a social worker, at Eastern State Penitentiary from 1966 until 1970.

Take a look down the steps to the right of the doorway. These were punishment cells. Down the stairs were four small cells with low ceilings and no plumbing. Isolation was always used at Eastern State Penitentiary, but its use changed drastically over time. In the 20th century, isolation at Eastern State was used as punishment. Prior to that time, it was the basic correctional philosophy. At every prison, punishment cells are called, in the inmate slang, "the hole." Here at Eastern, this place was also called Klondike.

ANONYMOUS INMATE 3:

They had a couple of cells down there, which was very bad. There was no mattress in there. No blanket. Just a steel bed. Very small cell. You did anywhere from 10 to 30 days in there, sometimes just bread and water, or sometimes with diminishing meals. Like, maybe one meal a day.

DICK FULMER, CORRECTIONAL COUNSELOR:

Let me tell you, the effect of prolonged time in isolation can be traumatic.

JESSE DIGUGLIELMO, INMATE:

I had a friend of mine, in fact this kid here Jimmy Devlin. This kid here, he was in the hole for 30 days, and when he came out he was almost blind.

DICK FULMER, CORRECTIONAL COUNSELOR:

My first assignment as a social worker was to the maximum security block. It held punishment cells, and what I was told quite specifically by the people who assigned me there was, "You can't screw these guys up very much, and it's a good place to learn." That's my direct experience with "the hole" that we're talking about.

SEAN KELLEY, DIRECTOR OF INTERPRETATION:

If you'd like to learn more about how Solitary Confinement is used in prisons today, press 35 and the play button now.

26. GHOSTS: “IS EASTERN STATE HAUNTED?”

STEVE BUSCEMI:

Hi I'm actor Steve Buscemi.

Is this place haunted? Who knows? Some visitors have said that they “sensed something” while visiting Eastern State.

CHARLES ADAMS, AUTHOR:

My name is Charles Adams. I wrote a book, *Philadelphia Ghost Stories*.

STEVE BUSCEMI:

Mr. Adams is not related to the famous cartoonist who created the Addams Family, but they share an affection for the macabre.

CHARLES ADAMS, AUTHOR:

I had heard the standard ghost stories, about shadowy figures darting from cell to cell and all the "whooo" stories. Nothing profound until I met a locksmith. He was removing about a 142 year old lock from the door of an abandoned cell, and he encountered what he described as an incredible and powerful energy.

This person was genuinely frightened by what had happened to him. He could not understand it, and therefore, I believe that what he told me was 100 percent the truth.

STEVE BUSCEMI:

What we know is that enormous suffering occurred behind these walls for over 140 years. Men and women died here. And the building itself is certainly 'haunting' if not haunted.

CHARLES ADAMS, AUTHOR:

In my opinion, there's not one ghost, not three ghosts, it's a stew of souls, restless spirits that swirl for eternity here at Eastern State Penitentiary.

STEVE BUSCEMI:

Maybe you don't believe in ghosts. But take a look around. If ghosts exist anywhere, they must be here.

27. FILMED AT EASTERN STATE**STEVE BUSCEMI:**

Hi. I'm actor Steve Buscemi.

Since its closing in 1971, Eastern State has become a highly sought out location for photographs, music videos, album covers and even feature films. You may be surprised at some of the places the penitentiary has turned up. Much of the 1997 movie *12 Monkeys*, starring Brad Pitt and Bruce Willis, was shot in the space you're standing in right now.

In the 1999 movie *Return to Paradise*, Eastern State was transported to the coast of Malaysia. This movie was shot in the dead of winter, mostly in Cellblock 12. In order to create the illusion of life in the tropics, the actors were sprayed down with water to make them look sweaty, and they put ice cubes in their mouths so their breath wouldn't show.

In 1985, Tina Turner shot the music video here for *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome*, and the cover for Sting's album *All This Time* was photographed here in 2001.

I first heard about Eastern State Penitentiary when I was looking for a prison location for a film I was about to begin shooting. I was just really amazed that a structure like this existed. From above in the center guard tower, you could just see that the architecture of this place was really unique and creepy. Unfortunately we couldn't shoot here because it was

an historical landmark. We wouldn't have been allowed to alter anything about the prison. But I still remember just being incredibly inspired when I first entered Eastern State Penitentiary.

28. “WHY DON’T YOU FIX THIS PLACE UP?”

SALLY ELK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Hello, my name is Sally Elk. I'm the Executive Director.

When our tour program began in 1994, the buildings were in a terrible state of deterioration. So much so that we've called the penitentiary a semi-ruin. Remember, the prison closed in 1971, then it stood for over 20 years with absolutely no maintenance. People always ask if we plan to restore the whole prison. We do not. For one thing, it would cost way too much. More importantly, we and our visitors like the decay.

Instead, our goal is a stabilized ruin: to stop the deterioration and to make the tour route safe for our visitors. We also plan to restore some places; places that help you better understand how the building was designed and how it changed over time. If you look up, you'll see a new plaster ceiling and a new skylight. We chose to restore this link because it's one of the most interesting visual places with its three barrel vaulted ceilings converging at the center. It was photographed as early as 1925. We couldn't imagine it without plaster.

Now walk into the link of Cellblock 2. Notice that we've replaced the damaged wooden roofing structure and left it exposed. Rather than replastering the ceiling and walls, we've worked to conserve and expose the original building materials to illustrate to you how the building was constructed over time. As an interesting example, look at the small window near the iron gate at the beginning of Cellblock 2. The loss of plaster around the window has revealed its original 1829 construction.

29. BARBERSHOP

IRWIN SCHMUCKLER, TEACHER:

My name is Irwin Schmuckler, and during the summer of 1966, needing a job, I was assigned to the barbershop here at Eastern State Penitentiary.

In the early days, inmates here were allowed to cut and shave as they chose. This inmate freedom was highly unusual and condemned by other prison systems. But in the 20th century, inmates were required to have haircuts.

RICHARD GRIFFIN, GUARD:

As soon as you get in there, within the first four hours, you hit that barbershop. And somebody flipped a coin and you were bald by the time it hit the ground.

IRWIN SCHMUCKLER, TEACHER:

In almost every cellblock at Eastern State, one cell was converted into an inmate barbershop. The cells were equipped with fluorescent lights, outlets, mirrors, and barber chairs. Inmates were trained to be barbers, and issued straight razors for shaving their “customers.” These razors were signed out by the guard on duty. In fact, that was my job.

Through the windows directly in front of you, you will see the officers’ barbershop. Some guards even brought their family and friends here for an inexpensive haircut.

The officers and their inmate barbers got along better than you might think.

RICHARD GRIFFIN, GUARD:

Well they had Midge the barber when I got there. And he was in charge of cuttin' all of the officers’ hair. I’d only been here three or four days and I was in dire need of a haircut and a shave. So I went in and sat in the chair and he came in and he had a real odd laugh [*laughs*], like that.

So he laid me back in the chair and he was gonna shave me first. And he took the non sharp edge of the straight razor and ran it across my throat. I said, “Now, if you’re done playing your games, lets get it on.” And with that, he gave me a hair cut and a shave and it cost like 40 cents for both. And that was my experience with Midge. He was a damn good barber.

30. GREENHOUSE

DONALD VAUGHN, GUARD:

My name is Donald Vaughn. I am the superintendent of the State Correctional Institution at Graterford.

There seems to have always been a greenhouse within the prison walls. This one was built around 1936. The greenhouse was never intended to produce food for prisoners. It was used to train inmates in a job skill. And since some inmates liked to work there, we used it to reward good behavior.

Sometimes flowers from the greenhouse were sold to the public and also to staff. I would order them for my mom.

31. SEXUALITY (20TH CENTURY)

DICK FULMER, CORRECTIONAL COUNSELOR:

My name is Dick Fulmer. I was a correctional counselor, also known as social worker, at Eastern State Penitentiary from 1966 until 1970.

As solitary confinement began to break down at Eastern State Penitentiary and inmates began sharing cells, sex among inmates began to become an increasingly common problem.

ANONYMOUS INMATE 1:

Not that there wasn't a lot of homosexual activity. But, either that was a silent coercion or a financial thing, you know, people paid cigarettes, what have you. It wasn't overt. There were a few stabbings, you know, because of homosexual affairs with people quote "falling in love," unquote.

DICK FULMER:

Rape also became an increasing problem, and the young were especially vulnerable.

FINN HORNUM, CONSULTANT:

They would have showers down at the end of the cellblock and by the time the steam got going, you couldn't see a damn thing, there was no way the guards could know what went on. They knew it happened. It was something that you tried to live with.

DICK FULMER, CORRECTIONAL COUNSELOR:

For me, working there, I would be confronted with this issue in several different ways. The most common was if they weren't willing to talk about how they were going to handle this, it was my job to bring it up to them. You have ten years to serve in this institution or some correctional institution. How do you plan to handle your sex drives? How do you plan to handle people who are going to proposition, people who are going to threaten? You need to think about this in terms of you adapting and surviving this institutional experience. It's part of your environment. You can't just ignore it.

SEAN KELLEY, DIRECTOR OF INTERPRETATION:

You can learn about issues of sexuality at Eastern State Penitentiary in the 19th century by pressing 32 and the green play button now.

32. SEXUALITY (19TH CENTURY)

NORMAN JOHNSTON, SOCIOLOGIST:

My name is Norman Johnston. I'm a professor emeritus at Arcadia University. I've been interested in the prison and writing about it since the early 1950s.

Sex in prison has always existed. At Eastern, as each inmate was, for the most part, confined to a cell by themselves the only sex available was masturbation. Masturbation was a serious concern among prison officials and most prison physicians in the 19th century. Usually referred to as "the solitary vice" or "self abuse." The consequences of masturbation were thought to be impotence, tuberculosis, gangrene, insanity, and sometimes even death.

For example, in the 1838 Annual Report 18 cases of insanity were listed. Of these, two-thirds were thought to be due to excessive masturbation. This silliness about masturbation lasted a long time.

In every prison today, as in the past, where there were females, whether they were inmates or they were staff, there has been a problem of surreptitious contacts of a heterosexual nature. In 1922 an inmate Ethel Johnson swore on a statement that she was raped by an officer. Her baby was stillborn inside the prison. The next year, a prison exclusively for female prisoners was opened in Muncy in the western part of the state, and all of the female prisoners from Eastern State were moved there, never to be placed again in this penitentiary.

SEAN KELLEY, DIRECTOR OF INTERPRETATION:

You can learn about 20th century issues of sexuality by pressing 31 and the green play button now.

33. KITCHENS

DONALD VAUGHN, GUARD:

I am Donald Vaughn, Superintendent of the State Correctional Institution at Graterford, the prison that replaced Eastern State.

The free-standing building directly in front of you was the kitchen. It was built in 1903. What looks like a porch is a loading dock, and the big hole in front is the old truck scale. There is still some debate over the food at Eastern. Some inmates thought it was pretty good.

COCHISE, INMATE:

They had good food. I mean, good food. Wasn't nothing bad there 'cause I prepared it, and a lot of other guys that worked in the kitchen helped prepare it. We had, we were getting like half a chicken. We didn't get no chicken leg or nothing. You got steak and you got hamburger.

DONALD VAUGHN, GUARD:

And some inmates had a very different opinion.

JESSE DIGUGLIELMO, INMATE:

You didn't have no chef. You had a guy that came in off the street. They taught him how to cook, and he made bean soup. He made bean soup. And you ate it.

DONALD VAUGHN, GUARD:

I thought the food at Eastern was pretty good.

SEAN KELLEY, DIRECTOR OF INTERPRETATION:

If you'd like to learn more about the types of food served in American prisons today, and about the controversial punishment food called Nutraloaf, press 34 and the play button now.

34. PRISON FOOD TODAY

SEAN KELLEY, DIRECTOR OF INTERPRETATION:

Hi, I'm Sean Kelley. I'm the Director of Interpretation here at Eastern State Penitentiary.

The days of half-chicken prison meals prepared by a devoted kitchen staff, as Richard "Cochise" Bell remembers here at Eastern State in the 1960s, are long gone.

Although the cost of American prisons has skyrocketed in recent decades—up to \$80 billion in 2010—the expense is not going to gourmet meals. Today the average cost of feeding an inmate in the U.S. is about \$4 a day, or \$1.25 per meal. The result is highly-processed, mass produced foods that generally arrive at the facilities frozen or canned. There are very few fresh fruits or vegetables in today's prisons. Kitchen staff—usually inmates—simply heat the food and measure portions out onto plastic trays.

I've eaten a lot of these meals over the years while visiting prisons. I can say from experience that inmates today are served meals that meet basic nutritional needs, but the food looks, and tastes, pretty awful.

And some prison food is intentionally bad. "Nutraloaf" is today's version of the old "bread and water" punishment diets, served to inmates who violate prison rules. Nutraloaf recipes vary from state to state, but all of them are meant to be unpleasant. The Illinois recipe, for instance, features a combination of ground beef, applesauce, tomato paste, and garlic powder. It's baked into a single loaf, sliced, and served at every meal during the length of punishment. You can find many states' neutraloaf recipes online, if you're curious.

Courts have generally upheld the rights of prisons to punish inmates with Nutraloaf, but the process remains controversial.

35. SOLITARY CONFINEMENT TODAY

SEAN KELLEY, DIRECTOR OF INTERPRETATION:

Hi, I'm Sean Kelley. I'm the Director of Interpretation here at Eastern State Penitentiary.

Prison administrators in the 1800s learned, both here and at other prisons, that solitary confinement is a very effective punishment. But they had grave concerns too. A growing body of research was concluding that prolonged solitary confinement is destructive: it often leads to emotional and psychological breakdown. As a result, by the 20th century most prison systems put strict limitations on their use of solitary confinement.

But in the decades since Eastern State Penitentiary closed in 1970, the use of solitary confinement in American prisons has grown substantially. Today, no other nation uses solitary confinement to the extent that we do here in the United States. Today about 80,000 American inmates live in solitary confinement, locked alone in a cell for 22 to 24 hours a day.

Many are sent to the "hole," as it's called, for just a few days. But some inmates in Federal prisons, or in states such as California or Louisiana, live year after year with virtually no human contact. These inmates often complete their sentences under these conditions, and they're released from profound solitary confinement directly onto the streets.

Supporters say that prolonged solitary confinement is necessary for punishing those who break prison rules, and for isolating truly violent inmates within the prison population. They say it helps keep prisons safe for staff and inmates alike.

Opponents often say it's the mentally ill who are isolated, and they are the least equipped to handle this punishment. Prolonged solitary confinement, they say, is a violation of the 8th Amendment, protecting against cruel and unusual punishment.

36. RACE IN U.S. PRISONS

KEITH REEVES, POLITICAL SCIENTIST:

The U.S prison system clearly affects some groups more than others.

ANNIE ANDERSON, RESEARCHER:

2.2 million Americans are now held in jail or prison, but that population is almost 60% Black or Latino. The U. S. population is just 30% Black or Latino.

KEITH REEVES, POLITICAL SCIENTIST:

I'm Keith Reeves, a Political Scientist at Swarthmore College.

ANNIE ANDERSON, RESEARCHER:

And I'm Annie Anderson, researcher here at Eastern State Penitentiary.

KEITH REEVES, POLITICAL SCIENTIST:

This troubling pattern—in which racial minorities are imprisoned at rates higher than the rest of the nation—dates back to the earliest years of American history.

ANNIE ANDERSON, RESEARCHER:

For instance: throughout the 142 years that prisoners were held here, Black inmates were always over-represented relative to their numbers outside these walls. Eastern State's first inmate, Charles Williams, was Black. He was led into this building in October of 1829, convicted of stealing a watch and a gold key.

KEITH REEVES, POLITICAL SCIENTIST:

In the early years, many of these prisoners were recently enslaved, and Black women arrived in especially high numbers.

An Englishman named Edward Abdy, who visited Eastern State in the 1830s, wrote that a lack of work and a biased legal system drove many Black Americans into this prison and the other American prisons of his day.

The crisis of race and incarceration has only grown worse since Eastern State closed. The massive growth of the U.S. prison population since 1970 has created more prisoners of all racial groups, but Black and Latino communities have been the most heavily impacted.

ANNIE ANDERSON, RESEARCHER:

In fact, there are more Black prisoners today than any other racial or ethnic group, although the general U.S. population is only 13% Black.

Take a look at the graph on the right of this sign. You'll see that for every 100,000 White men in America, 678 are incarcerated. But for every 100,000 Black men, more than 4,000 are incarcerated. That's a rate six times higher. Why is this still happening?

KEITH REEVES, POLITICAL SCIENTIST:

In my nearly 11 years studying this topic and working with incarcerated men, I've come to believe that race and the arrest of poor people residing in poor neighborhoods is part of the story.

So here's a question: do you think that how you look or where you grew up has impacted your experiences with the criminal justice system?

ANNIE ANDERSON, RESEARCHER:

And another question: why do you think the connections between race, poverty and incarceration remain so strong, nearly 200 years after these patterns were seen among Eastern State's first inmates?

KEITH REEVES, POLITICAL SCIENTIST:

The history of race at Eastern State was largely recorded in terms of "Black" and "White," but U.S. prisons today reflect the growing diversity of our nation. To see more on how the racial make-up of the U.S. prison system has changed over time, please visit The Big Graph on the baseball diamond.

37. EASTERN STATE IN RUIN

SALLY ELK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

My name is Sally Elk; I'm the Executive Director; I've been involved with Eastern State since 1985.

When I first climbed to the top of the tower and looked out over the site, it was hard to see the actual prison plan because of the vegetation that was here. The best way to describe the sight was that it was an urban forest and it was being consumed by nature. There were mulberry bushes, birds flying around all over the place, a colony of abandoned cats; it was easy to see that if nothing was done with the site, the roofs would continue to fail; you could see that skylights had been broken all over the place and water was coming in, paint was peeling, the plaster was falling; it was clear that effort had to be made to stabilize the structures.

In the early days I came in with the man that was in charge of city maintenances. His name was John Rubbo. We came up in his city station wagon and, as we got to the prison and were ready to get out, he pulled out a gun and said that he needed to make sure that I was going to be protected as we came into the prison because, during its period of abandonment, people were able to get in over the back wall and strip out the things that were important, like copper piping and anything that could be sold on the market. So, to this day, I'm not sure whether he was trying to scare me to take me in there or he was actually trying to protect me from somebody in there stealing copper pipes.

When it came time to sort of reclaim the abandoned period the first thing we needed to do was clear the vegetation because most of the trees had rooted themselves near the perimeter wall or right at the foundations of the building, so they were threatening the long-term viability of the prison. It was a major job because, you know, this is almost 11 acres of property. The trees would just – it was like a canopy, you were walking through a tunnel of trees. It was a very romantic site and I can remember, even when the trees were coming out, feeling that there was

some sort of loss; and, as we've reclaimed a lot of the property, even today, there's a little bit of loss of that abandonment, although it's clear we that need to do that in order to protect the site.

38. HOSPITAL

EVA GUTWEIN, TOUR GUIDE:

Hi, I'm Eastern State Tour Guide Eva Gutwein.

You're looking down the corridor of Cellblock 3, Eastern State Penitentiary's hospital block. Notice the Red Cross in the gate. The hospital had operating rooms, recovery rooms, X-ray machines, and a full pharmacy. Many of the inmates and staff members have returned to Eastern State to share their memories of the 1950s and '60s in this bustling hospital. As you hear their stories, feel free to explore the photographs and inmate-written articles about the hospital behind you.

ANTHONY ANDREWS, PSYCHOLOGIST:

They would march through the center of the prison in file, and sometimes an inmate would be shivved that quickly, and they'd rush them off to the hospital. You'd see the blood and...mostly fights. Mostly fights.

DICK FULMER, CORRECTIONAL COUNSELOR:

You name a medical procedure, from heart operation to plastic surgery to remove tattoos and scars: that was all done in our prison hospital.

CHARLES GINDLE, INMATE:

I started off as the doctors' clerk, then I went to the laboratory, and then I went in the operating room. And then I worked all three. Other inmates taught me, and other inmates had taught them. And the doctors overlooked, too.

JOAN DIBENEDETTO, CLERK:

I do remember I had a fall in my office, and my ankle swelled up, and they decided they wanted to take me into the hospital to X-ray me; and they brought me in a wheelchair down to the gate, and then all the prisoners met us in the inner gate and wanted to wheel me into the hospital, and they were all fighting over trying to wheel me into this hospital in here! That was eerie, too [*laughs*]!

FINN HORNUM, CONSULTANT:

The medical program at Eastern was known all over the state, and probably even out of state as well, because the big advantage that this institution had was that it was right smack in the middle of the Philadelphia area, where we're full of hospitals. But they would have to get specialists in. They got very little money for this, from the state, but they were usually willing to come in and work here because they saw things they never saw before, because this was a population that carried a lot of kind of strange illnesses with them.

CLIFFORD REDDEN, INMATE:

I remember when I got in a fight with a guy up here. He had a knife; I had a knife. He had cut me through my left eye here, and I had cut him through the ribs. They took him to the hospital, and he was getting blood transfusions.

One of the cons – he was named Pepe – said, “Want me to stitch it up?”

Because I asked him, “What’s the delay? I want to get this eye fixed.” So I said, “Yeah.”

So he stitched it up. But he used a long thread, and I could just feel him pulling it through, over long!

When he came out, the doctor said, “Very nice job.” He said, “Did you wash it out first?”

And I'm thinking, "Oh, God, he didn't, and if I tell him, they're going to take all these threads out." I said, "Yes, he did," and so he spoke up and said, "Yeah."

ANONYMOUS INMATE 4:

You go on sick call, and the doctors say, "Well, here's a bag of aspirin; get out of here, don't come back." Which was good! If you needed an operation, or, like, my nose was broke, they gave immediate medical attention for that. But like colds, and flu, they didn't worry about that too much. You got aspirins for that. "Give him chicken soup."

DICK FULMER, CORRECTIONAL COUNSELOR:

The other major issue in the medical section was the psychiatry. The people from across the state came here because the psychiatrists were here. The psychiatrists didn't come in because there were so many crazy people; the crazy people came because the psychiatric services were here.

JOSEPH MAHER, PSYCHOLOGIST:

Eventually, there was a great deal of emphasis on group therapy. By the time the institution closed, there were more than 25 therapy groups going, and the guard force had volunteered to be co-therapists. So we had captains, lieutenants, just regular C.O.'s being trained as co-therapists.

CHARLES GINDLE, INMATE:

One time, the captain told two other fellows and me to go put a straitjacket on this fellow, so we went in to put it on. We got bit, spit, kicked, and everything else, but we got the straitjacket on him. Then, the captain went to call the psychiatrist to tell him we put the straitjacket on him; the psychiatrist said, "Take it off." So now we go back, we take it off. The psychiatrist came right in to see the fellow; he looked at him and said, "Put it back on." So we went through it again.

RAYMOND GRADY, GUARD:

Quite a few guys was trying to commit suicide. One guy, named Dorsey, he banged his head against – you seen the beds in there, right? Yeah. I really thought he was crazy, banging his head the way he did. We had to go in and stop him.

ANONYMOUS INMATE 4:

They had what they called an “The Old Man’s Block.” They had all them old guys in one block. They walked around with crutches; some had canes. And they had the hospital block. They put them in that block ‘til they died. A lot of them never got out. There was no way they could get out; they were doing, like, double life. They stayed there.

RAYMOND GRADY, GUARD:

This place was a little...little mad at times, especially in the psychiatry block in the medical block.

EVA GUTWEIN:

The hospital needs extensive renovation before it will be safe for visitors, but we plan to open it in the coming years. We hope you’ll return to explore it yourself.

39. AL CAPONE’S CELL (RESTORATION)

MATT MURPHY, TOUR PROGRAMS SUPERVISOR:

What was Al Capone doing in Philadelphia in 1929, anyway?

LATEEF OAKMAN, TOUR GUIDE:

He and his bodyguard Frank Cline were driving from Atlantic City back to their hometown, Chicago. They stopped for the night in Philadelphia. Police recognized Capone and searched the two men.

MATT MURPHY, TOUR PROGRAMS SUPERVISOR:

They found that they were both carrying an unlicensed, loaded, 38-caliber revolver. Within 12 hours of their arrest, the men were given the

maximum sentence: one year in prison for carrying concealed deadly weapons. You can see that conviction on Capone's intake card. It's abbreviated as "C.C.D.W."

LATEEF OAKMAN, TOUR GUIDE:

What's ironic, though, is that while the courts were trying to be tough on this famous gangster, the prison officials here at Eastern State seem to have been surprisingly generous.

MATT MURPHY, TOUR PROGRAMS SUPERVISOR:

Notice the newspaper article with the headline "'Very Comfortable,' Says Capone, In Luxurious Cell." Now take a look at the cell on your left. We've restored it to look like that newspaper account.

ACTOR:

"The whole room was suffused in the glow of a desk lamp which stood on a polished desk. On the once-grim walls of the penal chamber hung tasteful paintings, and the strains of a waltz were being emitted by a powerful cabinet radio receiver of handsome design and fine finish."

The Philadelphia Public Ledger, 1929

MATT MURPHY, TOUR PROGRAMS SUPERVISOR:

We don't know why Capone received this special treatment. His arrest came at a time of growing mob violence in Chicago, and we hear the theory that Capone arranged for his incarceration here to avoid his enemies.

LATEEF OAKMAN, TOUR GUIDE:

We've never believed it. He spent a lot of money trying to get himself released from Eastern State Penitentiary, and he denied all his life that he came to Philadelphia to hide.

MATT MURPHY, TOUR PROGRAMS SUPERVISOR:

Directly opposite these cells, there's an audio stop about Al Capone's release from Eastern State Penitentiary.

LATEEF OAKMAN, TOUR GUIDE:

That's a story in itself.

40. BORN AT EASTERN STATE**HENRY ENCKLER:**

I'm 87 and in June I'll be 88, and I was born at the Eastern State Penitentiary. And I often wondered if I ever got in trouble, I had about seven years in that prison, would I get credit for that? [*laughs*] I don't believe so.

So, I used to go in all the prisoner's cells, and I'd go out in the yard when they had exercise. That exercise was a big joke, they just stood around and talked. And I used to go out there and roam around with them, you know.

A fella said to the other fella, "Who the heck is that kid?"

And you know, the other prisoner says, "Oh, that's the warden's grandson. Don't touch him, boy, you'll be in trouble."

But, he was almost right; I was the grandson of the Deputy Warden. I used to roam through the prison, wherever I wanted to go. The only off-limits I had was over where they did the cooking and the bakery and things like that. That was off-limits. But, I used to go in where my grandfather—he spent a good amount of his time on what they called the Center. I used to go in there and I'd imitate the different guards that would stand right in the middle of the center and turn and look down each row of cells, you know, checking. And I use to stand in the middle and do the same thing. I thought I was a big shot [*laughs*].

41. INTAKE

DONALD VAUGHN, GUARD:

My name is Donald Vaughn; I'm presently Superintendent of the State Correctional Institution at Graterford. Eastern State is where I started my career in corrections in 1966.

When inmates came in the evening they were brought in by county sheriffs, Philadelphia sheriffs, Montgomery County sheriffs. The inmates would be sentenced that day and they would be brought in fresh from the streets, some from county prisons. We would fingerprint them, and we would fill out the initial forms.

There was a part that always disturbed me. When a black man came in, we automatically had to check certain blocks. One was no matter what color eyes a man had, it had to be "maroon eyes." And no matter what texture of his hair, we would always check "wooly." I remember questioning one of my superiors at one time and he said, "Well, you know, that's not of our doing. That's just the way. That's procedure. That's what you have to do."

I said, "Well, the man doesn't have wooly hair. His hair is curly."

Says, "Well, the form says 'wooly' and that's what we have to check."

42. EXERCISE YARDS**SALLY ELK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:**

This is Executive Director Sally Elk.

JORGE DANTE:

This is Jorge Dante, Project Director for the yard's restoration.

SALLY ELK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

You are standing in the last surviving open-air exercise yard of the original penitentiary plan. Note the 10-foot high walls on all sides and the small doorway that leads into the cell. It is open to show both the wooden door and the metal lattice door. The exercise yard is approximately the same size as the cell. When Eastern State's architect John Haviland was designing the prison, he was very attentive to the prevalent thinking of the day; that disease in prison could be prevented by continually exposing the prisoners to fresh air. Unlike earlier dungeons and damp prisons, Eastern State was built to ensure the health of its population. The schedule did not allow for adjacent prisoners to be let out at the same time. Remember, the system was built on silence. The administration worked hard to ensure that the prisoners could not communicate with one another.

JORGE DANTE:

You might wonder if prisoners ever tried to escape from their yards. Yes they did. However, they were still separated from freedom by a 30-foot high perimeter wall.

As separate confinement broke down through the years, the yards continued to be used for exercise. There is some indication from records and legend that prisoners could keep pets and plant flowers and vegetables in their yards.

When separate confinement was officially abandoned in 1913, the walls between the yards were removed and they were roofed over. All but this yard, were converted for other uses, primarily workshops. Over the past two summers, I worked with 15 work-study students to restore the yard to the way it would have looked in the 1830s. This has been accomplished through the removal of many alterations. We restored the wood and shingle roof and capping over the walls, and restored the doors. You can find out more information on this project and all of our restoration projects on our website.

43. WOMEN AT EASTERN STATE

KELLY OTTERSON, TOUR PROGRAM MANAGER:

My name is Kelly Otterson. I'm a Tour Program Manager here at Eastern State Penitentiary.

I think that visitors often find it surprising that there were both male and female inmates in this one facility because today most prisons are segregated by gender. In fact, a small number of female inmates were housed at Eastern State from nearly the beginning. They were typically convicted of the same types of crimes as men, and received similar prison sentences.

The first female prisoner, Amy Rogers, was sentenced to three years for manslaughter. She arrived in 1831, less than two years after Eastern State Penitentiary opened. She was inmate number 73.

In these early years, most male inmates worked silently in their cells at trades such as shoemaking and chair-caning. But female inmates were generally assigned domestic work, such as doing laundry and cooking meals.

By 1836, the number of female inmates had grown to 19. During the same year, the women were moved here, to the upper level or "gallery" of Cellblock 7. If you look up, perhaps you can imagine the women peering over the railings as they shuffle to the kitchens on the first floor of this cellblock.

Prison records indicate that some male inmates were aware of their female counterparts. In one case, a male prisoner in Cellblock 6 was disciplined for communicating with a female prisoner through his skylight.

Administrators carefully documented women's pregnancies upon arrival, and several of the female prisoners gave birth to children while here.

Prison records reflect that inmate Caroline Sweeney was living here with her five-year-old son, born at Eastern State Penitentiary in 1849. And the newborn son of inmate 2741 underwent the rite of circumcision at the request of his mother.

In the first years of the 20th century, Elsie McKenty lived in Eastern State's castle-like administration building with her family. Her father was the warden. She recalls one inmate fondly, a woman she called "Nanny" who would help with her homework:

ELSIE MCKENTY HOUGH, DAUGHTER OF WARDEN:

There was a colored lady who I called 'Nanny.' She was a life prisoner. She used to help me with my lessons and she was really lovely, and she had a wonderful education.

KELLY OTTERSON, TOUR PROGRAM MANAGER:

Nanny eventually gained her freedom, and returned years later to attend Elsie's wedding inside the prison.

Pennsylvania eventually built a prison exclusively for women at Muncy, in central Pennsylvania. Eastern State Penitentiary's last female inmate, Freda Trost, convicted of poisoning her husband, was transferred there in 1923. Eastern State Penitentiary returned to an all-male institution, but, in a way, little changed. Although women were housed here for 92 years, at no time did they account for more than a small fraction of the inmate population. In fact, there were only a few hundred women ever held within these walls.

Today, although women are still outnumbered by male inmates nationwide, their conviction rates are dramatically increasing. Pennsylvania added a second, all-female prison in 1982.

44. PRISON RIOTS

FRANCIS DOLAN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR TOUR PROGRAMS:

I'm Eastern State's Associate Director for Tour Programs and Site Operations, Francis Dolan.

Inmate violence is a problem in most prisons, and Eastern State was no exception. In the early days, prisoners here lived in strict solitary confinement, so violence was limited to individual attacks against officers. But that system loosened up over time, and the cellblocks around you filled with inmates.

In response to the growing threat of groups of inmates, the prison administration installed head gates at the end of each cellblock. You can see them near Al Capone's cell at the end of this corridor. The head gates were designed to contain rioting prisoners to small areas. Officers working inside these cellblocks did not carry keys to the gates: they were locked in, without weapons, along with the prisoners.

By the 1960s, Eastern State was an aging prison with an aging prison population, but its reputation as a quiet institution was about to end. On the evening of January 8, 1961, inmates in this corridor, Cellblock 9, started the largest riot in Eastern State's history. Inmate John Klausenberg tricked an officer into opening his cell, claiming he wanted to retrieve a guitar from another inmate. The two men overpowered the officer and began unlocking the cells, first here and later in other cellblocks. Dozens of inmates were eventually freed, taking eight officers hostage and stabbing two of them with homemade knives. They took control of several cellblocks and even set the records room on fire, attempting to erase their criminal files:

JOHN MCCULLOUGH, INMATE:

I was on Four Block at the time, and I looked around, and it was the first time I ever saw a real prison riot; and everybody was completely out of control. This was freedom for everybody, you know: you could kick, tear up, destroy...

FRANCIS DOLAN ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR TOUR PROGRAMS:

Officials were prepared. They responded with “Operation Prison Breakout,” a prearranged strategy to deal with riots at Eastern State Penitentiary. Hundreds of local police and firemen secured a six-block radius around the prison. Then, state troopers and Eastern State officers, armed with tear gas and billy clubs, entered the front gates. They moved systematically, one cellblock at a time, securing the building:

RICHARD PARCELL, GUARD:

When we got inside, there was a lot of fire – they had set some fires, it was smoky. There were a lot of inmates running around who had gotten hold of drugs in the pharmacy; but there wasn’t too much physical confrontation there until we got into the garage, where the officers were held hostage.

FRANCIS DOLAN ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR TOUR PROGRAMS:

Although there was extensive damage to the prison and numerous injuries, there were no fatalities. Following an investigation, the Pennsylvania Attorney General recommended that Eastern State be closed as soon as possible, calling it “obsolete, vulnerable, and a danger to everyone living in the city.” Pennsylvania closed Eastern State Penitentiary in 1970. It was 141 years old.

45. GEORGE NORMAN

SEAN KELLY, PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

Inmates at Eastern State Penitentiary thought about freedom a lot. But for one inmate, George Norman, freedom had a special meaning. George Norman was imprisoned at Eastern State for helping his wife escape slavery.

I'm Sean Kelley, Program Director at Eastern State Penitentiary.

George Norman was a free black man living in Carlisle Pennsylvania in the late 1840s. Although he was free, his wife, Hester, was enslaved in Maryland, about 50 miles away. Hester escaped from her owner and fled north in the company of two other slaves: a father and his ten-year-old daughter. The three traveled through a network of safe houses called “The Underground Railroad.”

They made it to Pennsylvania—a state that did not allow slavery—and eventually to Carlisle, where Hester’s husband George lived. But the slave owners pursued them aggressively. On June 2, 1847, Hester’s former owner captured the three and had them locked in the county jail.

Many members of the Free Black community in Carlisle believed that the escaped slaves deserved to remain free, having reached the north. But the law did not appear to be on their side. Although Pennsylvania did not recognize slavery at this time, slave owners were often able to recapture and return fugitive slaves to the south.

A tense crowd gathered in the county courthouse—mostly free black men and women—as a judge reviewed the case. Among the crowd was George Norman, whose wife Hester now sat in the prisoner’s box. A white professor arrived to inform the court that a new Pennsylvania law made any dealings with escaped slaves a Federal issue, and therefore the county courts did not have authority to hold them. The judge ruled in favor of the slave owners anyway and the crowd rioted.

First in the courtroom—and later in the streets outside—the protesters charged the authorities to liberate Hester and the others. A brawl erupted. Blows were exchanged on both sides. George Norman grabbed his wife and pulled her to freedom. Women in the crowd surrounded the young girl and pulled her away too. As the crowd

moved into an alley with Hester and the girl, one of the slave owners pursued. The crowd turned on him and beat him severely.

The third fugitive slave, the young girl's father, did not escape. He was returned to slavery in Maryland. Hester and the girl did escape, but their freedom came at a price: Hester's husband George and ten other free black men were sentenced to three years of separate confinement with labor at the Eastern State Penitentiary.

In securing his wife's freedom, George Norman had now lost his own....

What do we know about George Norman's time in this building? Unfortunately, not much. One of the few records of him inside Eastern State comes from the penitentiary's moral instructor, who wrote "[George Norman] justifies himself in all he did." We can assume that his time here was unpleasant, however, especially given his race. Seven percent of African American prisoners would die before their sentences were complete, a rate far higher than the white inmates'.

The men from Carlisle did not serve all their time. The Pennsylvania State Supreme Court deemed their sentences at Eastern State too harsh. After serving nine months within these walls, all 11 men were released. They were free.

We don't know if George Norman was able to reunite with his wife, Hester. We don't know whether they were able to enjoy their newfound freedom together. But their story tells us a lot about the lengths people will go—both as individuals and as members of a community—in their quest for freedom.

We'd like to thank Jennifer Coval, whose extensive research on this subject has allowed us to piece this complicated story together.

47. OTHER ABSENCES

CINDY STOCKTON MOORE, ARTIST:

Hello, my name is Cindy Stockton Moore. The name of my installation is *Other Absences*. These 50 portraits are of men, women, and children who were murdered. Their murderers were later incarcerated at Eastern State Penitentiary. Being in the space, I have tended to imagine myself as someone who would be incarcerated here but when I would leave and be going on the rest of my day, I started to also think about the reasons some people were in here and I wanted to introduce a different point of view. A lot of the stories were haunting in different ways.

As you enter the cell on the left-hand side, right in the middle overhead is a portrait of Ellis Simons. -His portrait is a little bit larger and he's right in the center in that first row, and he was a 12 year-old who was stabbed to death with scissors by a 16 year-old who had invited him over to view his chemistry set.

Another level of absence that's happening in this project is all of the stories and the faces that I could not find due to race or class or other factors, those stories just would not be reported. There's only three victims of color that I was able to find, and Helena Davis is one of them. So, she is in the third row back, the second from the left-hand side, in her church hat actually, and she was killed by her suitor for refusing to marry him. She was killed in church. She wouldn't marry him because she was still married and it was against her religion and he immediately went and turned himself in to the police, he was so devastated he just killed the woman he loved.

48. GTMO

BILL CROMAR, ARTIST:

My name is Bill Cromar and the piece that I have here is titled GTMO, which is military shorthand for Guantanamo Bay. The name of the camp that was built at Guantanamo Bay is Camp X-Ray. The cell that you see

inside this Eastern State Penitentiary cell is as exact a replica as I have been able to make. It's exactly the size. It's exactly the materials that you see in the defunct cells at Camp X-Ray.

The two cells could not be more different. One is very solid. One is made of massive opaque stone. One is made of almost nothing, chain link fence. I suppose they both have the same end in mind. They both incarcerate. They both hold people in, but because of the way the incarcerators decide how to incarcerate, you end up with very different means to do that. Both places in a way, represent, at some level, somebody's idea of good intentions.

Hi, this is Bill Cromar once again. A lot seems to have happened at GTMO since the installation, at the same time, it seems like not a lot has happened. So, for more perspective on GTMO from someone who has actually been there, press 49 and the green play button now.

49. GTMO TODAY

OMAR FARAH:

My name is Omar Farah. I am a staff attorney at the Center for Constitutional Rights and I represent seven of the current detainees at Guantanamo Bay.

Looking at the installation of Camp X-Ray, it's easy to believe at that point that Guantanamo was supposed to be a short-lived experiment. And looking at it ten years on, the installation, even to me, it looks like a piece of history because there is so much infrastructure and there are so many resources and people at the camps and the area around Guantanamo – that really speaks to just how entrenched this detention model has become in our political landscape.

My work causes me to travel to Guantanamo about every three months. It's always a very trying experience for me. The prison is very haunting

and no matter how many times I go there I always feel a bit of anxiety in the pit of my stomach when I arrive there. At the same time, it's the one opportunity I have to come face to face with the prisoners I've represented for many years and have come to care about.

There were two sort of incredible turns of tide within a period of months that I think raise the hopes of a lot of prisoners and in time, both of those have unraveled. In the summer of 2008 the Supreme Court issued what was a landmark decision – probably the shortest lived landmark decision in the court's history – of *Boumediene v. Bush*, which gave the prisoners the right to challenge their detention through habeas corpus proceedings in a federal court. In the early months after the *Boumediene* decision came down, the prisoners were winning their habeas petitions in overwhelming numbers and some of the decisions coming out of the federal courts were scathing. And then, the president came into office and in a second day ordered the prison closed; but since then, the Supreme Court has refused to intervene and prevent the DC Circuit Court, which is the court that sits just below it in Washington, DC, from gutting the *Boumediene* decision of any of its practical meaning, and that's happened now.

Just to give you an example, the DC Circuit has ruled that government evidence against Guantanamo prisoners should be presumed accurate unless the prisoner has the ability to overturn that presumption. In practical terms, that means that the government wins its cases before it even enters the courtroom.

And then the president's promise has unraveled. As part of his order to close the prison, ordered the review of all government agencies of any information they had about the prisoners in order to determine whether they should be approved for transfer, or tried in the military commission system, or put in a third category of indefinite detention, which in and of itself is unjust; but those are the three dispositions that a prisoner can get.

Overwhelmingly, the prisoners who are approved for transfer – now 86 of the remaining 166 prisoners – are unanimously approved for transfer by every national security and law enforcement agency with a stake in Guantanamo detainee affairs and they’ve been there more than three years.

My goals for them are dictated by the goals that they have for themselves and increasingly those goals – it’s tragic to say – those goals are narrowing a bit: from practical things, the obvious release and reunification with their family, to more fundamental existential concerns, like how to maintain hope day-to-day how to maintain their psychological awareness, their physical fitness: how do they keep themselves from being broken.

It’s a strange, dark twist on every bit of improvement at Guantanamo. When the Department of Defense built a soccer field to give prisoners another way to get exercise, the Department of Defense held it up as a model of improvement for things at Guantanamo. Certainly, as somebody who represents the prisoners there, I applaud any improvement in their day-to-day conditions – that’s long overdue – but at the same time, it represents the normalization of what’s happening at Guantanamo and demonstrates just how deep into this dark experiment we’re getting. I mean, it’s 11 years now, and really no end in sight.

SEAN KELLEY, DIRECTOR OF INTERPRETATION:

If you’d like to hear artist William Cromar describe his 2004 installation, GTMO, press 48 and the green play button now.

50. SYDNEY WARE

NICK GILLETTE, TOUR GUIDE:

I’m Eastern State Tour Guide Nick Gillette, and I want to tell you about an inmate who shows us a glimpse into his mindset through the beautiful work he left behind more than a hundred years ago.

Sydney Ware was in his early twenties when he shot and killed two fellow coal-miners in a drunken argument over a game of cards in a saloon near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He was sentenced to hang for the murder of the first man killed, Morris Miller, but he convinced Pennsylvania's governor to commute his death sentence to life in prison.

He arrived at Eastern State Penitentiary in January of 1891. By all accounts, Sydney Ware was a model inmate. He showed remarkable talents in poetry and music, but it was his artwork that drew the most praise both inside and outside the prison walls. While here, Sydney Ware illustrated hundreds of charts of prison statistics for prison officials. The charts covered everything from inmate demographics, to daily population changes, to the reasons prisoners cited for their crimes. But the illustrations do seem to reflect an inmate's darker perspective. Links of chain form borders around pages; mournful faces peer through prison bars above the charts. His illustration depicting a seedy barroom scene over the chart of inmate habits could even be a reference to his own crime.

In 1911, Sydney Ware successfully petitioned the governor of Pennsylvania for a pardon for the first murder. He walked out the front gate of this prison, saw his first automobile, and was promptly rearrested, this time for the murder of the second man killed in the tavern, Frederick Kindler. After a remarkable plea to the court, Sydney Ware was pardoned for the second murder; in November 1911, he was a free man.

Sydney Ware married and settled down in Philadelphia, earning a living as a painter and illustrator. But his extraordinary set of illustrated charts remained in the offices of the Eastern State Penitentiary. The Pennsylvania State Archives eventually preserved the charts, where they remain today.

51. SPECIMEN

GREG COWPER, ARTIST:

My name is Greg Cowper. I'm a Curatorial Assistant in the Department of Entomology at the Academy of Natural Sciences here in Philadelphia.

The title of my installation is "Specimen." It's a cabinet of curiosities of the insects and invertebrate fauna collected at Eastern State Penitentiary, within the walls. And the idea kind of percolated through my thinking when I read an account by Henry Skinner, who was a medical doctor and Curator of Entomology in the late 1800s and early 1900s. He visited Eastern State Penitentiary probably in the summer of 1889, and, to use his words, he was "mortified" to discover an inmate making an insect collection in his exercise yard. And the reason he was mortified, of course, was because he was an entomologist; and he couldn't believe an entomologist would commit some kind of crime to wind up in Eastern State Penitentiary.

So far, I've collected about 500 specimens. Of those 500 specimens, a 150 of them shake out to be different species, so I've already really topped the 18 species that the inmate collected that Henry Skinner wrote about. But I will continue to collect insects over the life of the installation, from April to November, and it will continually grow and evolve—so it's almost a performance piece.

52. CHORUS**JESS PERLITZ, ARTIST:**

My name is Jess Perlitz. The title of the piece is "Chorus."

I traveled around to a variety of prisons in the United States and gave people the prompt, "If you could sing a song and have a song heard, what would it be," and recorded people singing: people who are currently incarcerated.

My installation is in the cell. There's one voice that's singing a song. It is kind of a beautiful ballad when it's one voice. And then a number of seconds later, another voice starts. And then another voice starts. And then as more voices get added in, it becomes incredibly overwhelming and almost unbearable to be in that space but also hearing just that cacophony of voices layered over each other.

When I was thinking about the history of solitude, that prisoners were meant to have that space to be able to reckon with God, and that people very quickly started going insane. There was something about that desire that was hopeful that they were trying to figure out how they were going to help people and that very quickly it became overwhelmingly awful.

53. BEWARE THE LILY LAW

MICHELLE HANDELMAN, ARTIST:

My name is Michelle Handelman, and I'm a video artist, and the name of my piece is "Beware the Lily Law."

The piece was inspired by the Stonewall riots, which happened in 1969, and was the spark that started the modern gay-rights movement. I wanted to recreate an experience that was like being inside a cell with a transgendered prisoner, and having them tell their story to you. So I spent a lot of time researching experiences from both male-to-female transsexual prisoners and female-to-male transsexual prisoners; and, after accumulating all of this research, I culled it down to three separate scripts and brought in three individual performers, who had all been touched by prison in some way. So even though these people are performers, they're also very closely connected to what it's like to be in prison and to hear the stories from their loved ones who are imprisoned.

You can imagine if you're a transgendered male-to-female—who now was once male but identifies as a female, and looks like a female—and

you've been arrested and find yourself all of a sudden in a men's prison, it's a very uncomfortable and dangerous situation.

55. JUVENILES AT EASTERN STATE

LAUREN ZALUT, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND TOUR PROGRAMS:

I'm Lauren Zalut, Eastern State's Director of Education and Tour Programs. Today, most children sent to prison are held in juvenile detention facilities, but that wasn't always the case. Children as young as 11 years old served time here at Eastern State Penitentiary, a maximum-security adult prison.

You can see an image of Mary Ash on this sign. It's an illustration, since we've never found a photograph of her. I hope one day we will. I find Mary's story particularly heartbreaking. She was convicted of arson and arrived at Eastern State in 1876. She was just 11 years old. Mary caught tuberculosis, like so many other prisoners at the time. She died here at age 13.

Today about 48,000 young people live in juvenile detention centers across the United States, and another 5,000 are housed in adult jails and prisons. Here's former Eastern State tour guide Russell Craig to share his perspective on juvenile incarceration today.

RUSSELL CRAIG, FORMER TOUR GUIDE:

I was in like, everything you can name: group homes, foster homes, prison—like everything, but def. They had locked me up 'cause they found out that I ain't go to school. So, it was like a crime. Truancy.

And then they found out, like, I ain't have, like, parents, that I was like homeless and stuff. So then they, like, made me stay. 'Cause, like, you know, I would've probably did like nine months or something, but they made me stay long term, which is like three years.

The juvie prison was just like real prison, but you just, like, younger. They take you in, you change your clothes, you have a cell—like you go into your, like, room where they lock you up. The beds was the same. How we was dealing with each other, if it was like a fight or whatever, it was the same thing. Chess, checkers, basketball. Push-ups and stuff, you know what I'm saying? Juvenile facilities and jails is just like real jail but it's for little kids.

As you already know, I was a tour guide also here at Eastern State. And nowadays I'm a artist. I work with troubled youth. And I also drew this picture of Mary Ash that you're looking at right now.

57. APOKALUPTTEIN:16389067:II

JESSE KRIMES, ARTIST:

My name is Jesse Krimes and I was recently released from a federal prison where I served a 70-month sentence for a nonviolent drug offense: so, almost 6 years. And while I was in prison, I created *Apokaluptein:16389067*.

So, I began doing these image transfers on used prison sheets. I would use hair gel that I would purchase from the commissary and I would put the hair gel on the sheet where I wanted to transfer the image. And then I would take the cutout image from *The New York Times*, place it face-down onto the sheet and take a plastic spoon, and press the back of the sheet onto the surface of the image and then I would peel the image off and it would leave the inverse trace on the sheet.

So, these works are actually contraband and it had the potential to get me in trouble, so I would kind of do these in secret and I would make one panel and as soon as it was finished, I would mail it out, so I could never see the entire piece together: it was all made in sections on 39 separate

sheets. I just had to kind of keep a running dialog in my head of how these things would match up when I came home.

I should say the piece, in its original iteration, is 15 feet tall and 40 feet long and it's made up of 39 prison bedsheets. The original Apokaluptein is recreated and installed in this cell using the same transfer process as the original.

So, the cell's divided into three sections. The bottom section is the representation of Hell. The central section is the representation of Earth. And the uppermost section is the representation of Heaven. The Heaven scene follows the architecture of the cell and goes up into the arch towards the eye-of-God, or the skylight.

The piece here at Eastern State feels like the final iteration of this work. Completing this piece here feels like I'm completing . . . I'm completing the project finally.

SEAN KELLEY, DIRECTOR OF INTERPRETATION:

The story of how Jesse Krimes was able to create this massive work of art while behind the walls of a federal prison is pretty remarkable. If you'd like to hear more, press 58 and the play button now.

58. APOKALUPTein:16389067:II (EXTENSION)

SEAN KELLEY, DIRECTOR OF INTERPRETATION:

Jesse's remarkable story left us with all sorts of questions. For instance, how was he able to get his hands on *The New York Times* inside of a federal prison? Here's Jesse:

JESSE KRIMES, ARTIST:

I had a friend of mine who got me a subscription to *The Sunday Times*. So, I knew that I had that coming every Sunday, but the prison also provides the whole week of *The New York Times*. The only problem is,

they provide one paper each day and there are 2,000 people on the compound. Usually, it goes to the library. It stays in the library for the day until the next day and then they give it to whoever's first on the list and this list has been developed for years and people pay money to be in the certain order within this list to get the newspaper.

And I didn't have much money, so I didn't want to pay, so I just automatically went to the end of the list. So, whenever everyone else was done reading *The New York Times*, they knew to give it to me and then I would take it and cut it up and use it as my source material. Yeah, I'm getting very delayed information but I still got my weekly *Sunday*, which is where I got most of the images because they were fresh and the ink transfer is better from a fresh image than one that's been handled and touched by thousands of people.

So, I began doing these image transfers on used prison sheets. First, I was taking them just from my own sheets where I would rip sections off, but then as the project continually grew into something larger, I began purchasing them, illegally, from a friend of mine who worked in the laundry department.

I began teaching art to other guys in the institution. In the process of doing that, it put me in contact with the recreation staff, so I began to develop some sort of relationship with them where I was able to order materials out of Blick catalog: paper, pencils, paints, and canvas, and all these materials that we would need to facilitate this class. I ordered one roll of Blick duck cloth canvas: I had no intentions of actually using it, but I knew that I could take the labels off of it and give the canvas to a friend of mine who's painting and then take my sheets and roll it back on this roll and then put the canvas labels on it. So, when they would come in, they would actually think these sheets were purchased through Blick: they thought they were canvas.

I actually told some of the guards, like, "This is what I'm doing." And when I told them, they became supportive of it because they really liked

my work. They were really interested, they would come and speak to me about each panel that I was making, why I'm choosing certain imagery, why I'm doing it. It became this kind of process that humanized me to the guards. And one of the guards actually would. . . he actually began holding and storing my work in the staff locker, so that when the guards would come around and do shake-downs, they wouldn't shake down that locker and find my work and confiscate it. And it was like this guaranteed safe spot where I could keep my work until it was finished and then send it out.

59. AL CAPONE'S CELL (UPDATE!)

SEAN KELLEY, DIRECTOR OF INTERPRETATION:

Hi, I'm Sean Kelley. I'm the Director of Interpretation here at Eastern State Penitentiary.

Lately we've begun to wonder if the stories about Al Capone's special treatment at Eastern State were a bit exaggerated.

Yes, as you can see on the sign, some newspapers did report he was getting special treatment. Our staff has been discovering other documents, though, that make the story seem less clear. One document says that Al Capone bought his fancy radio from the *previous occupant* of his cell. So, maybe radios weren't that uncommon at Eastern State? Another document refers to Capone's *cellmate*. I mean, how luxurious can a cell be, if you have to share it with a stranger?

The reporters had good reason to exaggerate, if they did. They were trying to sell newspapers, after all.

So, did Al Capone live the life of luxury here at Eastern State, or was he just a typical inmate? We've come to think the truth is somewhere in the middle.

At least, that’s what we think for now. It’s the funny thing about history: it’s always changing.

60. LGBTQ REFLECTIONS

ANNIE ANDERSON, MANAGER, RESEARCH AND PUBLIC PROGRAMMING:

Hi, I’m Annie Anderson. I’m the researcher here at Eastern State Penitentiary.

A few years ago, we started documenting prisoners who, if alive today, may have identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer.

Isaac Hall, sent to Eastern State in 1881, left a fascinating paper trail. Hall was one of nearly 500 people imprisoned at Eastern State for *sodomy*—an ambiguous term criminalizing certain sex acts, often between members of the same sex. Hall received a harsh sentence: \$100 and eight years of solitary confinement for what records indicate was consensual sex with a male partner.

Next to Hall’s name on every court document and prison record, in perfect cursive handwriting, is the alias “Lady Washington.” You can see Hall’s bill of indictment on the sign [here](#).

The *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported that Hall earned the nickname for, quote, “personating lady characters.” Eastern State’s Warden, Michael Cassidy, wrote that Hall was, quote, “known in the locality where he resided as Lady Washington and is no doubt of the kind who are addicted” to sodomy.

As I review these documents, I find myself wondering, “was Lady Washington a gay man or a transgender woman?”

Isaac Hall is one of the many LGBTQ individuals whose stories we’ve

come to know through the punishments they received.

We know that some of these prisoners experienced sexual violence during their incarceration, but at least a few seem to have found genuine affection and intimacy here.

In a 1940 journal entry, Warden Herbert Smith wrote that prisoner Harry LeGarr was, quote, "reported for suspicion of unnatural relations" with fellow prisoner Edward Nichols after the two men were seen hugging and kissing.

Smith and other prison officials labeled gender non-conformity and same-sex activity as "immoral," "indecent," "filthy," and degenerate.

Researching these historic stories makes me wonder who's documenting the experiences of LGBTQ prisoners today. There's likely a multitude of complex stories that echo the struggle and resiliency of Eastern State's Lady Washington.

61. A CLIMBER'S GUIDE TO EASTERN STATE PENITENTIARY OR, EASTERN STATE'S ARCHITECTURE, AND HOW TO ESCAPE IT

ALEXANDER ROSENBERG, ARTIST:

I'm Alexander Rosenberg, and the title of this project is A Climber's Guide to Eastern State Penitentiary or, Eastern State's Architecture, and How to Escape It.

My project involves climbing the exterior wall of Eastern State Penitentiary. I'm trying to treat it the way somebody would treat an unclimbed, outdoor site. So I'm trying to identify, rate, and name each climb, and then produce a guidebook of it.

The guidebooks that I'm looking at, they're typically pretty low production value kinds of things, so it's mostly done with text.

I was reading about somebody who made some stuff out of—I guess they used to do caning for the seats of chairs here, was one of the, kind of, craft activities that inmates could participate in. And somebody had used that stuff to make an apparatus to get over the wall.

The sound is really memorable climbing on this site in the daytime. When I'm out in the courtyards, it's like eerily quiet. And then there's this incredible moment when you finally do make it to the top, and you pop over, you get the sound of the city coming back to you. And it's just enough to make you kind of turn your head and notice where you are and see this incredible view. And it occurs to me that the only other person to have had that moment and that kind of sonic shift and see that view in the same way were other people going over the wall.

62. AIRPLANES

BENJAMIN WILLS, ARTIST:

My name is Ben Wills. I'm from Lawrence, Kansas, and I write letters to people who are incarcerated, and I collect paper airplanes from them.

I've been collecting these airplanes since 2013. There are planes from every state. And there are both men and women included in this installation.

I started looking at the paper airplane as a really good stand-in for an individual, right? They all share common characteristics, but they all look so incredibly different.

When they're installed all together, I think they take on the characteristics, sort of, of a choir. So each one of them communicates for themselves as an individual. But when they're all presented together, I

think that they start having a very shared message of people who are eager to communicate.

64. NOTABLE INMATE: PEP THE DOG (EXTENSION)

DICK FULMER, CORRECTIONAL COUNSELOR:

Hello, this is Dick Fulmer again. Back in 2003 when we recorded this version of Pep's arrival at Eastern State Penitentiary, I had done much of the research that discovered his presence there and over the four years since then, I've done some research and think that I've found the *true* story of how Pep arrived at Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia.

I have found correspondence between Governor Gifford Pinchot and Warden John Groome of Eastern State Penitentiary in 1924 where the governor says that he recently read that the governor of Maine had donated a dog to that state's prison, and this, quote, "has motivated me to do the same if it's alright with you," close quote. In the Warden's reply he says that he'd "very much like to have a dog donated to Eastern State Penitentiary...he will be a good addition to our community...so let's make arrangements to get him down here to Philadelphia."

That correspondence, for me, and I hope for you, absolves Pep of murdering anybody's cat and makes him, not a prisoner, but a guest.

67. AN ELECTRIC KITE

EILEEN SHUMATE, ARTIST:

Hi, I'm Eileen.

HEIDI RATANAVANICH, ARTIST:

I'm Heidi.

MICHAEL MCCANNE, ARTIST:

I'm Michael, and we're Provisional Island.

EILEEN SHUMATE, ARTIST:

This piece is called "An Electric Kite."

MICHAEL MCCANNE, ARTIST:

Yeah, which is—a kite is like a means of communication in prison, like a note you would pass down the cellblock.

HEIDI RATANAVANICH, ARTIST:

Our project is situated in two cells.

EILEEN SHUMATE, ARTIST:

In one cell, there's a remake of a contraband transmitter that is placed in a book, which is similar to how a lot of prisoners would hide their transmitters that they made.

MICHAEL MCCANNE, ARTIST:

And in the facing cell, you'll find a prison-issue clear radio. Anything that you hear on the radio is being broadcast from the transmitting cell.

HEIDI RATANAVANICH, ARTIST:

Prisoners made these homemade transmitters out of found material.

MICHAEL MCCANNE, ARTIST:

The first one we found—the first instance was from a prisoner in Germany, and that's actually the replica in the cell is... it replicates this transmitter, but it's... you know, a prisoner would get a little piece of an electronic, or another radio, and they'd take, like, transistors and capacitors and coiled wires and basically build a very simple transmitter.

EILEEN SHUMATE, ARTIST:

And use it for communicating within the cells, on their block, to be able to warn each other about things that are going on within the prison, to be able to listen to programs on the outside.

MICHAEL MCCANNE, ARTIST:

The radio waves kind of just pass through the walls of prisons, and so they sort of transcend that... that... those walls, and that, like, limitation on freedom.

HEIDI RATANAVANICH, ARTIST:

We invite you to step into the cell with the radio and tune into the broadcast.

68. DORIS JEAN**RACHEL LIVEDALEN, ARTIST:**

Hi, my name is Rachel Livedalen. I'm an interdisciplinary artist, and this is my installation, titled "Doris Jean."

Doris Jean was a wealthy Philadelphia heiress, and in 1955 she met Earl Ostreicher, and they eloped. Two months after her elopement, Doris found herself in an unhappy marriage, pregnant, and there were allegations that he was mistreating her, and she had already moved back to Philadelphia to be with her parents.

Abortions were illegal at the time, so she and her mother sought out an abortion at the apartment of Milton and Rosalie Schwartz. Milton was a bartender and Rosalie was a beautician. And Doris unfortunately died immediately after.

Milton and Rosalie both served time, the bartender and beautician. And Milton served time here in Eastern State.

Doris was 22, and it's interesting because a lot of the newspaper clippings describe her as a 22-year-old red-haired beauty.

Doris's mother, Gertrude Silver, she actually never served time. The judge ruled that she had so much psychological trauma from these events. But in her confession, she talks about just the desperation that Doris Jean experienced, and explains that, you know, she was just trying to help her daughter—that you would do anything to protect your daughter.

91. TERROR BEHIND THE WALLS

BRETT BERTOLINO, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS:

I'm Brett Bertolino, Director of Operations here at Eastern State Penitentiary. I hope you'll pardon our appearance. We do our best to keep our annual Halloween fundraiser *Terror Behind the Walls* from distracting our daytime visitors; but some equipment and props just can't be hidden from view.

Our first Halloween event was held in 1991. In fact, daytime prison tours didn't begin until three years later and were partially funded by those early Halloween events. Today, *Terror Behind the Walls* has grown to become one of the largest and most sophisticated haunted attractions in the country. It features more than 200 actors and Hollywood-quality special effects. It's consistently named one of the top ten haunted houses in the United States – and it supports a good cause. *Terror Behind the Walls* provides the single largest source of revenue for the historic site. It's funded new roofs throughout the penitentiary complex, an extensive fire suppression system, and allowed us to create exhibits, artist installations, and even this audio tour.

Terror Behind the Walls isn't just one of the scariest haunted houses in America; it's also helping save this beautiful and fascinating National Historic Landmark.

(END)