



Davenport's jail held just 3 prisoners in 73 years.

Rarely used old jail becomes a museum

The rarely used Davenport Jail may soon see more action than the building has seen in its 73-year history.

Under the sponsorship of the Santa Cruz County Historical Trust, the jail is soon to become a museum. The grand opening for the new museum is set for Dec. 12 from noon to 4 p.m.

The first exhibit in the jail museum will focus on the role of the cement industry in Davenport's development, starting with the early limestone quarries through the present.

But the centerpiece of the Davenport event is the jail itself.

Built in 1914, the two-cell building has had only three recorded occupants.

Early on, two boys from San Mateo, suspected of

stealing horses, were held overnight in the jail. Another time, a drunk was put in jail to sober up.

When the county built a central jail in 1936, there was even less need for the Davenport Jail, and the building fell into disuse.

In 1979, the private owners of the jail donated the building to the Santa Cruz County Society for Historic Preservation, and it is now owned and maintained by the society's successor, the Santa Cruz County Historical Trust.

The new museum will be open weekends from noon to 4 p.m. Group tours may be made by appointment.

Admission to the museum is free. More information is available by calling 425-2540.

— Kathy Salamon