WOODHULL HOUSE

Woodhull House was built in 1885, designed in the Queen Anne style by the architectural firm Peabody and Stearns of Boston, Massachusetts. In 1892, Woodhull suffered a devastating fire over Easter break, and was rebuilt and expanded that same year. A second fire, much more minor than the first, occurred in 1924. These two incidents are memorialized in the Woodhull House motto: Ex Cineribus Restituta, which translates to “Out of the ashes, restored.” Woodhull was named for Henry Woodhull Green, brother of Lawrenceville benefactor John Cleve Green.

HENRY WOODHULL GREEN

Henry Woodhull Green was born in Maidenhead (now Lawrence), New Jersey in 1804 to Caleb Smith Green, the grandson of Caleb Smith and Martha Dickinson. He studied at Maidenhead Academy (now the Lawrenceville School) before enrolling in Princeton College in 1818, graduating with honors at the age of 16 in 1820. Green would go on to become a lawyer and statesman, joining the New Jersey State Assembly in 1842, and a delegate to the New Jersey Constitutional Convention in 1844. Two years later, he was appointed to the New Jersey State Supreme Court.

Green married Emily Augusta Ewing, daughter of Chief Justice Charles Ewing, his mentor and former employer. The two had a daughter, also named Emily, in 1832. Emily Ewing Green died in 1837 at the age of 29, and Green then married her sister, Susan Ewing, with whom he had four more children. Green himself was a benefactor of Princeton College and the Presbyterian Church, and was a trustee and board president of the Princeton Theological Seminary. He died on December 19, 1876, at the age of 72.

Woodhull’s original House colors, selected in 1885, were peacock blue and gold. In 1897, however, the colors were altered to brown and white. A previous flag bearing these colors was white with a brown seal, the image of a shield with the Latin words “Veritas and Virtus,” meaning “truth and courage.”

The current colors, chosen in 1951, are black and gold. The flag depicts a gold band over a black field. The Woodhull shield sits in the center of the band, bearing the House symbol: the Phoenix.

WOODHULL HOUSE FLAG
WOODHULL HOUSE LIFE

Though Woodhull has received the Foresman Trophy and the Head Master’s Cup a number of times, in the early 1930s, a controversy erupted over which House could permanently claim the Charles Henry Raymond Debate Cup. The faculty decided that a House had to win the cup three times in order to lay claim to it. Woodhull did so in 1929, 1930, and 1934. The faculty then established that the trophy should be won three times in a row, which Woodhull accomplished handily, winning it in again 1935 and 1936.

Every Saturday during the 1950s, Woodhull would host 20 young women from Trenton in the House dining room. More recent traditions include the annual formal Wood Tea; and the pre-Hill Week Haka, a traditional intimidation dance originating from the Maori tribe of New Zealand.

Notable Housemasters include Charles B. Newton, former headmaster of Pingry, and Charles Henry Breed, former headmaster of Blair Academy.

Notable alumni include Frederic Collin Walcott L.1886, US Senator from Connecticut; Merian Cooper L.1911, the director of the original King Kong, and George Akerlof ’58, a Nobel Laureate in Economics and professor at UC Berkeley.

WOODHULL HOUSE CHEER

"Bons a lele!"
(chanted three times, beginning in a whisper and ending in a full-throated shout)

ABOVE: Residents of Woodhull House 1900.


ABOVE: Woodhull spirit at House Olympics 2015.